



REVETMENTS

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association
A Memorial to the American Experience in Vietnam

DECEMBER 2024



If you look for Me at Christmas

you won't need a special star –
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,
I'm right there where you are.

You may not be aware of Me
amid the celebrations –
You'll have to look beyond the stores
and all the decorations.

But if you take a moment
from your list of things to do
And listen to your heart,
you'll find
I'm waiting there for you...



Twas the day after Christmas,
And all through the works
Not a creature was stirring—
Not even the clerks.
But afar in the battle
On land, sea and air,
Brave lads fought through Christmas—
No Santa was there.
The things that they fight with—
The guns, tanks and ships,
Were delayed in production
By holiday trips.
So let us remember
Amid our good cheer,
We must stay at our work—
Or regret it next year.

Chaplain's Corner-Christmas, God's Gift to Mankind
Andy Csordas-Associate Chaplain

I suspect we all know about Christmas and the birth of Christ, hence the name of the holiday, Christmas. People have mixed beliefs when it concerns Christmas. Christians celebrate it as the birth of the Savior Jesus Christ. Others just use it as an opportunity to enjoy family, food and fellowship. Some even use it primarily to buy things on sale.

But what is the history of Christmas? Was Christ's birth something that just appeared in history or was it predicted in scripture well in advance of His birth? Peter Stoner, Chairman of the Departments of Mathematics and Astronomy at Pasadena College, was passionate about biblical prophecies. With 600 students from the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, Stoner looked at eight specific prophecies about Jesus. They came up with extremely conservative probabilities for each one being fulfilled, and then considered the likelihood of Jesus fulfilling all eight of those prophecies. The conclusion to his research was staggering. The prospect that anyone would satisfy those eight prophecies was just 1 in 10^{17} . * There are many more fulfilled prophecies, but they focused on only eight.

That is an unbelievably small probability. It is like asking you to pick the correct lottery number with 1,000,000,000,000,000,000 different combinations available. It is interesting that historians seem to reach a "verifiable" conclusion from one or two historical documents, but regularly ignore many historical references when it comes to scripture. Don't forget there are many other non-scripture references to the life of Jesus as well.

Just a few prophecies will be mentioned here. Keep in mind these prophecies were predicted hundreds of years before Christ was born. **Hosea 11:1** "*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I call my son*" was fulfilled in **Matthew 2:14-15**, *So Joseph got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod*".

Leviticus 17:11 says "*The life of the creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar, it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life*". It was fulfilled in **Matthew 26:28**, *"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins"*.

Jesus the Messiah will have all authority over judgement. **Isaiah 22:22** says "*I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open*". That was fulfilled in **Revelation 3:7**, *"These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open"*.

Christ alone can atone for our sins. God will not allow sin in heaven, and we have all sinned. Our sins are only cleansed through the blood Jesus shed on the cross. He arose three days after death, was on the earth for 40 days and seen by many people during that time. Then he ascended to heaven to prepare a place for you and me. He opened the door to heaven as referenced in **Revelation 3:7** above with his shed blood.

John 3:16 tells us, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"*. Is your soul troubled with the cares of the world or your personal situation? Accepting Christ is the only way to have that everlasting life; trust in Jesus, ask God to forgive your sins. **Lamentations 1:20** is talking about the condition of Israel, but it can apply to us as well, *"See, O Lord, that I am in distress: my soul is troubled"*. Asking Jesus for forgiveness will make your life so much better and you will have a peace like that you have never had before. That is the Christmas gift God gave to all of us, His Son.

