

Christ is Victor

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“His birth and our new birth”

“Behold: a virgin shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Isaiah 7:14).

His Birth in History. “Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” (Luke 1:35.) Jesus Christ was born into this world, not from it. He did not evolve out of history; He came into history from the outside. Jesus Christ is not the best human being, He is a Being Who cannot be accounted for by the human race at all. He is not man becoming God, but God Incarnate, God coming into human flesh, coming into it from outside. His life is the Highest and the Holiest entering in at the Lowliest door. Our Lord’s birth was an advent.

His Birth in Me. “Of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.” (Gal. 4:19.) Just as Our Lord came into human history from outside, so He must come into me from outside. Have I allowed my personal human life to become a “Bethlehem” for the Son of God? I cannot enter into the realm of the Kingdom of God unless I am born from above by a birth totally unlike natural birth. “Ye must be born again.” This is not a command, it is a foundation fact. The characteristic of the new birth is that I yield myself so completely to God that Christ is formed in me. Immediately Christ is formed in me, His nature begins to work through me.

God manifest in the flesh—that is what is made profoundly possible for you and me by the Redemption.

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“Jesus Christ was born for you”

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: 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).

The child is born unto us. The whole nature around us, angels above us, and the saints of God who knew Him, had been expecting the Son. When a kingdom is awaiting a child to be born in the royal family, and when a son is born, the whole kingdom is filled with joy. There is a spirit of triumph abroad because an heir-apparent is born.

Here also the prophet sees that a time of triumph for God’s kingdom has come. The Hebrew prophet says, “the government shall be upon His shoulder”. He will be called “Wonderful” and “Counsellor” and the mighty God.

The Son who is going to be born will be far greater than any wise man or any great king that was born on this earth. He will be the second Adam with the innocence of the first Adam before he was deceived.

When Jesus was born, the greatness of the event was fully understood only by Heaven. Nature seemed to understand it and a new star appeared in the sky. The magi or the wise men understood this and the extremely simple folk, the shepherds, understood this. The whole universe had been looking forward to this great event. “[T]he whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Romans 8:22). Sin not only affects humanity but also affects nature. When sin came, thorns came (Genesis 3:18). In the first home, murder between brothers was committed. Animals that were friendly to man became inimical to him. The human heart became desperately wicked, producing poisonous thoughts and making the imaginations of man a source of untold trouble to him; untimely rains, floods, storms, failure of crops, and allied natural calamities, began to occur.

A King came into the world who can restore order again. He is the Prince of peace. There were dangerous forces at work to de-

stroy humanity and to wipe out all peace and safety in this world. But this King has power to quell all these things. He demonstrated His power on the sea. For instance, He ordered the roaring sea with the fiat “Peace be still” (literally “muzzled”) and the winds and the sea obeyed. The disciples saw for the first time the Almighty God in Him. When He rose from the dead, He was completely crowned as the Lord of Heaven and earth.

Not only the troubled sea, but also the troubled heart with so much agitation, commotion, and disturbance, can be restored to peace—the peace that passes all understanding. Only those that have believed in Him understand the supernatural or superhuman influence of this new born Babe. The world and its philosophers have been seeking for peace. Here comes the Prince of peace who can touch human nature and transform it into divine nature. *The sin of mankind is nailed to the Cross and the resurrection-victory ransoms us from the power of the grave, redeeming us from death (Hosea 13:14).*

Only those who are born of the Spirit can understand the significance of the great events of our Lord’s birth. A Son is born to be the King of the whole universe by virtue of His holy life, having been tempted like any one of us, yet always above sin (Hebrews 4:15). He proved that the prerogatives that were given to the first Adam were sufficient to make him triumph over the evil one. This same Jesus, having been tempted in all points like as we are, was without sin and then He took upon Himself the sin of humanity. He took it into the grave and buried it there. Thus He befitted Himself to be the King.

Even nature recognised Him when the earth trembled and the sun became dark and the grave delivered up some of the saints, who arose and appeared before men. He walked on the earth as a king. Death yielded and the dead were raised to life. The grave had to give up Lazarus when He stood before its mouth and made Lazarus walk out a live man.

Greater than that, several sinful men and

“JESUS CHRIST...” CON’T ON PAGE 2

women who were “dead in trespasses and sins” went from Him completely changed. In an hour’s conversation, the harlot of Sychar became the missionary of the same place. He became the King who conquered the depraved human nature and restored man back to his near-angelic position.

The very name of Jesus makes the underworld tremble. The devil and his angels have been holding complete sway over the world, filling the human mind with sophistry and misguided philosophy which have missed the way of salvation. When men began to worship idols, these evil spirits entered the idols and created in deluded men and women a kind of false reality. But the depraved human nature is never bettered by this kind of idol worship. All the so-called “avatars” are a human fabrication and some persons even philosophise over the sinful lives of these “avatars”.

