

A Christmas Carol

Recently a fragment of an ancient scroll was unearthed in a cave near Bethlehem. It continues the parable of Lazarus and Dives:

And God thrust Dives into hell, saying, Inasmuch as you have mocked Lazarus, so shall you be mocked; and as you have made the hungry crawl on their bellies under your table and eat crumbs, so shall you crawl on your belly under Satan's table and eat crumbs of fire. And you shall have no power to right the wrong you have done. Of all these punishments, the last was the worst; and when Dives heard it, he cursed God and swore revenge. But the Lord closed His ears, and with each curse, Dives' torment increased sevenfold. But after some generations had passed, Dives knelt in the embers and said, Lord, Thy will be done; only let me right the wrong I have done.

The fragment breaks off there. How would you end the story, what lesson would you take from it, and how would you live out that lesson in thought, word, and deed?

This small offering comes from a land of imagination and good will, a country that may be less distant from us than we think, and in spite of our own errors and anxieties, as close to us as we hope. May all the blessings of the holidays come to all of you, now and forever, and your hopes for the new year be fulfilled.