

THE RELEVANCE OF THE INCARNATION

INTRODUCTION

Tomorrow, billions worldwide celebrate the incarnation of the Son of God, the birth of Jesus. Any reader of the Scripture can plainly see that no verse indicates when Jesus was born nor any verse indicating that a birthday celebration was ever expected by God. Nonetheless, while many of our neighbors are pondering the Son of God assuming fleshly form, we can contemplate from Scripture why that was such a marvelous event.

I. TO DENY THE INCARNATION IS TO DENY CHRIST

A. **1st John 4:2-3; 2nd John 7**

Despite the assumptions of many that the antichrist is an individual whose arrival will portend the second coming, in truth, anyone who denies that Jesus came in the flesh is antichrist.

B. **Matthew 10:32-33**

To deny Christ is to be denied by Christ. This is important stuff.

II. THE INCARNATION FULFILLED GOD'S PROMISE

A. **Romans 1:1-4**

Jesus' identity is twofold:

1. He is David's son according to the flesh, and
2. He is God's Son according to the Holy Spirit because of His resurrection.

B. **2nd Samuel 7:12-17**

God established a covenant with David, promising Him an unending dynasty.

C. **Acts 2:22-36**

Jesus was born David's offspring and when He died and arose, He was enthroned at God's side, His kingdom realized.

III. THE INCARNATION WAS NECESSARY TO CONQUER DEATH

A. **Hebrews 2:9-16**

The Lord had to assume fleshly form in order to die, so that He could defeat death and the devil through His resurrection.

B. **1st Corinthians 15:20-23, 50-57**

As the firstfruits of the resurrection, Christ has paved the way for those of us who will follow Him.

C. **Revelation 1:18**

Jesus is in control of death because He conquered death.

IV. THE INCARNATION ENABLED CHRIST'S SYMPATHY

A. **Hebrews 2:17-18**

If Jesus had not lived as a man, then He never would have been tempted to sin, but having experienced temptation, He is equipped to aid us in our temptations.

B. **Matthew 4:1-11**

His temptations were direct and personal, manifestly more severe than what ordinary men face.

C. **Hebrews 4:14-16**

There is nothing we face that He has not already overcome. Thus, we can approach God with confidence that He understands.

V. THE INCARNATION TAUGHT HIM SUBMISSION

A. **Hebrews 5:5-11**

While He was in the flesh, the Son of God "*learned obedience!*"

B. **John 5:30; 6:38; 8:28-29; 14:31; 15:10; 17:4**

On many occasions, He asserted directly that He was simply carrying out His Father's will, rather than His own.

C. **1st Corinthians 11:3**

Jesus is subject to the Father.

D. **Philippians 2:5-8**

His human form is an expression of humility. Therein He became mortal, and, having suffered death, He obeyed God's plan.

CONCLUSION

- A.** The incarnation of the Messiah matters because God promised David that his Son would sit his throne forever, but the Christ Child sat no throne! He ascended to heaven following His adult death and resurrection to receive that honor.
- B.** The Son of God was robed in mortal flesh that He might die and live again, thereby defeating death and Satan. It was no Baby Jesus who died and rose from death, but the Man Christ Jesus.
- C.** Becoming human let Christ experience temptation, enabling Him to sympathize with our weaknesses, but it wasn't a swaddled Infant in a manger who faced the devil in the wilderness. Rather, that was done by the Man who was accountable for His actions.
- D.** Being a Man let Jesus learn obedience, but the fullness of that obedience was obtained in suffering death, a death accomplished by Jesus the Man, not the Baby.
- E.** Without His birth, Jesus could accomplish nothing that followed thereafter, but the accomplishments of His earthly sojourn were done when He was grown, which is why our focus as Christians must be on grown-up Jesus of Nazareth. His birth was a prerequisite, not the accomplishment.
- F. **Colossians 1:21-23****
What Christ did in the flesh to present us holy was to die. That is the crux of the gospel. Birth was the means toward that end.
- G. **1st Corinthians 15:1-4****

The gospel, in short, amounts to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. These fundamental tenets are the core concepts of the faith.

H. 1st Corinthians 11:23-26

We are taught in Scripture to “*proclaim the Lord’s death*” by eating the Lord’s Supper. We have no comparable instruction regarding His birth.

I. Romans 6:3-6

Our salvation from sin through baptism is tied directly to His death and resurrection. Let us give that the focus it deserves.