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It's Not Just About the Baby Jesus



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #233 ~

Christmas, one of the biggest holy days of the year, is celebrated by billions of people all over the world. And what's it all about? We know it's not about the food, presents, Christmas songs, or family get-togethers. As that oft quoted saying goes – *"Jesus is the reason for the season."* The true Christmas message is not just about the baby Jesus, but about His entire life and purpose. Let's look at some passages from God's word that make this crystal clear.

Matthew 1:21-23 – *"She* (Mary) *will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins… they shall call His name 'Immanuel,' which translated means, 'God with us.'"* In this passage, the angel reveals to Joseph that Mary will be the mother of Jesus, and that He is not just her son, the son of man, but also the Son of God. Jesus is God in the flesh, and His purpose is to be the Savior, to pay for people's sins, which He did when He died on the cross. Not only that, but Jesus is Immanuel, and He was with the people at His 1st coming, and He will be with us again at His 2nd coming. In fact, *"… we*

shall always be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 5:17

Matthew 2:6 – *"'And you Bethlehem, land of Judah… out of you shall come forth a ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.'"* Jesus was born in that little town of Bethlehem, and His purpose is to rule over the people of Israel. The prophet Micah tells us, *"At that time He will be great to the ends of the earth. This One will be our peace"* (Micah 5:4-5). During this church age, Jesus is bringing peace to the hearts of individual people, and then during the millennial kingdom, He will bring peace to the whole world, at which time He will be a great and glorious King. *"The Lord will be the King over all the earth."* Zechariah 14:9

Luke 1:31-33 – *"You* (Mary) *will bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."* Again, we read that Jesus was a baby, and that He is both God and man. Jesus is great, and in the age to come, everyone will know He is the greatest person on the planet. That's because He will be perfectly reigning over Israel and the entire earth, a reign that will go on forever.

Luke 1:46 – *"My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior."* Luke 1:31-33 tells us that Mary knew she would be the mother of Jesus, the One who would be the eternal King. From Luke 1:47, we learn that she saw God as her Savior, for it was by the saving work of Jesus that her sins were forgiven. She also saw God (Jesus) as her Lord, the One who was Lord of her everyday life, and led her in the work she did for Him. Mary also understood the larger picture, that God did not just do great things for her but would do mighty deeds for all His people, earthly and eternal blessings based on the promises He made to Abraham – *"As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants forever."* Luke 1:55

Luke 1:67-79. *"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us*

and accomplished redemption for His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us…" This is Zechariah's song, a passage focused on three major promises God made to Israel that also relate to Gentiles. There's the Davidic Covenant, God's promise to David that an eternal King, Jesus Himself, would reign over Israel, and bring redemption, *"salvation from our enemies"* (Luke 1:71). Many 1st century Jews expected Jesus to deliver them from their Roman enemies, but the full realization of this promise will not be seen until He reigns as King during the 1000-year kingdom age.

There's the Abrahamic Covenant, God's promise to Abraham that He would greatly bless Israel, resulting in the whole world being blessed. (Gen. 12:1-3). This promise has a near and far fulfillment, for Israel was blessed in the past, but the lasting fulfillment will be seen in the ages to come. Finally, there's the New Covenant, the promise to Jeremiah that God would save people from their sins. This promise is personal and is for those Jews and Gentiles who repent of their sins and believe that Jesus Christ died for them and rose again. These will experience the *"knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins."* Luke 1:77

All these promises are fulfilled through Jesus Christ. Only through Christ, the Lord, Savior, and King, can any person love God, live for Him, and be truly blessed. And only by Christ can this world be blessed, whether that's now or in the coming kingdom ages. That's why the main message of Christmas is Jesus Christ, whether that relates to the past, present, or future. As Zechariah concluded, *"The Sunrise from on high will visit us, to shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."* Luke 1:78-79

There's much more to this magnificent, heart-changing, life-changing, world-changing story.

Luke 2:8. *"There were some shepherds…"* These lowly shepherds were wonderfully surprised that silent night by these angels. One angel told them about Jesus – *"I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you*

a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). Then there's *"the heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased'"* (Luke 2:13-14). These lower-class shepherds didn't just hear about Jesus' birth, they got to see Him. They were doing the most important work, for they were witnesses of Jesus, worshipers of Jesus, and proclaimers of Jesus. Luke 2:15-20

Luke 2:25-35. *"My eyes have seen Your salvation"* (Luke 2:30). There's Simeon, a godly old man, who was *"looking for the consolation of Israel"* (Luke 2:25). Simeon knew all about the promises to the Jews about this baby who would be the Messiah, the Savior and King who would bring salvation, blessing, comfort, and peace to both Jews and Gentiles. Simeon is super-blessed, for not only does He see the Messiah, but He is able to hold Him in his arms.

