

LORD AT YOUR BIRTH

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Long, long ago, in a faraway place, a triumph of insignificance was conceived. A teenage woman from an insignificant family was brought by her husband to an insignificant town on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Because of her advanced pregnancy, the keeper of an insignificant hostel put them up in his barn, since he had no vacancy. When her son was born, the only place for him to sleep was the livestock's stone feeding trough. Yet, in these unlikely surroundings was born the Son of God, Savior of the world, and Lord of all lords — Jesus the Messiah. Not everyone, however, was prepared to receive the good news.

John 1:45-46 (New Living Translation)

⁴⁵ Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him, "We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth."

⁴⁶ "Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "**Can anything good come from Nazareth?**"

"Come and see for yourself," Philip replied.

Do you know what it is to feel like an insignificant person leading an insignificant life? Have you ever wondered if anything great could ever become of you? Remember this: With God, all things are possible!

The story is found in the opening chapter of Luke's Gospel account...

Luke 1:26-45 (NLT)

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. ²⁸ Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

²⁹ Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. ³⁰ "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

³⁴ Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

³⁵ The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she's now in her sixth month. ³⁷ For nothing is impossible with God."

³⁸ Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her.

³⁹ A few days later Mary hurried to the hill country of Judea, to the town ⁴⁰ where Zechariah lived. She entered the house and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ At the sound of Mary's greeting, Elizabeth's child leaped within her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

⁴² Elizabeth gave a glad cry and exclaimed to Mary, "God has blessed you above all women, and your child is blessed. ⁴³ Why am I so honored, that the mother of my Lord should visit me? ⁴⁴ When I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. ⁴⁵ You are blessed because you believed that the Lord would do what he said."

One of the Christmas season's favorite carols is "Silent Night." John Freeman Young wrote the familiar third verse:

*Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.*

"Jesus, Lord at thy birth." It's an unusual statement — a revelation, really — one strongly supported in the Scriptures. What does this pronouncement tell us?

It tells us where He came from...

No one was clearer about this than John, the writer of the fourth Gospel account. John does not even bother to report about the birth of Jesus. Instead, he takes us all the way back to the beginning, to the creation of the world.

John 1:1-5 (NLT)

¹ *In the beginning the Word already existed.*

*The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.*

² *He existed in the beginning with God.*

³ *God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.*

⁴ *The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.*

⁵ *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

Our Lord was not only present at the creation of the world, He Himself was the Creator! His origin was not in this world. Jesus made this clear on several occasions, as quoted by John.

John 3:13 (NLT)

*No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has **come down from heaven**.*

John 6:38 (NLT)

*For I have **come down from heaven** to do the will of God who sent me, not to do my own will.*

John 6:51 (NLT)

*I am the living bread that **came down from heaven**.*

It tells us where He is going...

Jesus came from the Father in Heaven and He returned to the Father.

John 13:1 (New International Version)

*It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and **go to the Father**. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.*

John 14:12 (NIV)

*I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because **I am going to the Father**.*

John 14:28 (NLT)

*Remember what I told you: I am going away, but I will come back to you again. If you really loved me, you would be happy that **I am going to the Father**, who is greater than I am.*

He is the Ruler of Heaven and Earth and the entire universe — seen and unseen, known and unknown. He is seated now at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

It tells us why He came...

His visit to our world was temporary, in order to prepare a permanent home for us in His.

John 14:1-3 (NIV)

¹ *Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.* ² *In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.* ³ *And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come back and take you to be with me** that you also may be where I am.*

He came to save us from our sins, to take away our judgment and our sentence of death. He came to set us free. His coming was an intervention of mercy and grace.

It tells us why He is worshiped...

The angels worshiped at His arrival. The shepherds worshiped at His birth. The magi worshiped at His feet.

He is not worshiped today for His teachings, though they were profound. Some may worship Him for His miracles, though He said that those who follow Him would do the same and even greater works.

However, since His resurrection from the dead, His followers have recognized His essential being and have worshiped Him also, proclaiming, *"My Lord and my God!"* (John 20:28)

It tells us why we trust Him to save us...

He was in this world, but not of this world. *"He faced all of the same testings we do, yet He did not sin."* Hebrews 4:15 (NLT) He offered His sinless life as a ransom for our sinful lives.

Thus, Isaac Watts penned the lyrics:

*Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in;
When Christ the mighty Maker died
For man the creature's sin.*

If the Creator took our place and paid our debt, who can successfully contend with Him?

