

## **The Wednesday Word, December 13, 2017: More Light from the Manger**

*Luke 2:12. "And this shall be a sign unto you; You shall find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."*

I sometimes think there should be a 'Selah' (pause and think of that) after this verse.

Think of how God entered our world, not as a mighty invader from outer space but as a baby, a little, helpless, human baby. He didn't arrive as a war Lord filled with anger. He arrived as a harmless infant dependent on others to feed and provide for Him! The Angel sent the Shepherds to Bethlehem saying this shall be a sign unto you, you shall find the baby.

And what did they find? They found the baby. What was the sign? The sign was a baby ... a helpless, humble baby. Yes indeed, but what a sign! This baby in a feeding trough for cattle was none other than the Mighty God Himself! This sign, therefore, points to immense truths about God. Sometime today, I hope we can take time to meditate on this.

Although He was fully and truly God from all eternity, He became human. He was not half-God and half-man, but fully God and fully man. Although He laid aside the outward glory and trappings of deity, He did not cease to be God. The Lord Jesus Christ was and is the God-man, two natures joined together in one Person.

He came here to save us. What we could not do to bring about our salvation He did for us. If He had not been born as a human, He could not have represented us. For us to be saved required that we have a substitute to die in our place and stead. One of us, a human, had to die.

Many battles have been fought over this basic truth of the divine/human saviour. In the first century, the battle raged over his genuine humanity. Did God really become a man? Some people said no. But 1 John 4:2 reminds us if we deny the humanity of Jesus Christ, we are not Christians.

Our friends the Jews do not believe that God became a man. They may occasionally say nice things about Jesus but they vigorously deny that he was God manifest in the flesh. Such a thought is blasphemy to them. The Hindus do not believe that Christ is the Mighty God incarnate. In their religion, Jesus may perhaps be a god, one among millions of gods, but they don't believe that Jesus is the human revelation of the Supreme Deity.

For Christians, Luke 2:12 teaches us that the Lord from heaven entered this earth as a human ... a tiny, helpless, little baby. He did not rent a body to be used and be discarded after 33 years. No, He joined Himself to humanity and became fully and genuinely human. As Luther said, 'The mystery of the humanity of Christ, that He sunk Himself into our flesh, is beyond all human understanding.'

An unknown writer wrote,

"If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an instructor.

If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist.  
If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist.  
If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer.  
But our greatest need was for a substitute, so God sent us the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

And that's the Gospel Truth!