

The Metaphysics of Christmas

Vive la Difference!



Every person, place, story and event mentioned in the Bible represents some aspect of our own individual consciousness.

The Bible is the story of our soul's unfoldment.

The Christmas Story, as recorded in the Gospels according to Matthew (1:18-2:23) and Luke (1:26-38, 2:1-20), as well as the additional traditions we have tagged onto the holiday, represents the birth of a new level of awareness: the Christ Consciousness.

Through an understanding of the spiritual or metaphysical meaning of the symbols presented we can discern for ourselves the process by which we birth the Christ level of consciousness in our own being.

The fact that the gospels of Matthew & Luke tell two different stories can be discouraging to literalists who have gone a long way to reconcile the differences. But I say vive la difference! They speak to us at different stages in our own spiritual progress.

The Audience:

Matthew's gospel is primarily directed to Jewish Christians and "is a manual of Christian teaching in which Jesus Christ... is described particularly as the fulfiller and fulfillment of God's will disclosed in the old Testament." (The New Oxford Annotated Bible)

In contrast Luke "sets forth the words and works of Jesus as the divine-human Savior, whose compassion and tenderness extended to all who were needy. The universal mission of Jesus is emphasized..." (The New Oxford Annotated Bible)

Genealogy:

Matthew begins "The Genealogy of Jesus Christ" (vs. 1:1) with Abraham the father of the Jewish people.

Luke begins with Adam, the father of the human race (vs. 3:38.)

Revelation:

The revelation of the impending divine birth was made to Joseph in Matthew's Gospel (vs.1:18-21.)

In contrast the revelation is to Mary in the Book of Luke (vs. 1:26-31.)

Visitation:

The Christ child is visited by “wise men” in Matthew (vs. 2:1-12.)

This is compared to the “shepherds” in Luke (vs. 2:8-14.)

Birth Place:

Matthew indicates that the family lived in a house in Bethlehem (vs. 2:11.)

Luke places the birth in a manger “because there was no room for them in the inn.” (vs. 2:7.)

Home:

Matthew is clear that the family lived in Bethlehem. They escaped to Egypt first and then settled in Nazareth to protect the child (vs. 2:19-23.)

Luke places the family in Nazareth before the birth traveling to Bethlehem to “be enrolled.” (vs. 2:1.)

Addendum:

Herod’s evil and trickery are emphasized in the Book of Matthew (vs. 2:1-18.)

Whereas the special birth and the relationship of John the Baptist to Jesus (cousins) is brought out by Luke in the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth (vs. 1:5-25, 57-80.)



My gift to you, prepared by Rev. Matthew E. Long

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