Luke 2:38. *"… looking for the redemption of Jerusalem."* Anna was a godly old woman who was looking for the Messiah. The moment Anna saw Jesus, she knew He was the Messiah, the One she had been praying and fasting about for many, many years. She *"began giving thanks to God"* (Lk. 2:38), for she knew Jesus was the only One who could bring redemption, salvation, and great blessing to Jerusalem and the people of Israel, as well as to the entire world.

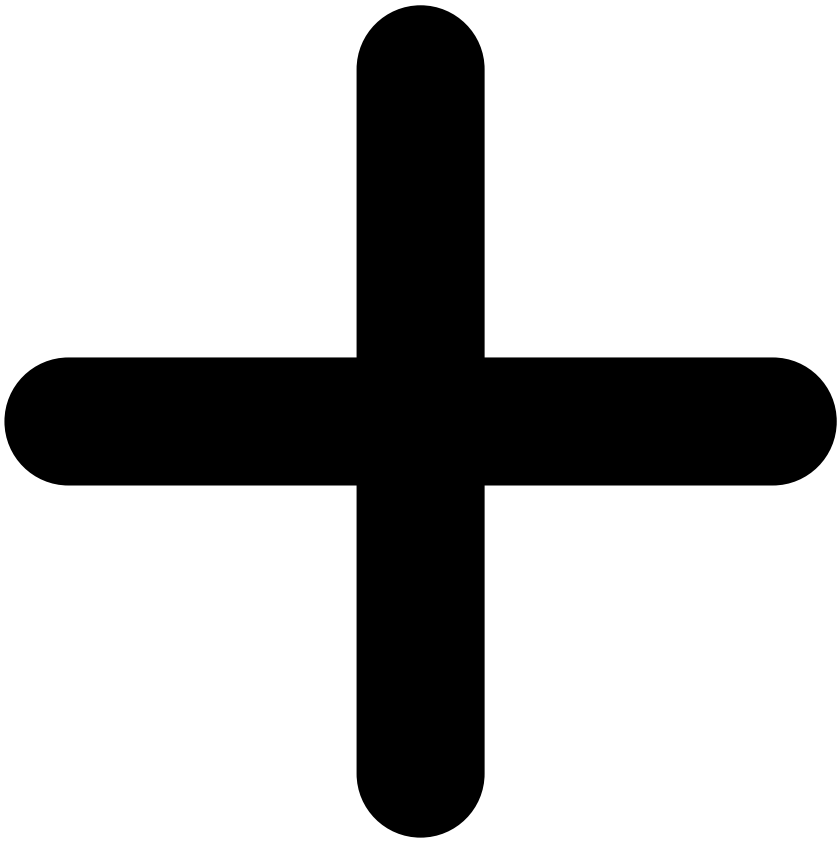
Revelation 12:5. *"She gave birth to a Son, a male child, who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and her child was caught up to God and His throne."* Speaking of the birth of Jesus and His ascension into heaven, this end-time's, big-picture verse focuses on the fact that He will be a King and will rule the nations. This, of course, is speaking of the millennial kingdom age, when "*God* (Jesus) *is the King of all the earth… God reigns over the nations."* Psalm 47:7-8

The Christmas message is about Jesus, and not just the baby Jesus. It's about Jesus being the Son of God and the son of man. It's about who

He is, His person, and what He does, His work. It talks about three key promises God made to man, and they are only fulfilled through Jesus Christ. It tells us that Jesus is the Savior, and He did His work as the Savior at His 1st coming. It tells us that He is the King, and He will do His work as the King when He reigns over the world at His 2nd coming. It tells us that He is the Lord, and He is always the Lord, over the world, over the church, and over our own lives. It tells us that Jesus is *"Immanuel"* which means *"God with us."* And He is now with us through the Spirit, but He will be with us in the future, from that moment of the rapture, and forevermore. *"I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."* John 14:3

Isaiah 9:6-7 – *"A Child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government shall rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this."*

P.S. Christmas is a most wonderful time of the year to think about the person of Jesus Christ, who He is, and all He has done for us. We should be so filled with love, joy, and hope. Here are three Christmas posts from the past: *"First Coming to Church Age to Second Coming"*, *"The Christmas Story and Christ's Second Coming"*, *"The True Meaning of Christmas."*



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