

Who is Jesus? Part 2

The God-Man, Jesus Christ

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Turn to the Gospel of Luke. I want to continue in the subject that we began last week on “Who is Jesus?” As I said last week I am not addressing this issue because of it being the Christmas season. I have no interest in doing anything Christmas wise. But, having been exercised about two months ago to restudy this, because of some challenges that were brought to me and some others, I want to share with you some of my thoughts of what the Word of God has to say.

I will begin reading again at verse 26, the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke.

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.¹

The word “blessed” is the Greek word eulogeu and is used by Paul in Ephesians 1:3 where he says God “hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ”. So all the saints of God have this same blessing in Christ.

And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?²

I have pointed out already that this does not mean a simple mental knowledge of a person, but what she is saying is, that she was a virgin and that there had not been any

¹ Luke 1:26-28

² Luke 1:29-34

sexual relation between her and any man, although she was espoused or engaged to Joseph.

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy [note the word “holy” if you would, please] thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.³

We have here then a record of the salutation or the announcement, as it is sometimes referred to, of the angel unto Mary concerning the birth of Christ and His incarnation.

We have already noted that this is Jesus Christ the very Son of God. We have titled our thoughts, “Who is Jesus?” And I submit to you that this is the most important issue and question that any of us might entertain. Who is Jesus Christ?

The fact of the matter is our eternal destiny hinges on who He is and our relationship and knowledge of Him. Christ said in John the 14th chapter and verse six, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”⁴

Jesus Christ made a declaration about Himself and about access to the Father. If he is not who He said He was—and we noted last week that He declared Himself to be God and that was the very reason why the Jews wanted to stone him. They accused him of blaspheming. You have that recorded for you in the 10th chapter of the gospel of John and other references.

So it is that Christ identified Himself as God.

John said in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”⁵

The Scriptures make it very clear that Christ is the eternal Son of God. The fact of the matter is He declared Himself to be the Son of God. He said He was the Son of God in John the third chapter when He gave that very familiar statement in verse 16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”⁶

³ Luke 1:35-38

⁴ John 14:6

⁵ John 1:1

⁶ John 3:16

In the very next verse, verse 17, Christ said He “came not into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved”.⁷ Verse 18 says “He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

In the Greek the phrase is “hath not believed on the Son, the only begotten one.” And there is a definite article, so it is not just a Son, but the Son, the Son singular and uniquely. Christ is the only begotten Son of God.

Every born again person has been begotten by God, having been regenerated by the Holy Spirit of God, but not in the same sense as Christ, who is the eternal Son of God, who has always existed eternally, self-existent and equal with God the Father.

We believe in the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, as three distinct persons, but one in essence and in unity.

As I said last week, I cannot explain the Trinity to you, nor can any person understand it. It is impossible for a finite mind or a feeble mind like I have to explain the infinite one. It is impossible for a mortal being to understand the eternal God. Christ is very God. He is the only begotten Son of the Father.

Not only is He the Eternal Son of God, but amazingly—and this is what the incarnation is all about—Jesus Christ became man. He became flesh. He is God-man.

John 1:14 says, “And the Word was made flesh.”⁸ That does not mean that Jesus Christ ceased to be what He was previously. There is not some kind of transformation that took place whereby He was changed in His God-nature. He is as much God after His birth as He was before His birth. He became flesh. He was manifested in human flesh.

How to explain all that is beyond, as I said, human comprehension. Paul speaking in 1 Timothy 3:16 says, “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.”⁹

Maybe we will understand more about it in eternity. I don’t know if we ever shall be able to comprehend how it was, in the marvellous wisdom of God and by the miraculous power of God that Jesus Christ, very God, eternal God was made to become flesh, sinless flesh and dwell among us.

In 1 Timothy 2:5, the Apostle Paul identifies Christ as God, he said, “There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”¹⁰

Paul describes this condescension of Christ in the second chapter of Philippians when he said:

⁷ See John 3:17-18

⁸ John 1:14

⁹ 1 Timothy 3:16

¹⁰ 1 Timothy 2:5

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: made in the likeness of men.¹¹

I want to then give us some proof of the human nature of Jesus Christ.

First, His humanity is proven by His human birth.

Jesus Christ manifested Himself and appeared in Old Testament times, not as God-man, but in special manifestation. We call these the pre-incarnation manifestations of Christ.

