

At 1:00 a.m., February 26th, Grace began barking wildly from the bonus room – as if we had an intruder. Out the window, we could see a specter-like shadow accompanied by an occasional scraping noise. The culprit was an ice-laden tree from next door. The rest of the night was a mix of various scraping, creaking, and buzzing sounds from roof ice and temporary power glitches.

The last interruption came around 5:15 when Betsy had a vivid nightmare convincing her that the ceiling was falling in! Finally, the power went out altogether at around 6:00. Needless to say, we didn't sleep much that night. That was one of the early *kinks* we *weathered* this past year.

In early May, we found *puddles* in the *sealed* crawlspace. Apparently, multiple mix-ups occurred with the air conditioning system installation, and the circuit breaker for the air conditioner was sized too small – causing the unit to shut down randomly. We also grappled with the challenge of directing road, lawn, and roof water away from the lawn and into the woods.

Finally, we all had joint problems. Betsy had arthroscopic surgery on her shoulder and bicep. Grace had arthroscopic surgery on her right elbow. I had a shoulder problem but managed to nurse it back to health on my own through swimming. We're all recovering now.

Wouldn't it be nice to live in a world without kinks? That's how it was when God *created the heaven and the earth*. After completing creation on the sixth day, God said that *it was very good*. Adam and Eve kept the garden. They lived in blissful peace and harmony with: each other, the animals, the plants, and their Heavenly Father.

The couple had no health problems, no financial problems, no marital problems, and no concern for aging or death. They had no government to enslave and lie to them and no need for one. They had no problems at all and nothing to fear. Plants nourished all of God's creatures.

When we think of Christmas, we envision the star, the shepherds, the humble and peaceful manger scene, Mary, Joseph, and of course the baby Jesus. He came first as the Lamb of God, the Sacrifice, and the One who gave His life that all who call upon Him might live.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:

This same Jesus who came to be the Savior and Redeemer of mankind will come again. When He does, He will restore peace among men and all of His creatures. The curse will be lifted.

*and the government shall be upon his shoulder:
and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God,
The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)*

How refreshing it will be to have a ruler in command who embodies truth, wisdom, and righteousness. We look forward to the day when peace again fills the earth. Animals will be at peace with man and with each other. Men will live to be as old as trees, and blood will be spilled by neither man nor animal. The current pain and chaos all around us will end, and one great day this world will at last be transformed.

Merry Christmas!
Ron and Betsy