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Christmas gifts



★ *Christmas Gifts*

① *Light..... ~*

② *Salvation .. –*

③ *Glory*

Christmas Gifts

With the coming of Christmas:

Without doubt, the birth of Christ is the birthday of mankind. Without the incarnation of Lord Jesus for our salvation, humanity would have remained under humiliation, subjected to the authority of death. By His glorious incarnation, Christ opened for mankind the only way for self-realization, happiness and glory.

How did the birth of Christ become humanity's birthday?



Shame of Sin

Human kind fell and was despised by Satan. In their self-centeredness, humans knew the pains of regret and lived under the shame of sin.

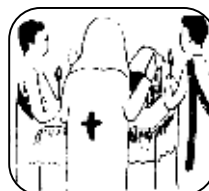
- * Is there a shame greater than separation from God?
- * Is there a shame worse than banishment from the Garden of Eden?
- * Is there a shame worse than disorder in human components?

Instead of being led by the Spirit within them, humans were led by their enemy Satan, and motivated by rebellious instinct?

Then came the pressure of lust. Instead of living in a pure spiritual love, Adam and Eve fell under the sway of sensuality. Instead of being filled with generous, self-sacrificing, pure, divine love, selfishness appeared to kill Abel the righteous. Instead of laying sacred foundations for marriage, the sons of God loved the daughters of the world.

Humanity was stricken by corruption. Adam and Eve came out to till the land. Thus, their eyes looked down to the earth of which they were physically made, not up to heaven where the divine breath exists, this breath that made a living soul out of dust.

Nature rebelled!
Animals rebelled!
The priest over all the creation...
Lost his dominion over everything...
So that a minute virus could kill him!
What a shame!



It is the fruit of sin!

Hope Of Salvation



Thanks be to the Lord. He did not stop when we stopped. He raised Adam and Eve from the pit of shame and despair, giving them the hope of salvation, and placing before them the image of the Savior. Out of woman's offspring came a man who would bruise the Serpent's head. But man's salvation would not be easy for this Omnipotent descended of woman's offspring. He would-through His divinity-be able to bruise the Serpent's head, yet the Serpent would bruise His heel, i.e. in His humanity, He would undergo pains and be crucified. This prophecy denotes that the Savior is a unique being; He takes His humanity from Eve, while His divinity is infinite. The two natures (**human and divine**) would be united in one nature, making out the "**unique natured**", the only one of His nature.

Mankind waited many centuries for this Savior, the Messiah. They lived in the sorrow of sin, yet in strong faith. They cried with Job: "***Nor is there any mediator between us, who may lay his hand on us both***". They groaned with Isaiah: "***He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor... Oh, that you would rend the heavens ... and come down***" (V – fl –).



Then Came Christ

He came with gifts for mankind:

- ☝ Light
- ✌ Salvation
- ☞ Glory

Light

He shone upon us who were sitting in darkness. By His light we came to know the light. He is the light of the world with His unique example, holy teaching, life-giving guidance. Man knew the path of light and became light. Man's mind was enlightened, as well as his heart through his continuous living with the Good Savior and Beloved Teacher. The Lord left us a living example and a Bible: the example to follow, and the Bible to learn from and to be enlightened by its words.

Salvation

He is the “**Savior of the World**” of the New Testament. Pharaoh gave Joseph the same title, for he saved the people from death by physical hunger resulting from the famine. Likewise, Christ saved us from death by spiritual hunger. He is the “**Second Adam**”: by the First Adam we died, while by the Second Adam we live and are saved. Our salvation was not easy, for it cost Him His precious blood and His broken body.

Glory

He is the source of glory. He grants glory to His children. He is high in heaven, yet, came down to earth. He took man up to heavenly Jerusalem to have fellowship in divine nature, and to have a legacy of perpetual immortality that never ends, never gets corrupted, never vanishes.

Come on to Christmas gifts,

contemplate them

and possess them!