*Credit: The Jesus Film Project

** Opinions expressed are those of the author, not necessarily those of the Tan Son Nhut Association



Twas the night before Christmas and all 'round the base,
 Not even a VC would dare show his face.
 The radar was strung round the hilltops with care,
 In hopes no attack might give us a scare.
 Under the bugnet all snug in my sack,
 I had just settled down to dream of a WAC ...
 When out by the airstrip there arose such a clatter
 I sprang from my bunk to see what was the matter.
 Fearing machine guns and mortars around the defense,
 Into a bunker I quickly commenced.
 But what to my wondering eyes there arose
 A miniature cart pulled by eight water buffaloes.
 A little old driver so lively and quick,
 I knew in a moment it must be a trick.
 For no Army driver was speedy like that,
 And he wasn't wearing a crushed fatigue hat.
 A Montagnard pipe stuck out of his face,
 Of stinking grey smoke it made more than a trace.
 A huge duffel bag he slung over his shoulder
 As I crept right up, growing much bolder.
 "Who goes there?" I challenged, still fearing a trick.
 He replied, "It's only Ong Nguyen Nahn Nick."
 I recognized him after a pause.
 Twas only the Vietnamese Santa Claus.

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Written by:

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1967

Submitted by Bernard Bucholz, who
 mentioned that while it isn't TSN, it is
 Viet Nam, and it's good!

Editor's note: On the left is what I re-
 typed to make it more readable, but I
 wanted to show what it looked like
 when it was typed in 1967!



THE PHU MY ORPHANAGE, DECEMBER, 1970. By: Rich Carvell, 12th RITS, and Vice-President, TSNA

Christmas came in December 1970, but we were away from our families, serving in Vietnam. For many of us, it was the first time ever away from our families for the December holiday. But we had an alternative ... Sanctuary de Phu My.

The men and women of the 12th Reconnaissance Intelligence Technical Squadron at Tan Son Nhut spent many weeks planning a Christmas party for the orphans at Phu My.

The first thing we had to do was to accumulate enough hot dogs to feed the kids, and that took several trips to the commissary in the Cholon area of Saigon. We also purchased cans of potato chips and Kool-Aid packages to make a flavored drink for the children at the orphanage. As we built up our supply of hot dogs, we needed a place to store them until time for the Phu My Christmas party. No problem. The 12th RITS had several very large, refrigerated reefers outside our squadron's building where we stored film and other supplies which needed refrigeration. As we amassed the hot dogs, we stored them in those reefers, thinking they would be safe, right? Wrong.

On Christmas day, as we prepared for the trip to Sanctuary de Phu My and the Christmas party for the orphans, we went to the refrigerated reefers to collect our stash of hot dogs. But they were not all there; some were missing. Then someone recalled that on Christmas Eve, some guys in the RITS had a party outside our building and apparently ate part of our supply of Phu My hot dogs. There were not enough hot dogs remaining to feed all of the orphans. Oh, what to do.

Problem solved.

Some of the NCOs at the RITS worked at the enlisted and officer clubs at Tan Son Nhut. Those guys called the clubs and asked for donations of hot dogs. By the time all of the hot dogs had been rounded up from the clubs, we had enough to feed the orphans.

One group of folks from the RITS went ahead of the second group trying to collect replacement hot dogs. The first group set up the 55-gallon grill with a sack of charcoal for fuel. If I remember correctly, starter fuel for the charcoal was drawn from the gasoline tank of the Air Force pickup truck.

All of the children were dressed in their best donated clothes for the GI Christmas party. And they waited excitedly in the open air room when we arrived. By the time the second group arrived, the charcoal was lit and ready to roast the hot dogs which we brought.

Hot dogs, potato chips, served on paper plates, and Kool-Aid to drink. But one would have thought we were serving filet mignon. The kids were so very excited to be fed this picnic food by American GIs.

The orphans waited patiently to be served. There were a couple of mishaps, but we had enough food to replace food that was spilled. Many of the orphans got seconds of the Kool-Aid drink.

The open air room where the orphans were served had a hand-painted picture of Bethlehem in one corner under the roof. And after eating, a group of orphans entertained the Air Force troops with a rendition of Christmas carols ... in English! Don't know if they knew what they were singing, but the troops enjoyed the music.

Entertainment? My family had enjoyed pinatas for many years, so my Mother suggested in a letter to me months before the party that we provide a pinata for the orphans at Phu My. I asked her to send me instructions on how to make a pinata, but her response was that she and my sister would make one and ship it to Vietnam. And they did!

