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December 25th “Is it Christmas”?

By Chuck Richardson

Christmas is a sacred holiday to a good number of people on this planet. Many will celebrate Jesus' birth on this day as a religious ceremony. Should we? I read of a woman greeted as a favored one named Mary who would give birth to a child without the seed of a man, and you shall name him Jesus, and “HE will be great and will be called the Son OF THE MOST HIGH” [Luke 1:26-32]. I also read of this same Jesus being born in an animal pen and laid in a manger/animal trough, “because there was no room for them in the inn” [Luke 2:6,7]. And I read the shepherds in the fields were given the herald of HIS birth by the angel of the Lord [Luke 2:8-14]. These same shepherds went straight to the manger in Bethlehem to see the child Jesus and then went told others [Luke 2:15-18]. I read his parents Mary and Joseph would perform all the Law required for HIS position in the Hebrew community [Luke 2:21-38]. Matthew's account will tell of the visit of the magi/wise men from the east sometime around HIS second year and bringing valuable presents and worshipping HIM, they were “warned by God in a dream to not return to Herod but go to their own country another way”. [Matthew 2:1-12] Jesus' parents would flee to Egypt at the instruction of the angel of the Lord and remain there until the death of Herod [Matthew 2:13-15]. In all I read, though there were shepherds at Jesus' birth that may have worshipped HIM, no other came for the same, and reasonably later than HIS birth, the magi came to worship HIM, but again no other came for the same. I don't read of any later ceremonies celebrating HIS birth during HIS life on earth and read no first-century Christian celebration, command, or implication for such. So, in absence of a divine text teaching the command to celebrate Jesus Christ's birth, why do many celebrate HIS birth? History shows it was human ideology that made December 25th into a “mass” for Christ to compete with the pagan ritual of worshipping the sun, which already occurred on that date (see “Christmas, Encyclopedia Britannica).

The Bible had nothing to do with the formation of this doctrine, as even the Catholic Encyclopedia, New Advent, acknowledges: Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church. Irenaeus and Tertullian omit it from their lists of feasts; Origen...asserts that in the Scriptures sinners alone, not saints, celebrate their [gods] birthday (newadvent.org, Christmas).

Therefore, Christ-Mass has a steady practice from later adoption and tradition until this time. No Biblical Support! So, we must have a believing faith that Jesus was born miraculously, that HE was proclaimed by shepherds and worshipped by magi. That God HIS Father preserved HIM from the hands of Herod. That HE grew to an adult in order to live righteously among men, to teach and heal in preparation for HIS kingdom to come [Mark 1], I celebrate HIS birth every day unto that end, but God did not give us a day to celebrate HIS birth and further, we don't even know the day of HIS birth to celebrate. It is troubling that so much is invested in Jesus' birth while diminishing Jesus' death and resurrection.

So, much scripture is given as instruction for the celebration of Jesus' death and resurrection that it's amazing so many Christians remember HIS death in the Lord's Supper once a month, quarter, and year, yet I know the first century Christian remembered it every first day of the week [Acts 20:7].

Likewise, Jesus instructed partaking of the essential elements that represented His body [Matthew 26:26-28], and notice what Jesus instructed at the conclusion of the institution: But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." [29] I solemnly attend that celebration every first day of the week and I strive to focus on the reason for the death on a daily basis. In the prediction of HIS death, Jesus also said HE would be raised as well [Matthew 20:17-19].

Dear friend Jesus' resurrection is excitedly hopeful and in this, I celebrate as I do HIS death. I find peace in HIS promise to resurrect me someday [1Corinthians 15]. The need to celebrate HIS death and resurrection is overwhelmingly testified in scripture [Acts 2:22-36]. This is the reason the Sanhedrin arrested the Apostles and killed Stephen [Acts 4:1-3; 7], and the testimony of Jesus' death and resurrection was repeated everywhere the gospel was preached as recorded in the book of Acts [Acts 17:18,32; 23:6,8; 24:15,21; 26:23].

The New Testament is remarkably silent on Jesus' birth in comparison to HIS death and resurrection. The resurrection is declared as power [Romans 1:4; Philippians 3:10]. The resurrection is said to usher in eternal reward [1Peter 1:3; 1Corinthians 15:21; Revelation 20:6] Friend, this is a powerful inducement for me to celebrate HIS death and resurrection over HIS birth. Sure, as God planned our salvation Jesus had to be born for our salvation, but salvation would not be possible without Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection [Romans 6:3,4], and my new life would be impossible without this.

Therefore we conclude, thanks be to GOD HIS SON Jesus The Christ was born, but thanks even more to GOD HIS SON Jesus The Christ died and arose.