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1 Light

The birth of Christ gave us:

“The people who sat in darkness saw great light”

John 1:9

With these words, the Divine Revelation explained an essential target of the glorious incarnation. Since the fall, humanity has entered into a dark world. It was the darkness of sin and the separation from God. Why? For ***“God is light, dwells in light, and is praised by angels of light”*** (Church hymns).

“God is light and in Him is no darkness at all”

John 1:9 He is ***“dwelling in unapproachable light”***

1 John 1:9

✂ **Sin is darkness :** The darkness of separation from God the light, the darkness of spiritual blindness, and the resulting blindness of man’s insight.

✂ **The sinner :** Is actually a blind man who cannot see himself, God, or the way.

Thus, he stumbles till he falls into the pit and dies. But repentance opens man’s eyes and the repentant is led by God’s Spirit to the way of salvation and Christ the Savior.

Did not the Lord say to us when He came to our earthly world: ***“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life”*** (John 1:9). ***“The light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does what is truth comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that they have been done in God”*** *John 1:9-11*

Living in Darkness

Mankind was under the heavy yoke of darkness before the coming of the light of life, the God Who appeared in the flesh. This darkness had many aspects.

1- Darkness of Mind

For many centuries, mankind imagined God as an idol that they worshipped him in the shape of a gold or stone statue, or in the shape of a strong creature such as Abis the Calf-god, and the serpent or in the shape of one of God's creations that are fundamental to human life such as the sun, the sea or fire. In this way, paganism proceeded haphazardly, trying to discover the Almighty God. Feeling no satisfaction or enlightenment, unable to hit the target, people worshipped an "**unknown God**" as was the case with Athens during the days of St. Paul.

2- Darkness of Instinct

The human mind dissolved, its contents scattered and its components clashed. Though humans had a conscience to lead them to the good, yet their instincts revolted leading them to the path of evil. Humans could not control these instincts or direct their energy. Hence, appeared the murderous instinct that killed Abel, the sexual instinct that drove God's sons towards the daughters of the world (**as well as Amnon towards his sister Tamar**), the possessive instinct that drove people towards destructive wars that sweep everything away.

What we see now of mad wars, hateful egotism, profane perversions, is a repetition of what humanity underwent before the coming of Christ, and what it can undergo when it abandons or disbelieves in Him... This may still happen in an age of more destructive and catastrophic weaponry.

3- Darkness of sin

The enemy of good predominated over humanity. He gave it the ability to invent evils: thus we heard about many offenses, some of which St. Paul tried to mention in his epistle to the church of Rome: "***For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness... (they) changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. Therefore, God also gave them up in to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator.. for this reason God gave them up to vile passions...***"

God gave them over to debased mind to do those things which are not fitting, being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy murder, strife deceit, evil-mindedness”... etc (Rom – – –).

Light Shone on them



Before Christ, humanity lived in the faint light of candles:

1- Prophets' words

They shone on humanity (**in a limited world, namely the Jewish one**), from time to time to instruct people in God's way and of the necessity of submitting to divine law as well as ethical law.

Laws multiplied, as well as rituals, sacrifices, washings and statutes, in the hope that they might do something to purify and enlighten mankind, but, this did not happen. Though the words were divine, the prophets' faithful and honest and human intentions were good in general yet the nature that was corrupted needed an ultimate and comprehensive renewal and the diseased eyes needed a healer, a creator to restore to them their lost sight.

How numerous are the prophecies that foretold the Savior and called humanity to yearn for His coming and to ask Him to come quickly. Even Balaam, the deviant false prophet, was used by the Lord. He shone through him with words of light on the humanity that was in darkness. Seeing the Lord afar, Balaam said, ***“I see Him, but not now, I behold Him, but not near: A Star shall come forth out of Jacob”*** (1 XP ~ –).

The sound of the groaning increased, and longings (**were inflamed for the coming of the Savior**).

