Outline Notes and References – The Birth of Christ

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Reading – Luke 2 v 1 - 20

Jesus Christ, the Word of God, must be our foundation (1 Corinthians 3 v 11) and our guide by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1 v 79, John 16 v 13). We must not be the followers of traditions of men.

“The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.” Deuteronomy 29 v 29

Vital importance of having a scriptural and spiritual view of Christ. “What saith the Scripture?” is a most important question (Romans 4 v 3). The scriptures are able to make us “wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 3 v 15)

A date is not stated in Scripture for Christ’s birth, and there is no specific commandment to observe a day (nor is it forbidden either) – see Romans 14 v 6. If we are to keep the day – it must be unto the Lord.

- Mary pondered these things in her heart (Luke 2 v 19)
- Shepherds glorified and praised God (Luke 2 v 20)

Beware of pagan idolatry and excess (25 December was a pagan high feast – Saturnalia, Yule). Many traditions like green tree etc. are of pagan origin, and not from the Bible. Warning in Scripture about excess, drunkenness, and revelling (Galatians 5 v 21, 1 Peter 4 v 3).

Beware of images of Christ, Angels, Mary + Child – these lead away from the scriptural truth in Christ. Images of Christ tend to either superstition or teaching that He is only like ourselves.

Exodus 20 v 3 – 5; Deuteronomy 4 v 9 – 19

- Pre-eminence of the Word, but no similitude seen. Images forbidden in worship.

What does the Bible say about the appearance of Christ?

- Humanity – Isaiah 52 v 14, 53 v 2-3,
- Divinity – Isaiah 6, Ezekiel 1, Revelation 1 and 6 v 15-17) – Christ is now in glory at right hand of Father.

Jesus’ birth prophesied from Genesis 3 v 15, 15 v 5 – 6 and in many parts of scripture. Connection with the bringing of peace – Micah 5 v 2 – 5. Peace between an angry holy God and sinners.

Incarnation and Virgin Birth – Matthew 1 v 18 – 23, Luke 1 v 31 – 35. The name of Jesus and His mission – “he shall save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1 v 21)

The Mystery of godliness revealed - God manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3 v 16) – truly man, yet truly God. (Hebrews 1 and 2; 1 John 5 v 20) As such Jesus is worshipped.

His condescension – “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 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: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2 v 5 - 11

Mary and Simeon took up the baby Jesus in their arms (Luke 2 v 25 – 32). By faith those who saw Him and believed (Luke 2 v 25 – 32) – blessing upon those who has not seen and yet have believed (John 20 v 29). Hatred of many others, even those who consulted the scriptures – Herod (Matthew 2 v 16) and later the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Scriptural order of birth and presentation in the Temple (Luke 2), followed by the visit of the Wise Men (Matthew 2) – tends to be confused by traditions of religious men. So many other truths are confused in the minds and teaching of many churches and pastors. Let us beware of the enemy who seeks to sow confusion. The whole armour of God includes the Truth and the Word of God (Ephesians 6 v 13 - 17). Let us rightly divide the Word in our ministry “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.” (2 Timothy 2 v 15)