

# Biblical Wisdom

## The Lessons That Last All Year Long

by Lamar Vest, President of  
American Bible Society

(NAPSA)—The most important lesson learned during Christmas can illuminate our lives all year long. That lesson is that God cares so much about us that He showed up among us.

Jesus was born into the same world that you and I live in today. Jesus was born to a broke teenage mother. He was born into an occupied nation ruled by outsiders. He was born in a world that was not so merry—the diseased were outcasts, women were stoned at even the suspicion of impropriety, and children were senselessly slaughtered.

Some time in the past two thousand years, we've forgotten the reality of Jesus' birth—its stark juxtaposition of joy and pain.

We witness the glittering side of the holiday in all the bright displays, in the commercials on every channel and the songs that permeate public spaces.

But the pain is there just below the surface.

Just beneath the glitter and the ever-cheerful tunes, we hurt again with the news of another police officer killed in the line of duty; news of another trusted coach accused of assaulting another innocent child.

Stories of women on the other side of the world whose repeated rapes are perpetrated as another senseless act of another senseless war.

So much of the pain is more personal and hits much closer to home.

*Dr. Lamar Vest is the President and CEO of the American Bible Society (ABS) and author of five books. Under Dr. Vest's leadership, the 195-year-old Society is working to deliver Scripture where it is most needed including anytime, anywhere access through MP3, web, e-mail and mobile technologies.*

*Headquartered in Manhattan, ABS exists to make the Bible available to every person in a language and format that each can understand and afford, so all people may experience its life-changing message. One of the nation's oldest nonprofit organizations, today's ABS provides interactive, high- and low-tech resources enabling first-time readers and seasoned theologians alike to engage with the best-selling book of all time.*



**According to Dr. Lamar Vest, president of American Bible Society since 2009, "As American Bible Society approaches 200 years of Bible ministry, I find its mission and message more critical than ever for today's complex world."**

A friend is rejected for that much-needed, much-prayed-for organ transplant.

A neighbor is losing his house to foreclosure.

Jesus wasn't born into a utopian society to well-to-do parents. He was born right here among us.

So He gets it when you hurt. He feels it when anger wells up in you because of life's injustices. He grieves right along with you through your losses and discouragements. He lived it, so He gets it.

That's the Jesus of the Bible.

There's much more to Jesus than just a perfect baby born in a perfect manger on a perfectly silent night. I challenge everyone to get to know the real Jesus who came into the real world for the sake of real people. Why not read what happened after the manger? His story is as close as the nearest Bible.