2- Predications of Philosophers

Another candle shone on the horizon. It was the predictions of philosophers of different nations. We heard about Eastern and Western philosophers who groaned waiting for the heroic Savior. In our dear Egypt, we saw Akhnaton who believed in the one god, the immortal spirit that surpasses all existence for he is the first cause and origin.

St. Clement, head of the Theological School of Alexandria, called these philosophers **“The pagan prophets”** i.e. the Spirit of God worked in them, because of their yearning for right and truth, their wish to know the Creator, and their longings for the Savior. The

Spirit worked within them, so they know something about the Messiah, as a puzzle or a candle.

Perhaps, the Magi were the best examples of these. After Balaam's prophecy, they waited centuries for the shining star, believing that God, the light, must fulfil His promise and a star "**Will shine from Jacob.**"

Then Came The Light



When the Lord was born, His glory shone over the Shepherds who heard the good news. When Simeon the Elder took Him up in his arms he said: "**Lord, now You are letting Your servant to Your words; for mine eyes have seen You have prepared before the face of bring revelation to the Gentiles and the Israel**" / *N - √.*



depart in peace, according Your salvation which all peoples, a light to glory of Your people

Even the Lord said about Himself: "**I (- Q -).** For He is the way to see God, the way for divine fellowship and a life in

am the light of the world" and the light.

St. Athanasius sees in the Lord's incarnation "**The Good Teacher**" who did not expect His young sinful students to come up to His heavenly it level, for this is impossible. Rather, He came down to them in the flesh on a human level and without degrading into sin to take them up from the darkness of mud to the world of light, to make them enjoy the true God, the Incarnate Lord, the Consoling Spirit and a happy eternity.

Light Shone Out Of Mary



The church sings, "**God is light, dwells in light, and is praised by angels of light. Light shone out of Mary, Elizabeth gave birth to the Baptist**".

The Holy Spirit awoke David saying, "**Arise and sing for the Light has shone**". David sang, He took his spiritual harp and went to the church – the house of angels – and sang to the Holy Trinity, "**With Your light O Lord, we see the light. Let Your mercy be to all who know you. O the true light who shines over everybody that comes into the world! You saved our father Adam from temptation, delivered our mother Eve from the pangs of death, and granted us to be Your children, We, with the angels praise You and glorify You. Truly You are blessed O Christ our Lord with Your Good Father and the Holy Spirit for You came and saved us**".

You may notice that the church quotes a part of this hymn in Matins, so that the spirits may arise with the body and the light of God may shine our hearts together with the daylight.

NOW...

Dear Friend...

**The lord Jesus shone.
With light for your life.
With a lamp for your way.
With the sun of righteousness.
To cure you of all spiritual disease.**

**Come to the Lord!
Link up your life to Him!
He is the true life.**

**He is the everlasting happiness.
He is the light .
He makes out of you light.
He is the sun.
He makes you as pure as the sun.**

**Will you accept Him?
Come to a quiet time with Him,
Then with Your spiritual father!**



God bless you!



2 Salvation

The birth of Christ gave us: **Salvation**

“For there is a Savior born to you this day” (/ N —)

With by the birth of Christ the Savior was born...

Rather Salvation was born...

For there is no salvation without the incarnation...

And no redemption without the incarnation...

And no incarnation without birth...

One may object saying: it is possible for incarnation to take place without the need for birth. So many times did God take concrete shape in the Old Testament: once in the shape of a man or an angel or even fire, etc...

We answer that the point is not incarnation but taking flesh. There is a big difference between incarnation and taking flesh.

Incarnation: is taking a concrete aspect, or appearing in a concrete shape visible, audible or tangible.

But Taking flesh: is a unity between the divine nature and human nature, with all its components of body, human soul and human spirit and without being defiled by the corruption of sin, He came to save man. Therefore, He had to be united to man's nature. Thus, we cry in the Liturgy: **“He took flesh and became man”**. In the Creed, we shout stressing this fact.