The fact of the matter is that you have Him appearing, manifesting Himself in the burning bush when He spoke to Moses in Exodus the third chapter. There are other times when Christ manifested Himself in speaking to Abraham. He is the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

Now the difference is that now He became robed in human flesh. He now takes upon Himself a human body and this body is given to Him by Mary. Christ was not the burning bush, He was only manifesting His presence, but in the incarnation, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became human flesh. He had a body that was flesh and blood. We will talk more about the reasons why He had to have flesh and blood, later. But His body was given to Him by Mary, by the Holy Spirit. Christ was conceived in the womb of Mary. There is much detail given to us about His birth in the Gospel of Matthew, but more in the Gospel of Luke.

All of this detail is given to us to show that the process by which Christ came to earth was not simply that He came down to earth as an angel would or as He appeared there in the burning bush unto Moses, but that He came to earth in a very special way in which He would come to earth and take upon Himself a human body.

We have the record of the conception of His human body and we have a detailed record of His birth. We read in the Gospel of Luke, the second chapter, that Joseph and Mary had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem because of the taxation decree made by Caesar Augustus. We read in verse six, "And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered." Every mother understands what the scriptures mean when it says "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered." You mothers understand very well that process. Nine months has passed since the first appearance of the angel Gabriel to her. I believe it is now about the first of September, about the 10th or 11th of the month, and it is the time for the birth of Mary's baby. So we read, "She brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

¹¹ Philippians 2:6-7

So it was that Jesus Christ did not just miraculously, suddenly appear on earth coming down from heaven, but rather, He came in a human body that was conceived in the womb of a woman, that developed, was born by its mother and nursed on her breast. Amazing condescension! God became flesh and dwelt among man. All because He loved His elect people and would come and die for them. What amazing love!

So Paul says, in Galatians chapter 4, verses four and five, “When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Note the phrase. “God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, [and] made [to be] under the law,”¹² So Christ came to earth by the means of the virgin Mary and she gave Him a human body that was necessary in order that he might be our Savior. Paul says Christ, by His resurrection was declared to be the Son of God, who “was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.”¹³

The Human Nature of Christ is seen by His human functions.

We have record given to us in the Bible of various things about Christ that prove His humanity. In Luke the second chapter verse 21, we read, “And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child,” His parents took Him to Jerusalem to be circumcised according to the Law of Moses; this is He that was “called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.” Again, we read in verse 40, “And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.”¹⁴ The child grew. This is human development. Every parent understands that language very well.

At the age of 12 we have record of Jesus in the Temple teaching the scribes and Pharisees. We have other accounts that tell us that He walked and talked with human beings here on the earth. He became tired, amazingly, the eternal, omnipotent Son of God, creator of the universe, became tired because He limited Himself and identified Himself with a human body. He hungered. He thirsted. He slept. He sweated. He had a physical body that was beaten, nailed to the cross and when His side was pierced, blood flowed out, sinless human blood. When He had dismissed His spirit, His human body was taken down from the cross and laid in a grave. He laid there for three days and three nights and then was resurrected.

Even after His resurrection, Christ had a real physical body. When the Lord appeared to His apostles in the upper room after His resurrection, He said to them, “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” (Luke 24:39) You remember Thomas had said he would not believe unless he could touch his hand in His side.

¹² Gal. 4:4-5

¹³ See Romans 1:3

¹⁴ Luke 2:40

Christ resurrected body was a real physical human body. It was not some type of mystical body or celestial body, as some have said He had when He came to earth. He had a real human body because that was necessary for Christ to be our Savior.

Paul tells us in the 10th chapter of Hebrews that it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to wash away sins. Let me give us the exact wording from verse four; “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”¹⁵ It is not possible! It is not possible for the blood of any animal; bulls, goats, pigeons or whatever, so we all as sinners have a dilemma.

What is going to satisfy God concerning our sins? “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”¹⁶

Ever since the sin of Adam we have all been under the curse of sin. “and so death passed upon all men for in that all have sinned.”(Romans 5:12b) What will we do then about our sins? “There is none righteous, no not one.”(Romans 3:10) Paul tells us again in Hebrews 9:22 that, “Without shedding of blood there is no remission.”

So now, we have the dilemma given to us, that it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin. It must then be by our own blood or by the blood of our substitute, a human being who dies in our place because it is us, as human beings that sinned in Adam and brought the curse of sin to the entire universe.

It was not the animals that sinned. They were dying all through the Old Testament as a sacrifice for sin only to foreshadow the Lamb of God. None of those sacrifices took away any sin. They were only a symbol, a type pointing to the coming Lamb of God, the very Son of God who would take upon Himself a human body and identify Himself with those whom He came to save and bear the sins of His people.

