

A CHRISTMAS STORY

Once upon a time, an Inspiring Artist and an Amazing Creator decided that They would have a family. Lots of children to shower love on and share talents with.

Fiery, Spirited Mum and Rock-Solid Dad set about having the family of Their dreams: huge, colourful, and closely connected; varied in sizes, shapes, and skills. (Some of the kids later came up with concepts such as “race” and “species”, even though Mum and Dad loathe any form of division or discrimination.)

The Great and Only Divineness (“G.O.D” for short) gradually (billions of years gradually) birthed a wonder-ful family. The children had the freedom to live how they wanted in Earth’s House while God would watch out for them from the Attic. Popping down now and again for a chat, a cup of tea, and a slice of apple pie. (Apples were more a humans’ thing than God’s but They were too polite, and too kind, to refuse any well-intended offering.)

Despite their paradisaical existence, the human offspring began to grumble. “You’re cramping our style,” they complained to God. “You’re in my space!” “You’re in my face!” These comments made God very sad but, like all good parents, They respected the autonomy of Their children. “We’ll go and live up on the Cosmos Station,”ⁱ They said. “But We can be here in a flash whenever you need Us.”

Some members of the family liked God to be close all the time - sparrows, in particular. But most of the *Homo Sapiens (sapiens?!)*ⁱⁱ preferred to keep the Great and Only Divineness at a distance. Of course, the really wise ones loved God and enjoyed doing all they could to help both their Parent and their Siblings of Every Sort. God trained them as teachers and preachers, helpers and healers, and activists for social justice. (The G.O.D. Academy still runs these courses and would love you to sign up.)

God and the Wise Ones worked as hard as they could and loved as deeply as possible but still Earth got itself into a very bad place. Wars, poverty, and prejudice of every description – to name three! Worse still, humans drew further and further away from God. They blamed and badmouthed the Source Of Unlimited Love (“SOUL”), daring to suggest that LOVE causes Earth’s tragedies and disasters.

Mystical Mum and Devoted Dad felt terrible. They were VERY grateful for sparrows and ravens and field poppies who never turn away from their Parent. Samaritans, too, are generally a faithful bunch.

After a lengthy heart-to-heart, God came up with a radical plan. They would squeeze themselves into a human who would show all others of his/her species how to live closely, but freely, with God while doing good, God-y things.

Mum rooted for a daughter (“*Think of all the cute outfits I could buy.*”) Dad pointed out that it would be 2,000 Earth years (at least!) before humans listened to what a woman said. So, They settled on a boy. Next, They picked parents. After a worldwide search, God found a lovely young couple in Nazareth, Judea. Mariam had a passion for social justice and her fiancé Joseph possessed a rare combination of courage and tolerance. Added to which, they were related to old friends of God, Abraham and Sarah. The Nazareth bride and groom- to- be would be perfect.

Mariam and Joseph were thrilled to be part of God's Great Plan to Save the Planet. They gave birth to a really sweet kid whom they named Yeshua. His favourite pastimes were helping out his dad, going on picnics, and, as he grew up, religion. Yeshua developed a deep love for God, though he could never get over his suspicion of organized religion.

After some years working as a master craftsman for "Joseph & Son", Yeshua experienced a call to full-time ministry. He taught people about God's radical love and demonstrated that love through his wellness and wellbeing programmes. Yeshua still loved picnics, adored impromptu parties, and delighted in dining with polite society's "rejects."

Yeshua's message, his advocacy for the dispossessed and disadvantaged, and his unbounded love and care, gradually transformed humankind. Hearts and lives turned back to God and God's ways. By the end of Yeshua's very long, very hard-working life, the world had begun to be restored to its original state of perfection. **Everyone lived happily ever after.**

*No quite how the story ended?
It's not too late to make changes to the historical narrative.
Even now, with God's help, we humans can transform our world
and make God's dreams, a reality.*

ⁱ Like the Space Station only larger. The C.S. is both beyond Earth and deeply embedded within the planet.

ⁱⁱ Latin: "wise man"