



The First Advent of Christ

When we want a deep problem to study, let us fix our minds on **the most marvelous thing** that ever took place in earth or heaven—the incarnation of the Son of God. (*18LtMs*, Ms 76, 1903, par. 18)



Luke 2:8–20

Biblical Prophecies

- ❖ Abraham; possession of land of Canaan; Israel; Jerusalem
- ❖ Jesus
- ❖ Nations
- ❖ End-time events

Prophecies of Christ

- ❖ Isaiah 61; Luke 4:18–21
- ❖ Isaiah 42; Matthew 12:15
- ❖ Isaiah 11
- ❖ Micah 5:2
- ❖ Genesis 49:10
- ❖ Isaiah 7:14

- ❖ Isaiah 9:1, 2; Matthew 4:12–16
- ❖ Isaiah 35:3–6; Matthew 11:2–6
- ❖ Isaiah 40:3–5; John 1:23
- ❖ Isaiah 53; Luke 4:28, 29
- ❖ Daniel 7:14; Luke 1:33
- ❖ Zechariah 11:12, 13; Matthew 27:3–9
- ❖ Daniel 9:24–27

- ❖ Exodus 12:46; Zechariah 12:10; John 19:31–37
- ❖ Leviticus 17:11; Matthew 26:28
- ❖ Psalm 22; John 19:23, 24

The mysteries of redemption, the blending of the divine and the human in Christ, his incarnation, sacrifice, mediation, will be sufficient to supply minds, hearts, tongues, and pens with themes for thought and expression for all time; and time will not be sufficient to exhaust the wonders of salvation, but through everlasting ages, **Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed soul.** New developments of the perfection and glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, will be forever unfolding. (*ST* November 24, 1890, par. 8)

Before Christ's first advent the world seemed indeed to have become the **grave for all piety**. It was Satan's seat; man was in the power of the great apostate, helplessly receiving his lies of God and of Christ as truth. The heavenly angels looked upon the world polluted by sin under the inhabitants thereof, and **thought how much easier it would be to exterminate it than to reform it.**

But the Son of God himself came to work a reformation. (*ST* April 15, 1897, par. 2)

Heaven's councils decided that Christ, the great Teacher, must himself come to the world. God had spoken through nature, through types and symbols, through patriarchs and prophets. Lessons must be given to humanity in the language of humanity. The messenger of the covenant, the Sun of Righteousness, must rise upon the world. His voice must be heard in his own temple. Christ must come to utter words which would be clearly and definitely understood. He, the Author of truth, must separate truth from the chaff of man's utterance, which had made it of none effect. The principles of God's moral government, and the plan of redemption, must be clearly defined. The lessons of the Old Testament must be fully set before men. (*ST* April 15, 1897, par. 3)

❖ Nature

❖ Types and symbols

❖ Patriarchs and prophets

- ❖ Language of humanity
- ❖ The principles of God's moral government
- ❖ The plan of redemption
- ❖ The lessons of the Old Testament
- ❖ Win the confidence of humanity

Man's terrible necessity demanded help without delay. Who met this necessity?—An illustrious teacher, the Son of God. The eternal Word came to our world **to win the confidence of humanity.** (*ST* April 15, 1897, par. 4)

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

(Galatians 4:4–6)

At the first advent of Christ, darkness, covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Light and truth seemed to have departed from among men, and Satan appeared to reign in undisputed power. Rival sects existed, and among those who professed to be the servants of God were displayed love of preeminence and strife for power and position. Souls who were desirous of light were filled with perplexity and sorrow. **Many were sighing, “What is truth?”** Ignorance prevailed, but many were looking for something better, looking for light that would illuminate the moral darkness of the world. They were thirsting for a knowledge of the living God, for some assurance of a life beyond the tomb. (*ST* January 20, 1890, par. 1)

He had selected the lowliest place in society. He was the Majesty of heaven, and he knew that the world would bear sway by magnificence, carrying everything before its display and grandeur; but Jesus honored those whom the world looked upon with contempt.

Christ's birthplace was devoid of conveniences, not to speak of riches and luxury. And his entire life in this world was in keeping with the humble home of his early experience. (*ST* January 20, 1890, par. 3)

Christ came just as prophecy had foretold. He was the “way, the truth, and the life,” and the beams of the Sun of Righteousness dispelled the moral darkness so that the honest in heart might see the truth. The absence of outward display and worldly grandeur, **called forth comments of disapprobation from the people.** Doubt and criticism met him on every side. Christ himself had chosen the human conditions of his life. (*ST* January 20, 1890, par. 3)

The Saviour of the world proposed that no attraction of an earthly character should call men to his side. The light and beauty of celestial truth alone should be the drawing power. The outward glory, the worldly honor, which attracts the attention of men, he would not assume. He made himself accessible to all, teaching the pure, exalted principle of truth as that which was only worthy of their notice. But although so humbly born, so unpretending in life, **God did not leave him without a witness.** (*ST* January 20, 1890, par. 4)

The **principalities of heaven** did him homage. Wonders in the heavens above and signs in the earth beneath attested his power and majesty. At his baptism **a voice from heaven** fell upon the ears of men, declaring, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” The bright glory of God in the form of a dove of burnished gold encircled him. John declared: “That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” (*ST* January 20, 1890, par. 4)