But this Jesus, after two thousand years, remains unspotted and no one can ascribe any kind of impurity, sin, or selfishness to Him. He is the selfless Deity who took upon Himself our sickness, sin, and sorrow. Our sicknesses

and sorrows produced in Him those wounds, while He willingly gave His life for humanity. Jesus, by virtue of His character, stands supreme in Heaven and on earth. Nobody can dethrone Him and those that follow this great Saviour also share His greatness. They stand supreme, not by human support nor by patriotic sentiment, but by sheer virtue which gives them the highest place in humanity. The grave has no power over them. There is no fear of death in them—Jesus allays all fears. They become the stars that shine forever in the firmament of God’s kingdom.

Of the increase of Jesus’ government and peace there shall be no end, and the throne of David will overflow with judgement and justice forever. He is known as “the rod of the stem of Jesse”, “a branch” that should grow out of his stem. He came from the family of Abraham. God’s promise that all the nations of the world will be blessed through Abraham’s family is being fulfilled. A prophecy about Jesus was that He would be a person “of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and He shall not judge after the sight of His

eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears” (Isaiah 11:3).

He is the “Wonderful Counsellor” who, with transcendental wisdom, guides His people. There is no wisdom above the wisdom that comes from Jesus. All the philosophers of the world have become dwarfs before Him. He lived what He preached. His philosophy was translated into holy living. The world wants to see a great philosophy or a revealed philosophy in concrete form and that is personified in Jesus. God made it possible for man to look at His own image in the flesh. On the Cross we see the broken and the bleeding heart of God, the heart that was broken for sin-ridden humanity. Finally we see Him enthroned in Heaven above all principality and power.

Is this great and matchless Saviour and Lord the undisputed ruler of your whole personality and all that you have this Christmas?

—N. Daniel

“The News of Christmas”

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word” (Luke 1:38).

The first tidings of Christmas which came to Mary, the mother of Jesus, left her stunned and breathless with wonder. She surely knew the promise that the great Redeemer, whose coming was foretold in the Scriptures, was to be born of a virgin. Being devoid of all self-consciousness and beautiful in her purity, Mary found it impossible to believe that she was to be God’s choice of the ages, to be the mother of His son.

Simple in her sincerity, she asked the angel who brought the tidings to her: “You know that I am a virgin, how can these things be?” Not that she disbelieved God, but for one stunning moment, she lost sight of God’s promise that Jesus was to be virgin-born, and gave way to natural reasoning.

The beauty which is invested in purity becomes an enduring beauty. Despite all the cosmetics and face-lifts of today, most beauty queens have a very short beauty span. How quickly their charm vanishes! But the beauty of a clean woman and a praying mother grows with her increasing years. Even her grey hair is so pleasing to behold.

But the torment of an unclean conscience can shatter nerves of steel, etch lines and wrinkles on your face, and make your beauty disgusting and hateful. That is why many young people today appear to be many years older than what they are.

While the revelation of the angel came to Mary as a bolt from the blue, completely unset-

ting the even tenor of her life, yet she received the tidings with joyful anticipation and submission with those timeless words, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord!”

Christmas—the beautiful story of God’s love for rebellious sinners—comes to us as a breath from Heaven. It is not at all the annual spree of buying and the uninhibited binge of beer, alcohol, and gorging of prodigious piles of food.

Christmas is a forceful reminder to all mankind that we are not merely cut adrift to float aimlessly in the sea of life. “Unto you is born this day a Saviour!” Who needs a Saviour? Those who are lost. Who is more lost than we who live on this planet today? We hold in our hands weapons of self-destruction, which promise a carnage so uniform that there will be no victor or vanquished.

At the heart of the Christmas story is the Saviour. Without Him Christmas has no meaning. Like Mary of old, it could be that we are slightly puzzled as to what this should mean. Is God going to do such a wonderful thing for me? It seems incredible, but let us say: “I do believe it, God will not deceive me, He will do the impossible for me.”

Yes, Christmas makes a lot of impossibilities actual realities. God’s promise to send the Saviour has come to pass; everyone who trusts in Him is going to see a glorious deliverance from sin.

Christmas brings to us God in very flesh. How many are the sages who almost despaired that their earnest seeking of God was all in vain—they felt they could never meet the Eter-

nal One! Oh what a thrill to see Jesus, God in very flesh, God’s holiness, God’s love, God’s tender compassion for the suffering, all put into flesh and blood before us! Not in marble, not in gold, but in Flesh and Blood.

There He comes and stands before us—Immaculately beautiful, Peerless, Perfect—all that God should be! Can you turn your gaze away from Him? No, He grips you, He fills you, and He thrills you until you cry: “Jesus is all to me; I cannot live without Him.” Yes, that is true Christmas—the coming of Jesus into your life.

—Joshua Daniel

Reality Check!