In order for Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer, He must have a human physical body. Paul tells us in the 10th chapter of Hebrews, verse five, quoting our Lord, who was quoting from the old Testament, “Wherefore,” in view of this dilemma and the crises that sinners are confronted with, “Wherefore when He cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not.”¹⁷ Here is our dilemma compounded. There is no sacrifice; there is no offering that sinners can possibly bring to satisfy God. Here is God’s marvelous work of salvation and redemption. Here is a declaration of His infinite wisdom in our salvation. “But a body hast thou prepared me.”¹⁸ It was a special body, a sinless body, incarnated in the womb of Mary whereby that God became flesh in a body that was prepared for Him by God.

Christ said, “In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure.”¹⁹ Here again, mankind’s dilemma is repeated.

¹⁵ Hebrews 10:4

¹⁶ Ezekiel 18:4, 20

¹⁷ Hebrews 10:5

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Hebrews 10:6

Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.²⁰

Whenever we are speaking about the work of redemption by Christ Jesus; wherever we read in the Word of God about our redemption, we are told what Jesus must do to redeem us from our sins. There is always a reference to the cross, a cross on which a human body was hung, a cross on which human blood was shed. So the Word of God teaches us that Christ must have a human body if He is to be our Redeemer. He must bear our sins in that human body.

Peter speaking in 1st Peter says in chapter two, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.”²¹

When believers partake of the Lord’s supper we do that which our Lord told us to do reminding ourselves, as He told us, of His broken body and His shed blood. He gives us those two elements, the bread and the wine to remind us that He had a real physical body that was beaten, that was striped and nailed to a cross. A real physical body that suffered and out of which blood flowed for the remission of the sins of His people.

The prophet Isaiah says in Isaiah the 51st chapter verse three. “He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him.”²²

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.”²³

Then in verse five, “But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”²⁴

In verse 10, “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.”²⁵

²⁰ Hebrews 10:7-10

²¹ 1 Peter 2:24

²² Isaiah 55:3

²³ Isaiah 53:4

²⁴ Isaiah 53:5

²⁵ Isaiah 53:10-11

This suffering was necessary. The physical human body of Christ was necessary in order for Christ to fulfill these Old Testament prophecies.

When Philip was meeting with the Ethiopian in the chariot there on the road in the desert, the Ethiopian was reading this very portion of Isaiah. The Ethiopian asked the question, “Of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or of some other man?”²⁶

It was very clear to the Ethiopian that these acts, this suffering must be done by a physical person, so he asked, “Is the prophet talking about himself or is he talking about some other man?”

The Jewish rabbis, in order to try to get away from the clear implications that Messiah would suffer, make this prophecy to refer to the nation of Israel. So they make the whole nation of Israel to be the fulfillment of Isaiah 53. But that is a wrong interpretation. It is impossible because forty-eight times in this chapter the personal pronoun, he, his or him is used by the Holy Spirit. The prophecy speaks about a person, “He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows.” It is that “He was wounded,” it is “His stripes” and His suffering. This is an individual with a human body.

So in order to fulfill all those Old Testament prophecies, Christ must have a human body, but it must be a sinless body with sinless blood. It must be a human body in order for Him to identify Himself with His elect people.

In Hebrews the second chapter, Paul gives us some insight to this very subject. In the second chapter of Hebrews verse nine, we read, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels.”²⁷

Now in verse six, Paul has just asked the question, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels.”²⁸

He is talking about human beings. He is talking about mankind. “Thou madest him a little lower than the angels.”²⁹

Man is lower than the angels in the order of creation and also in power. Then Paul writes in verse nine:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, [and] crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons

²⁶ Acts 8:34

²⁷ Hebrews 2:9

²⁸ Hebrews 2:6-7

²⁹ Hebrews 2:7

unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.³⁰

Now that is an interesting phrase. How can it be possible that God, Jesus Christ, could ever be made perfect? It was not in His character, or in His essence as God, but rather made fully qualified to be the sin bearer, to be the Savior. The Greek word is “telioo” and it means to be consecrated, set apart. He was the Holy Son of God, who became flesh and lived a life in complete obedience to the will of God. He was sinless. All the requirements of the Law and the prophets, all the types and all the shadows, He fully satisfied all of them because He was the sinless God-man.