Took Flesh And Became Man



How could the Lord become man unless He was born of our nature and took the flesh of our humanity? This is what He took from the Virgin.

He is the Word, the Son of God, the Light born of Light, from the beginning before all the ages, the Pre-existent, the True God of the True God, born of the Father before all ages as in the example of the birth of light by fire.

† **No Time Barrier:**

Is there a time-lapse between the flashing of light and the flaming of fire? If we light a candle which precedes the other: light or fire? Don't they appear together?

† **No separation:**

It is incorporeal birth. When the light is born of fire is there any separation? Can we separate light from fire? Impossible!

The Word, the Divine Wisdom, dwelt in Mary's womb **"and took flesh by her"**, as the Spirit of God sanctified and purified her, making the substance that would be transformed in her womb into the baby a sacred substance, one which would not bear the corruption of sin. The Son, the Word, the Messiah, the Incarnate God, the Human Word, came forth as God appearing in the flesh, to grant mankind piety; **"Great is the mystery of godliness: He (God) was manifested in the flesh"** , ~7IP~ - √.

Notice here the link between human godliness and the manifestation of God in human flesh. It is divine incarnation that enabled our loving God:

- To be manifest amongst us so that we can say: **"We beheld His glory"** , - Q- - √.
"Which we have looked upon and our hands have handled"
 , - Q- - √.
- To come down to us in our weakness and teach us as a teacher coming down to the level of his earthly and sensuous students.
- To die upon the cross and to redeem us, offering up His humanity- which is united to His divinity- as a sacrifice in place of us. Then He arose from death into life, that by Him, we too might be re-born into a new life.
- To make us partakers in His divine nature, i.e. God would dwell within us, to enable us to dwell in the throne of His grace, and enter into the depth of His eternity and immortality: **"He took what is ours and gave us what is His"** (St. Athanasius), i.e. He took our humanity and gave us **"fellowship in divine nature"** , 3HV- √.



Salvation... How?

Salvation in the Coptic Orthodox belief is a continuous process that proceeds through man's whole life. It starts with baptism, is completed by repentance, and ends with the transformation of the human earthly body into a heavenly spiritual body.

That's why we reject the idea of **"I have been saved"**? and **"momentary salvation"**, not out of love for theological arguments, but in full understanding of the dimensions of the **"Process"** of salvation. The Holy Bible uses the word Salvation in each of the three milestones: baptism repentance and the transformation of the body. The following verses prove this fact:

1- Baptism :

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved"
 , 0 DN- - √.

"Baptism which corresponds to this (Noah's ark), now saves you". This verse emphasizes that baptism does not merely mean external washing: **"removal of filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ"** (~3HV -).

"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom). It is evident here that baptism is death and resurrection. It is performed by immersion (as the baptized person should be completely buried with water; hence it is burial).

*“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (*DO). This means that baptism includes our whole being, for Christ baptizes us: our minds, hearts, spirits, and behaviors.*

2- Repentance :

All of us defiled our baptismal garments, but the tears of repentance form another baptismal font for repentance is another baptism (as **St. John Climacus** says). The following are some verses that reflect the role of repentance in man’s salvation:

- ✿ *“Today salvation has come to this house”* , / **N** – . The story of Zacchaeus’ repentance.
- ✿ *“Receiving the end of your faith the salvation of your souls”* , – **3 HW** – .
- ✿ *“In returning and rest you shall be saved”*
 , **V** – .
- ✿ *“Hold me up, and I shall be safe and I shall observe your statutes continually” (Ps.*
 – – .
- ✿ *“Remember me, O Lord, with the favor You have toward Your people. Oh, visit me with Your Salvation”* , **3 W** – .
- ✿ *“Be saved from this perverse generation”*
 , **\$ FW** – .
- ✿ *“For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret”*
 , **&RU** – .
- ✿ *“Account the longsuffering of our Lord as salvation”* , **3 HW** – .
- ✿ *“But others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garments defiled by the flesh” (- **G** –)*.
- ✿ *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes”* , **5 RP** – – .
- ✿ *“Now it is high time for you to awake from sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when first believed”* , **5 RP** – – . This paragraph spurred St. Augustine into repentance and salvation.
- ✿ *“Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls” (Jas*
 – – .