BUT AS MANY AS RECEIVED [JESUS], TO THEM GAVE HE POWER TO BECOME THE SONS OF GOD, EVEN TO THEM THAT BELIEVE ON HIS NAME: WHICH WERE BORN, NOT OF BLOOD, NOR OF THE WILL OF THE FLESH, NOR OF THE WILL OF MAN, BUT OF GOD

JOHN 1:12-13

“God’s faithful provision”

In the winter of 1855, in the state of Iowa, the snow fell early in November to the depth of two feet. The storm was such that neither man nor beast could move against it. In a log cabin, six miles from her nearest relative, lived a woman with five children, ranging from one to eleven years.

The supply of food and fuel was but scant when the snow began falling; and day after day the small store melted away, until the fourth evening when the last provisions were cooked for supper, and barely enough fuel remained to last one day more. That night, as was her custom, the little ones were called around her knee to hear the Scripture lesson read, before commending them to the Heavenly Father’s care. Then, bowing in prayer, she pleaded as only those in a similar condition can plead, that help from God might be sent.

While wrestling with God in prayer, the Spirit took the words of the Psalmist and impressed them on her heart: “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” And

again, these words came as if spoken audibly: “The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that wait on the Lord shall want no good thing.” The woman’s faith took God at His word; and with an assurance that help would come, she prayed to God who hears prayer, and retired to rest without a care or fear about the following day.

When again the morning broke, that mother arose, kindled her fire, and put on the kettle as she had done on other days before the food was all gone. Just as the sun arose, a man in a sleigh drove up to the house, and hastening in inquired how they were getting along. Her heart at first was too full to say anything; but in a short time he was told something of their destitution, and of her cry to God for help. He replied: “Last night about nine o’clock, [my] wife and I were both impressed that you were in need. Spending almost a sleepless night, I hastened at early dawn, to come and inquire about the case.”

Then returning to his sleigh, he took into the house breadstuff, meat, and groceries, so that the

mother had an abundance with which to prepare a breakfast for the little ones, who had eaten the last bread the night before. And as if to make the case above-mentioned an indisputable special providence, the individual who was thus impressed—at the very hour that the mother was crying to God—was a stranger to the circumstances and surroundings of this family. Indeed, he had never been in that house before, nor had he ever shown any interest in the person referred to; but he ever afterwards proved a friend indeed.

In that hour, faith in God was so tested and yet was so triumphant. This story is from 1855—but God’s provision has been repeated on a daily basis throughout the history of our world!

—Selected from **S. B. Shaw, Touching Incidents and Remarkable Answers to Prayer**

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“Christ receives the devil’s castaways”

The Bible says that not many wise men according to the flesh, not many mighty, and not many noble are called; God wants no flesh to glory in His presence. One noble, eighteenth-century lady “called” to help spread the Good News of Jesus Christ was Selina, Countess of Huntingdon. She was grateful for the letter “m” in “many”; suppose the Bible had said that “not any noble” are called!

Lady Huntingdon desired others to receive the salvation that Jesus Christ offers. On Sunday evenings, famous preachers would speak in her home. One Monday, two ladies gave a report on the famous preacher George Whitefield. “O, my Lady,” she was told, “of all the preachers we ever heard, he is the most strange and unaccountable. . . . he declared that Jesus Christ was so willing to receive sinners, that he did not object to receive even the devil’s castaways! Now, my Lady, did you ever hear of such a thing since you were born?”

Lady Huntingdon understood that there was something unusual in the invitation. As Whitefield was then in the house, she let him answer for himself.

“They say,” Lady Huntingdon informed him, “that . . . you expressed yourself in the following terms—‘So ready is Christ to receive sinners who come to Him, that He is will-

ing to receive the devil’s castaways.’ ” “[W]hether I did what was right or otherwise, your Ladyship shall judge from the following circumstance,” said Whitefield.

“Did your Ladyship notice,” he continued, “about half an hour ago, a very modest single rap at the door? It was given by a poor, miserable-looking, aged female, who requested to speak with me. I desired her to be shown into the parlour, when she accosted me in the following manner:—‘I believe, Sir, you preached last evening at such a chapel?’ ‘Yes, I did.’ ”

“ ‘Ah, Sir,’ ” the woman had said, “ ‘I was accidentally passing the door of that chapel, and hearing the voice of some one preaching, I did what I have never been in the habit of doing—I went in; and one of the first things I heard you say was, that Jesus Christ was so willing to receive sinners, that he did not object to receiving the devil’s castaways. Now, Sir, I have been on the town for many years, and am so worn out in his service, that I think I may with truth be called one of the devil’s castaways. Do you think, Sir, that Jesus Christ would receive me?’ ” Whitefield carried on, “I assured her there was not a doubt of it, if she was but willing to go to Him.”

The poor lady was saved; though her sins were as red as

crimson, the atoning blood of Christ had washed them white as snow. She was given power to become one of the “sons of God” through Jesus Christ.

—See **J. K. Foster, *The Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, vol. 1a***

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