

The Salvation of God

Let us pray:

Heavenly Father, we join our prayer with the Psalmist: Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. O Lord, may the words of my lips and the meditations of all our hearts be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and Redeemer. Amen.

Introduction:

Happy Christmas! I have always loved this time in the life of the Church calendar!

What has been your experience of the season of Christmas? Is it your family celebrations?

Do you have pleasant memories of previous Christmas celebrations?

Not everyone does. Do you remember waking to the news when cyclone Tracy had destroyed Darwin on Christmas day in 1974?

The reality is that the Christmas Season for most people are a mixture of experiences, some of which are fantastic, and others you wouldn't wish upon anyone.

Even today – only a few weeks ago, society was starting to embrace with anticipation that we will all be 'home for Christmas' has been derailed by the insidious coronavirus latest variant. Some families are hurting as children, grandchildren – are forced to isolate. There is no doubt there are hurting people who are have had their hopes dashed about joining with other family and friends this Christmas.

Saying the above, you and I are here today to celebrate the birth of the Saviour, the incarnation of God. The incarnation is the theological term for when God became man. A celebration every Christmas is to recall has the reason behind Jesus being sent into the world. The Christian celebration of Jesus further reveals how the LORD brought His plan of salvation; in short, Christmas is part of the Salvation history.

Let me explain:

An examination of the Biblical reference concerning the Birth of Christ, whether they be a prophecy from the Old Testament, Accounts front the Gospels or insights from the New Testament letters, all reveal one inescapable truth: The Birth of Jesus – is the birth of the Saviour! The long-promised Messiah.

An excursion through the scriptures and see God's desire to save!

1. May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, ² that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations. Psalm 67:1-2

Deliverance

2. when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, ⁵ he saved us, Titus 3

Deliverance

**3. Luke 2:10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,^[a] the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,^[b] praising God
Deliverance, but this time a different dimension is added Deliverance for the bond of sin.**

4. so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, Hebrews 9:28

This Deliverance from sin, this salvation comes through the atoning sacrifice – as the Christ bears all sins on the cross.

During this Christmas celebration – I wish to highlight that Jesus was more than a good teacher:

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Saviour and of Christ Jesus our hope, 1 Timothy 1:1

The world requires a saviour

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, 2 Timothy 1:1

Only God can give life – hence the incarnation -Jesus is God who became man
Romans 5:9-10

Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God.^[a] ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will his life save us.

Deliverance from being alienation that is being reconciled to God – the work of the Saviour!

1 Peter 1:15

Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; God is holy and his plan of salvation which includes the Birth of the Christ was so that we could come into his presence.

Acts 2:47

praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

No one can save themselves – it is the work of God the gospel was being proclaimed and people heard what God was saying and turned to him.

1 Corinthians 1:18

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Ephesians 2:5

even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ^[a]—by grace you have been saved—

Titus 3:5

he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy,

God's plan of salvation was out of his faithful love; God grace freely bestowed upon all who call upon His Name.

God's action plan is rescuing people from their sins and their consequences and bringing them into a salvation where they can experience blessing:

Luke 19:9

Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham.

Jesus has the power to save

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith,

Gospel – the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus!

People can fail to realize that the major need of humanity is for reconciliation with God. Hence we need a saviour. Reconciliation between humanity and God

means peace between rebellious humanity and the one true Holy God. As we experience this peace – this raises the possibility for others to also come into the peace of God through his Saviour – Jesus Christ – in short, they can also have their lives turned around.

Matthew 1

¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

Turning back to the nativity readings

²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The Name Jesus is et/y/mo/log/ically is **Yahweh is Salvation**

Resources:

- In Dictionary of Theology IVP
- Leon Morris – The Gospel According to Matthew - The Pillar New Testament Commentary.
- R T France – Matthew – Tyndal New Testament Commentaries.