In verse 11, “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one.”³¹ Christ, by becoming flesh, identified Himself with His elect people whom He came to save. (Matt.1:21) “for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.” The elect are one with Him who is our elder brother.

Again, I remind you that Paul tells us that it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to wash away sin. Most certainly an angel cannot die for sinners because they do not have a physical body with blood. So the marvel of the incarnation was that the Son of God became flesh that He might have a body to identify himself with those whom He came to die for, because only man can die for man’s sin.

Someone has said they couldn’t understand how it would be possible for God to die.

Well, it is possible because God became man, sinless man with a human body whereby He could die for those whom He came to redeem from sin. He did dismiss His spirit to the Father, but He died in His human body.

Verse 11 again, “For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.”³²

May I skip down in our reading here to verse 14 of the second chapter of Hebrews? “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.”³³

The words “part of the same” restricts His taking part thereof that he did not partake of sin.

...that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.³⁴

³⁰ Hebrews 2:9-10

³¹ Hebrews 10:11

³² Hebrews 2:11

³³ Hebrews 2:14

³⁴ Hebrews 2:14-15

Now note verse 16, “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.”³⁵

Christ is not an angel. He is not a condescending angel because it is impossible for an angel to be our savior. It is not possible for an angel to redeem us since they do not have blood to shed for sin. But Jesus Christ became flesh and blood and is of the very seed of woman, of Abraham, of Isaac, of David and of Mary.

You have record of Jesus’ human genealogy given to us in the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke. The genealogy of Joseph is in Matthew, chapter one and the genealogy of Mary in Luke, chapter three. The genealogy of Joseph goes back to Abraham, through David and through Solomon.

The genealogy of Mary must go back to Abraham and on to “Adam, which was of God.” This is to show that Christ was of the seed of Eve in fulfillment of the Messianic promise given to her in the Garden. But the line back to David is through Nathan, the oldest son of David. The reason this is given is that Christ received His throne rights from Mary, a descendent of Nathan. The Davidic throne rights of Solomon were lost with the sin of Jeconiah, (see Jeremiah, chapter twenty-two and verse thirty). The genealogy of Joseph is given to us because the Law of Moses required that a woman must marry a man within her tribe in order to receive her inheritance (see Numbers 36:3, 8-9). Christ could not inherit anything from Joseph, because he was not His father.

So Christ is the fulfillment of the prophecy the Lord made there in the Garden, that the seed of woman would crush the head of the serpent. All down through the centuries of time God has brought forth and preserved the seed of Adam, that Christ might be partakers of the very nature that you and I have, human bodies. We are descendants of Adam. Christ is a descendant not of Adam, but his body came from a woman who was a descendant of Adam. He has a specially prepared body in which there is no sin. But that body was given to him by a woman who was a descendant of Adam. So, all those Old Testament types and prophecies were fulfilled by the physical birth and a physical body given to Jesus Christ.

But He must have a sinless body.

I have already expressed something of the dilemma, the problem that many people entertain in their mind and it is a real legitimate problem. How can a sinful woman bring forth a sinless body?

Mary was a sinful woman. In Luke, chapter one and verse 47, Mary refers to “God my Savior.” She needed a Savior because, as I have said, she was of Adam and Eve and was born under the curse of sin. How can it be possible then for a sinful woman to produce a sinless body?

³⁵ Hebrews 2:16

Well, there is a marvelous thing taught in the Bible and that is that God is so holy that when He touches something He makes it be holy. Go back again to the burning bush in the third chapter of Exodus. You remember Moses saw the bush burning and he approached unto it because he wanted to find out what was happening. There was a voice that came out of the burning bush that said, “put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”³⁶

What made that cursed ground to be holy ground? It was because of the presence of God. So it is that wherever God dwells, it is holy. Wherever He manifests Himself, it is made to be holy. You have that in the Old Testament Tabernacle and the Temple. In the Gospel of Matthew, in the eighth chapter, Jesus touches the lepers and healed them.

Now one of the worst things you could do, according to the Law of Moses and in the days of our Lord, was to touch a leprous body. There were some very strict rules about anyone who had leprosy because it was a very contagious disease and so they had to isolate themselves from everyone else. Even if they went walking down the road they had to walk on the side of the road where no one else was. They couldn't let their shadow fall on anyone else because of the contagious nature of the disease. The leprous person must always keep themselves separate from others, under threat of death, because of the danger of someone being contaminated by the disease.