These verses make obvious the necessity of struggle, with faith, repentance and gratification by God’s words, so that man’s salvation which started with baptism as a free gift would be completed now by repentance as a responsibility.

2- Changing the Body :

As long as we are in the flesh of sin, this and is subject to disease and death, our Using any means, we have to take off this shame and weakness, to put on a glorious is not susceptible to disease, sin or death.



dense body that is liable to fall salvation is not yet complete. earthly body, the body of heavenly body of light which

✿ *“But our citizenship is in heaven from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like His glorious body”*

3KL ž- -.

✿ *“You, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (-3HV -).*

Are we not still awaiting a Savior, and Salvation **“to be revealed in the last time?”** It is the final salvation of taking off the earthly body and putting on the heavenly body. Only then can we say with full confidence and reassurance that we are saved.

Longings Realized



How glorious are the longings that inflamed the hearts of God’s children, waiting for the newborn Messiah, the saving Messiah, Who would save us from sin and Hades and lead us into holiness and the paradise of delight.

✿ *“I have waited for your salvation, O Lord” (*HQ -).* It is Jacob’s cry - the Patriarch of the tribes of Israel. He said it eighteen centuries before the birth of Christ.

✿ *“Oh that You would rend the heavens... and come down” (, V -).* It is Isaiah’s cry, the prophet of salvation, the evangelist prophet, the author of the Fifth Gospel. He said it eight centuries before the birth of Christ.

✿ With faith, Isaiah saw the glorious, Jesus, and shouted *“Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this One who is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? “I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save”. Why is Your apparel red and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? I have trodden the winepress alone and from the peoples no one was with Me”* , V - .

Now....

Dear Friend,

This is Jesus the Savior!
Will you go with me to Him.
And with the shepherds and Magi.
Asking Him to reign over your life.
To save you from your sins and offenses.
And from your sorrows and pains?

Just then..

Only then..

This verse will be fulfilled

“With joy you will draw water from wells of salvation” , W- .

Just then ...

You will sing with Isaiah the prophet:

“Behold, God is my salvation:

I will trust and will not be afraid;

*For the Lord God is my strength and my song'
He also has becomes my salvation"* , V- ǃ.

**What is the value of Christmas to you.
Unless it becomes your own birthday?
The birthday of your dear soul...
A birth that started in baptism as a free gift..
And will end with the taking off of this body...
As a free gift!**

**There is only one responsibility left:
It is repentance!
Will you now knew the promises of repentance?**





The birth of Christ gave us:

Glory

*“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace,
good will toward men” / N - √.*

For God’s glory it is certain that in His temple *“Everyone says Glory!”* 3V √. But for man, it was true that before the fall, *“You have crowned him with glory and honor”* 3V √. After the fall, Satan looked down on man who fell under the power of sin, so that Eli’s daughter-in-law cried out on hearing that the enemies had captured the Ark of the Covenant, had slain both her husband and father-in-law and conquered her people, she called her newborn son **“Ichabod”** i.e. the glory has departed 3V √.

Yes, the glory has departed from human life. Humankind that was created in the image of God, after His likeness and lived in the Garden of Eden as a dear friend of the Lord and the object of His joy and pleasure, this banished humankind was at a loss, suffering under the yoke of Satan, stumbling and falling down, breaking down under the blows of a rebellious body, instinct and corrupt nature.