We hung the pinata in a Sanctuary de Phu My courtyard tree as the orphans quietly watched what we were doing. When it came time to blindfold the first hitter, we did not have to explain anything to him; he knew exactly what to do. One well-placed hit with the stick in his hands broke open the Arkansas-made pinata and spilled wrapped candy all over the ground. The orphans also knew what to do when the pinata was broken and rushed in to pick up as much candy as they could. Not all of the orphans got a share of candy, but we had saved some, and the troops gave candy to those who did not get any from the broken pinata.

We were away from our families on that Christmas day in 1970, but all of the RITS troops who participated in the Christmas party for the orphans at Sanctuary de Phu My had a very merry Christmas in 1970.

December 1966

By: Paul Clark
377th SPS
TSN 1966-67



I am sitting in my office viewing for the umpteenth time a copy of the Air Force News, dated Dec 09, 1966. On the cover is a picture of two 377th Security Policemen, A2C Robert B. Kane, and AB Alvin W. Curie from Grand Rapids, Michigan.

I was from Ohio then, born and raised there, but now reside in southern Michigan.

I look at the picture of Curie and remember him so well even though he was in a different sector, "C Sector," I think. I was in a single man bunker that night just down from him and Kane. I was in "B Sector."

I will never forget that night and the explosions that seemed to go on forever and it was warm that night. I got the chills just waiting and watching the flight line and praying to see the daylight and for the planes to keep dropping flares. I could hear Curie's machine gun down the line, as they were firing on the VC that had broke through to the fighters.

Curie fired the M-60 that night and killed 13 VC. I remember watching him later as we gathered for guard-mount at the armory. He didn't really look like a hero but then what do heroes really look like.

Later, we stood in an official ceremony for the defense the 377th Security Police did during the attack. Curie was promoted to what rank I can't remember now and awarded medals for his heroism of stopping the enemy from doing immense damage to the aircraft and killing more of our troops.

It seems we stood for hours that day as speeches were made and medals were given out to the men who were on the main line of resistance, especially to the K-9 handler and to "Nemo the wonder dog," hero of the night.

But the toll of that night took its toll on Alvin and reminded me of the movie I saw of the Indian, Ira Hayes. That night wasn't anything like Iwo Jima but the toll of taking lives seemed to have an ill effect on Alvin and he began to drink more heavily. Within 6 months after the Dec 4, 1966 attack, they were putting Alvin on a plane, busted down again to no stripes and sent back to the states.

I often wondered what happened to him and tried this year to contact some of the Curies in Grand Rapids, MI., to find out where Alvin is buried, after reading on your site he had died.

I had no luck contacting anyone there but would like to take a drive there and just visit his grave to honor once again the young boy that I looked up to that night as a real hero and the only one I ever personally met and will never forget.

Not all the heroes died on the battlefield, some have to live with themselves and what happened in Vietnam, for years and some never get over it.

I honor AB Alvin W. Curie today and never let his heroism die as long as I am alive. I tell my four sons the story and my eleven grandchildren.

The congregation I now pastor, shares our story with tears, as I have now in my eyes, of the necessity of war at times and the horror of it also.

God bless our troops in harm's way today and God bless America.



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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

As I was thinking about the January, 2025 issue of Revetments, I had the thought that back in the January and February, 2018 Revetments are 28 articles about TET, received after I made a request that I needed TET articles.

Sooooo, unless you want to see some of those again, I need your info about you and TET.

Please send anything and everything to me at:

larlo4044@gmail.com

THANKS, AND MERRY CHRISTMAS



NEW MEMBER

Victor E. Rigsby, Ripon, CA
8th Aerial Port Squadron
February, 1969 – February 1970
eugeneinthemiddle@gmail.com

Received from Mark Reveaux after the November 2024 Revetments was published.

I was at TSN during TET and will be remembering the 23 personnel on **Veterans Day**, who were killed at TSN during that attack. In particular the security persons at the 051 gate. I recall the time of the attack which was about 0320 HRS when we heard police whistles, followed by automatic weapons fire, then mortar rounds and the base sirens. A Huey flew overhead and fired rockets towards the French cemetery.

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