But here Jesus Christ does something that no one else had ever dared to do. He touched the leper and the leper is made to be whole.

There is another case, a beautiful illustration of this, when the woman who had an issue of blood for many years and the Word of God tells us “had suffered many things of physicians.”³⁷ The issue of blood caused her to be unclean. She could not go into the Temple. She dared not go into the Temple to worship, because she was unclean. But we read in the ninth chapter of Matthew, when the woman touched but the hem of the Lord's garment, she was healed and made to be clean. Another time, you have Him touching the eyes of the blind.

In Mark the sixth chapter, we have a whole multitude of people made clean. I am reading Mark the sixth chapter and verse 56. “And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.”³⁸

Here are people who were sick and crippled and because of that were considered to be unclean. But simply by touching the hem of the Lord's garment they were made to be clean.

³⁶ See Exodus 3:5

³⁷ See Mark 5:26

³⁸ Mark 6:56

So the angel told Mary, “That holy thing that is conceived in you...”³⁹ It was not possible for the blood of Mary to contaminate Christ, but rather, Jesus, because He is the very Holy God, His blood sanctified Mary and so that which came forth out of her womb was the sinless body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Now it must be a body, because He must have sinless blood. Peter makes great emphasis on that. He tells us in First Peter chapter one, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers: But with the precious blood of Christ, as a Lamb without blemish and without spot.”⁴⁰

He tells us again that Christ was a man who, in there was no guile, or no sin.⁴¹ He totally is without sin. It is the precious, sinless blood of Jesus Christ that is the only means of redeeming us from our sins. There is no other way whereby we could be redeemed, but by the precious blood of Christ, the sinless blood of Christ.

God, through the marvelous means of the incarnation, brought about a human body. How it could be done is amazing and inconceivable, but He was born of a virgin and conceived by the Holy Spirit of God, became sinless flesh and dwelt among us.

Not only was it necessary for Christ to have a human body in order to be our Redeemer Savior, but it is also necessary in order for us to have a hope of a resurrection.

The blessed hope of the resurrection is that Christ, who died and was buried, was resurrected. The same body that went into the grave came out of the grave. In the resurrection, we will be like Christ, just as He came forth from the grave we also will come forth from the grave in a glorified body.

Now if it were an angel that died, you know, if it were possible for an angel to die and then be put into a grave, then you legitimately could ask, “What benefit is that to me? What comfort or assurance is that to me for an angel, who is an eternal being, to come out of the grave?”

But when they put the lifeless human body of Christ into the grave and when that very same body came forth out of that grave, as a real physical body that can talk, walk, which you can see and touch, that is a great encouragement and comfort to the saints of God concerning our resurrection. Jesus Christ is the first fruits of our resurrection. He is the proto-type. Just as He came forth from the grave so also shall every one of God’s people come forth from the grave with changed, glorified bodies; sown in weakness but raised in strength; sown in dishonor but raised in honor, like unto our Lord and Savior.⁴²

³⁹ See Luke 1:35

⁴⁰ See 1 Peter 1:18-19

⁴¹ 1 Peter 3:10

⁴² See 1 Corinthians 15:43

So the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is essential to the hope of our bodily resurrection. It is essential in order for us to have a hope and comfort concerning the resurrection of our own bodies.

There is another reason why Jesus Christ must have a literal human body. I hope the Holy Spirit will help us to understand the preciousness of this truth and the importance of His human nature. It is that in order to qualify Him to be our Great High Priest, to be a faithful high priest, it was necessary for Him to have human flesh and blood.

In the fourth chapter of Hebrews Paul talks about this. He tells us:

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God; let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.⁴³

What have been your problems through this week? What sin have you had to wrestle with? What are your problems today? What do you fear? What do you have need of?

Let me tell you. We have a Great High Priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He is not some type of super human being. He is the God-man with a real human body. What a great comforting, encouraging thought it is when we read in the 11th chapter of the Gospel of John that Jesus Christ wept at the tomb of Lazarus.⁴⁴

He is no less concerned today for all the problems and afflictions of His people.

There is a false teaching that Christ is too busy to be concerned with our problems. You may sometimes think there is some justifiable reason to think that way. But I will tell you that God brought about the incarnation of Christ whereby He prepared for His Son, Jesus, a special body. That very body that suffered and died upon the cross; that body that was buried and in the grave for three days and three nights and then came forth, that very same Jesus Christ in His glorified body, now sits at the right hand of God. He is there for the very express purpose of making intercession for us as our advocate, as the Great High Priest for all of His people.