Christ came to save fallen man, and Satan with fiercest wrath met him on the field of conflict; for the enemy knew that when divine strength was added to human weakness, man was armed with power and intelligence, and could break away from the captivity in which he had bound him. Satan sought to **intercept** every ray of light from the throne of God. He sought to cast his shadow across the earth, that men might **lose** the true views of God's character, and that the knowledge of God might become **extinct** in the earth. He had caused truth of vital importance to be so mingled with **error** that it had lost its significance. The law of Jehovah was burdened with needless **exactions and traditions**, and God was represented as **severe, exacting, revengeful, and arbitrary**. (*ST* January 20, 1890, par. 6)

- ❖ Intercept every ray of light
- ❖ Lose true view of God's character
- ❖ Knowledge of God become extinct in earth
- ❖ Vital truths become mingled with error
- ❖ The law of God become burdened with needless exactions and traditions
- ❖ God represented as severe, exacting, revengeful, arbitrary

- ❖ As the people of God approach the perils of the last days, Satan holds earnest consultation with his angels as to the most successful plan of overthrowing their faith. He sees that the popular churches are already lulled to sleep by his deceptive power. By pleasing sophistry and lying wonders he can continue to hold them under his control. Therefore he directs his angels to lay their snares especially for those who are looking for the second advent of Christ, and endeavoring to keep all the commandments of God. (*4SP* 337.1)

- ❖ The Sabbath is the great question which is to decide the destiny of souls. . . .When death shall be made the penalty of violating our Sabbath, then many who are now ranked with commandment-keepers will come over to our side.
- ❖ We can separate many from Christ by worldliness, lust, and pride. They may think themselves safe because they believe the truth, but indulgence of appetite or the lower passions, which will confuse judgment and destroy discrimination, will cause their fall.
- ❖ Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with the cares of this life.

- ❖ “I will have upon the ground, as my agents, men holding false doctrines mingled with just enough truth to deceive souls. I will also have unbelieving ones present, who will express doubts in regard to the Lord’s messages of warning to his church. Should the people read and believe these admonitions, we could have little hope of overcoming them. But if we can divert their attention from these warnings, they will remain ignorant of our power and cunning, and we shall secure them in our ranks at last. God will not permit his words to be slighted with impunity. If we can keep souls deceived for a time, God’s mercy will be withdrawn, and he will give them up to our full control. (*4SP* 340.2)

- ❖ “We must cause distraction and division. We must destroy their anxiety for their own souls, and lead them to criticise, to judge, and to accuse and condemn one another, and to cherish selfishness and enmity. For these sins, God banished us from his presence; and all who follow our example will meet a similar fate.” (*4SP* 340.3)

He was pictured as one who could take pleasure in the sufferings of his creatures. The very attributes that belonged to the character of Satan, the evil one represented as belonging to the character of God. Jesus came to teach men of the Father, to correctly represent him before the fallen children of earth. Angels could not fully portray the character of God, but Christ, who was a living impersonation of God, could not fail to accomplish the work. The only way in which he could set and keep men right was to make himself visible and familiar to their eyes. That men might have salvation he came directly to man, and became a **partaker of his nature**. (*ST* January 20, 1890, par. 6)

The Father was revealed in Christ as altogether a different being from that which Satan had represented him to be. Said Christ, “Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” The love of Jesus, expressed for the fallen race in his life of self-denial and sufferings, is the manifestation of the Father’s love for a sinful, fallen world. Christ endured shame and grief and death for those who despised his love and trampled upon his mercy. He paid the debt of man’s transgression upon the cross of Calvary with his own precious blood. The men of his own nation, the leaders of the people, were so ensnared by the deceptions of Satan that the plan of redemption for a fallen race seemed to their minds indistinct and unexplainable. (*ST* January 20, 1890, par. 7)

Those who are seeking the righteousness of Christ will be dwelling upon the themes of the great salvation. The Bible is the storehouse that supplies their souls with nourishing food. They meditate upon the incarnation of Christ, they contemplate the great sacrifice made to save them from perdition, to bring in pardon, peace, and everlasting righteousness. The soul is aglow with these grand and elevating themes. Holiness and truth, grace and righteousness, occupy the thoughts. Self dies, and Christ lives in His servants. In contemplation of the word their hearts burn within them as did the hearts of the two disciples while they went to Emmaus and Christ walked with them by the way and opened to them the scriptures concerning Himself. (*CT* 341.2)

How few realize that Jesus, unseen, is walking by their side! How ashamed many would be to hear His voice speaking to them and to know that He heard all their foolish, common talk! And how many hearts would burn with holy joy if they only knew that the Saviour was by their side, that the holy atmosphere of His presence was surrounding them, and they were feeding on the bread of life! How pleased the Saviour would be to hear His followers talking on His precious lessons of instruction and to know that they had a relish for holy things! (*CT* 342.1)

When we want a deep problem to study, let us fix our minds on **the most marvelous thing** that ever took place in earth or heaven—the incarnation of the Son of God.

God gave His Son to die for sinful human beings a death of ignominy and shame. He who was Commander in the heavenly courts laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and clothing His divinity with humanity, came to this world to stand at the head of the human race as the pattern-man. He humbled Himself to suffer with the race, to be afflicted in all their afflictions. The whole world was His, but so completely did He empty Himself that during His ministry He declared, “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.” [Luke 9:58.] (*18LtMs*, Ms 76, 1903, par. 18)