Romans 8:31-39 (NLT)

³¹ *What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?* ³² *Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?* ³³ *Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself.* ³⁴ *Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.*

³⁵ *Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?*

³⁶ *(As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.")* ³⁷ *No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.*

³⁸ *And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.* ³⁹ *No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

It tells us about ourselves, too...

It tells us something significant about ourselves!

It is in the nature of the plan of God, who sees the end from the beginning, and who calls those things that do not yet exist as though they do, that the births that He generates are not merely seeded with destiny, but enveloped in destiny!

Galatians 4:1-7 (Jewish New Testament)

¹ *What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a minor he is no different from a slave, even though he is the **legal owner** of the estate;* ² *rather, he is subject to guardians and caretakers until the time previously set by his father.* ³ *So it is with us — when we were "children" we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe;* ⁴ *but when the appointed time arrived, God sent forth his Son. He was born from a woman, born into a culture in which legalistic perversion of the Torah was the norm,* ⁵ *so that he might redeem those in subjection to this legalism and thus enable us to be made God's sons.* ⁶ *Now because you are sons, God has sent forth into our hearts the Spirit of his Son, the Spirit who cries out, "Abba!" (that is, "Dear Father!").* ⁷ ***So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if you are a son you are also an heir.***

1 Corinthians 3:22-23 (New Living Translation)

²² ***Everything belongs to you,*** ²³ *and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.*

Jesus became Savior by the life that He lived, but He was born Lord before He could do a single thing. He is not Lord because He *did* anything, but because of who He is (nature) and where He came from (origin). "Savior" reflects His achievement, but "Lord" reflects His essential destiny.

You may have much still to accomplish in your life (I know that I do), but if you have been born again by the Spirit of God, your essential destiny has already been established, and you also have been given titles to suit your divine origin and your divine purpose. God has not only called you to rely upon Him, but He has called you by the name(s) of your destiny in Christ. Consider these "callings":

He calls you a "child of God" (belonging to Him by birth).

John 1:10-12 (The Message)

*He was in the world,
the world was there through him,
and yet the world didn't even notice.*

*He came to his own people,
but they didn't want him.*

*But whoever did want him,
who believed he was who he claimed
and would do what he said,*

*He made to be their true selves,
their **child-of-God** selves.*

1 John 5:1 (NLT)

*Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has become a **child of God**.*

1 John 4:7 (NLT)

*Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a **child of God** and knows God.*

He calls you a saint (holy, like Him), as in Paul's final words to the church in Philippi (4:21-22):

²¹ *Greet all the **saints** in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send greetings.* ²² *All the **saints** send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.*

For God has said, "You shall be holy, because I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16).

He calls you a priest (for Him).

Revelation 1:6 (NLT)

*He has made us a **Kingdom of priests** for God his Father.*

Revelation 5:9-10 (NLT)

⁹ *And they sang a new song with these words:*

*"You are worthy to take the scroll
and break its seals and open it.*

*For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation.*

¹⁰ *And you have caused them to become
a **Kingdom of priests** for our God.
And they will reign on the earth."*

Revelation 20:6 (NLT)

*Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For them the second death holds no power, but they will be **priests of God** and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years.*

He calls you a servant/minister (representing Him).

Moses was called "a servant of God." King David was called a servant of God. Jesus was known as God's "holy servant." Paul, James, Peter, Jude, and John described themselves as servants of Christ. And we are called to follow in their steps.

Mark 9:35 (NLT)

*He sat down, called the twelve disciples over to him, and said, "Whoever wants to be first must take last place and be the **servant** of everyone else."*

Luke 22:26 (NLT)

*But among you it will be different. Those who are the greatest among you should take the lowest rank, and the leader should be like a **servant**.*

Paul testified that Jesus told him (Acts 26:16-17):

*Now get to your feet! For I have appeared to you to appoint you as my **servant** and witness. You are to tell the world what you have seen and what I will show you in the future.*

Each of these titles describes a special relationship that you have with Christ — as a child, a saint, a priest, and a servant. These titles have not been awarded based on your achievements-to-date, but based upon your trusting relationship. They describe, not your past, but your future in Christ.

You were born again, His child. You were born again ,a saint. You were born again, a priest. You were born again, a minister. Receive that! Accept that! Agree to that!

And walk it out, in the name of Him who was Lord at His birth.