Paul said in view of all that, wherefore, “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens...let us come unto him boldly.”⁴⁵

He also tells us in the seventh chapter of the Book of Hebrews, “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”⁴⁶

⁴³ Hebrews 4:14-15

⁴⁴ See John 11:35

⁴⁵ See Hebrews 4:14, 16

⁴⁶ Hebrews 7:25

We are yet in these old sinful bodies and we must deal with stress, persecutions, afflictions and numerous other problems. We still live in a sin cursed world and have to constantly deal with the infirmities of the flesh. But there is a resource that God's people have, whereby we are given assurance that He is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God because He ever liveth to make intercession for us, and is touched with the feelings of our infirmities.

Were you ever so poor that you were born in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes?

Very few people have ever been that poor.

Have you ever been so distressed that you would cry out as He did in the Garden of Gethsemane, whereby His sweat became like drops of blood? Have you ever prayed as He prayed? Have any of us ever prayed under such agony, under such burden as He prayed for us? Have any of us ever suffered, as He suffered for us?

I think that Paul addresses that very issue in the 12th chapter of Hebrews. He rebukes all of us. He is speaking about the suffering and death of Christ in verse two, then in verse three he says, "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners,"⁴⁷ Christ endured the false accusations of sinners, "against himself." Paul instructs us to be faithful "lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."⁴⁸

God knows that human nature becomes weary. Paul writes several times to the saints in the early churches to "be not weary in well doing." You see, the problems of life just wear us down sometimes.

So Paul writes, "Be not weary in well doing," "lest ye be weary and faint in your minds."⁴⁹

Now note what he says in verse four of the twelfth chapter of Hebrews; "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."⁵⁰

Where are the nail prints in our hands? Where are the stripes on our backs? Some of God's people have suffered severe persecution, but none have ever had to endure what Christ endured for us on the cross. Some Christians have been faithful, even unto death. But even in their hour of death, in the hour when it seemed they were abandoned by everyone and were alone in the hands of their cruel persecutors, their heads to be cut off or their bodies to be torn apart by the lions, they had the blessed comfort of knowing that their Lord Himself had suffered, in like fashion had suffered pain, by His death on the cross. He knew not only of the shame and humiliation, but also the desertion by friends and the suffering in His body. He knew what pain was. Christ knew what it was to

⁴⁷ Hebrews 12:3

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ See 2 Thessalonians 3:13; Hebrews 12:3

⁵⁰ Hebrews 12:4

experience the agony of the cross, the most painful death known at that time. So, now we have Christ, in His glorified human body; the same body, but glorified now, that same Jesus, the God-man, as our Great High Priest.

So we are to flee unto Christ, to run unto Him, as a child who has been hurt flees to its mother knowing that of all the people in the world, that one person will show him love and sympathy. The injured child knows that she who has borne him, who has nursed and cared for him, though all others might forsake him, he knows assuredly his mother will show compassion. So the child runs to its mother in full confidence of her protection, healing and consolation.

But, oh, we have one who is our Eternal Father, who has given to us His Son to be our Savior and Redeemer. Christ has identified Himself with us in that He took on a human body, flesh and blood, as you and I have, lived in that human body, died in that human body and in that now glorified body, He sits as our Great High Priest to make intercession for us. That Christ, who said, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb.13:5). That very Christ on whom we are told to cast “all your care upon Him; for he careth for you” (I Pet. 5:7). That same Christ is our Great High Priest. Paul then tells us, “Seeing then we have a Great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb. 4:14-16) Hallelujah! What a Savior! What a Great High Priest the saints of God have.

The world celebrates His birth. To them it is but a festival, a pagan festival at the most. Let me read a statement made by Charles Spurgeon. He said, “The Roman Catholics may well celebrate their Christmas for it is of papal origin, but there is no reason for Protestants to do so.” (Mr. Spurgeon used the term, Protestants, to include all who are not Catholics) “For it is neither holy nor appointed by God.”

God’s people have much more to rejoice about than just the virgin birth of Christ our Saviour. He was born, not on December the 25th as the world claims, but probably in early September, but whatever the date, the facts are true. He was born of the virgin and became flesh to identify with us. So we should worship Him whom God the Father has sent forth to be our Redeemer and Savior, to be our Great High Priest. We should be encouraged to ease our burdens upon Him who says he cares for us because He was as much human as we are, yet without sin, and is touched with the feelings of infirmities.

Let us pray.