

# Don't forget the birth of Jesus Christ

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**By Dave Havir**

BIG SANDY, Texas—How much attention do you give to the anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ?

Of course, students of the Bible realize that Paul told the Corinthians that they should commemorate the Lord's death until He came (1 Corinthians 11:26). Those of us in the Church of God heritage place a great deal of emphasis on the death of our Savior. Rightly so.

However, many of us have not placed an appropriate amount of attention on two other events in our Savior's physical life: His resurrection and His birth.

I realize that most of the people in the Church of God movement do not want to participate in the customs of Easter or Christmas. But does that mean that believers should avoid any thought of the historical events of Jesus' resurrection or His birth?

## **The resurrection**

More and more believers place a greater emphasis on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is encouraging.

Although the death of Jesus Christ is a vital step for salvation, His resurrection is the more-important step.

If Jesus went into the grave but did not come out of the grave, there would be no future resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12-18).

Someone may ask: When do these believers commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

My response: During the Days of Unleavened Bread.

## **The birth**

Makes sense, doesn't it? Believers celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ right on the heels of commemorating His death.

Someone may ask: Although I understand why believers celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, why should believers recognize the birth of Jesus Christ?

My response: Jesus' birth was important to the Father.

At this very moment in my mind, I can hear people quoting Ecclesiastes 7:1: The day of death is better than the day of one's birth.

(Remember that Ecclesiastes is generally regarded as an intense search for meaning and satisfaction in life on earth. Many of the statements reflect the author's frustrations as he sought to make sense about life. Hence, a believer should be careful to avoid using some of the earlier statements in the book of Ecclesiastes to formulate doctrine.)

Do you realize how much emphasis God placed on the Messiah's birth? Do you realize how many prophecies in the Old Testament applied to that birth?

Here is something else to consider. Although there are differences of opinion about how much God directs the events of a person's life, there is less debate about how much God intervened in the birth of Jesus.

People may argue about how much or about how little God was involved in many occurrences in the history of mankind, but most professing Christians agree that God micro-managed the birth of His Son.

In *The Prophecy Study Bible* Tim LaHaye lists 125 prophecies in the Old Testament about the first coming of Christ.

God gave details about the coming Messiah. Then He made it happen. As I said earlier, Jesus' birth was important to the Father.

### In the autumn

Someone could ask: When is the best time of the year to recognize the birth of Jesus Christ?

My response: In the autumn.

Many Bible students teach that Jesus was born in the autumn.

One example is the Companion Bible. In the margin of Luke 2:21 the author writes his opinion that Jesus was circumcised "on the last and great day of the Feast of Tabernacles" (page 1436).

Someone could ask: What is the best way to recognize the birth of Jesus Christ?

My response: During that time of the year, I recommend that a believer spend time reading the Old Testament prophecies about Jesus' first coming and then slowly digest the accounts of Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2.



**MANGER**—This manger at a dig site in Israel shows, according to archaeologists, that Jesus would not have lain in a wooden manger as depicted in Christmas stories. His would have been carved out of stone like this one at Megiddo. [Photo by Dixon Cartwright]

A believer can use the Feast of Tabernacles to consider how the Father is using Jesus Christ to usher in His Kingdom.

- Consider Jesus' birth.
- Consider Jesus' ministry: His actions and His words.
- Consider Jesus' death and resurrection.
- Consider Jesus' role today as Savior, High Priest, Apostle and Head of God's church.
- Consider Jesus' return as the King of Kings.
- Consider 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.

God brings salvation to mankind through Jesus Christ. It would be a shame for believers to ignore the awesome details and circumstances surrounding the beginning of Jesus' physical life.

It would be even a bigger shame for believers to ignore the power surrounding that magnificent event.