It was not for God to leave humankind, His own dear and handmade creation, to be lost and aimless or to leave His own image to fall into a deep pit of dishonor.

👉 Yes, Man Was Sentenced to Death.

But human death would mean God’s inability to proceed in His plan. It would also mean His lack of compassion for a weak human race that had been tempted by the enemy. God forbid that we should disbelieve in His might or love!!.

✌ Then, Let Him Forgive Us.

This is not acceptable. It means losing the rights of divine justice which condemned man to death. It means the continuity of human corruption even after humans are forgiven for their first serious fall.

👉 Then, Let Him Redeem us.

This Son of God took flesh and died in the place of man, to fulfil divine justice and express divine love at the same time. Thus we saw *“Mercy and truth have met*

together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (3 V –ž). We saw all God’s perfect attributes made manifest to us in one event, in a unique and unprecedented way.

Glory In The Highest



Hence, it was natural for the hosts of angels to chant, “**Glory to God in the highest**” for the birth of the Savior was the natural preliminary step towards revealing God’s absolute, infinite and perfect attributes: love and justice at one time. Actually, heaven shared the earth in one carol:

- ✿ **A star shining on high...**
- ✿ **Angles singing joyfully...**
- ✿ **Shepherds keeping vigil and preaching...**
- ✿ **Magi believers offering gifts...**
- ✿ **Angels leading Joseph after they had announced the birth to the Virgin!**

Truly, heaven and earth are reconciled and peace has Prevailed.

Joy Be Unto People



Without doubt, mankind’s fall and shame were hurting God’s loving heart. But through the nativity mankind’s lost honor was restored. Behold, the Lord became man! He took flesh from a woman. This is true: His Spirit sanctified her and the Word dwelt in her womb.

Mary gave the Lord flesh... so the “**Holy One born by you is called the Son of God**”.

How glorious...

That God lets a man give Him...

That God dwells within us...

That humanity gives birth to its Creator...

That we call Mary “The Mother of God”...

Not because she granted God existence... God forbid!

But because she gave the Lord flesh...

Of her own flesh...

By His grace!

He created Mary...

Yet became the Son of Mary!

He created David...

Yet became the Son of David!

David called Him Lord...

Yet He called Himself Son of David!
 God is not only pleased with man...
 Rather, how wonderful, He became united to man!
 He is dwelling within man!

Christmas Glory



1- Glory of the New Man :

When man's first image was marred, God renewed him. He restored humans to their original image. Here we recall the Artist Analogy: the artist drew a portrait of the king's son. Later the prince went on a journey and the portrait was marred for some reason. It was necessary for the prince to come back, so that the artist could redraw the portrait so that the king could enjoy seeing his son's portrait when he is away. To redraw the portrait the artist did not throw away the old precious panel and use a new one. Rather, he redrew the portrait on the same old panel. This means that God did not exterminate man and recreate another Adam. Rather, He renewed the old Adam and restored him to the divine image he had lost.

This is a perfect analogy that St. Athanasius drew to explain the divine incarnation. The new man "*Created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness*" (Eph 4:24) "*is being renewed in knowledge according to image of Him who created him*" (Col 3:10).

2- Glory of Divine Fellowship:

After man lost the divine fellowship and was banished from the Garden of Eden and went astray in great adversity, mankind restored the glory of divine fellowship and the permanent feeling that he is in God's company.

Try to imagine, dear friend, the great difference between the Garden of Eden, and the Paradise of the New Testament that we won by grace. In the first, Adam was fed on vegetables and fruits, while in the latter, he is fed on God's body and blood. In the Garden of Eden, Adam fell victim to a dialogue with Satan, while in the Paradise of the New Testament, Adam is able with God's grace to resist Satan and make him flee, so that Satan can soon be crushed under man's feet with God's power (5 RP ~ - ž).

- ★ Do you enjoy, dear friend, divine fellowship?
- ★ Are you daily gratified by praying the psalms and canonical hours?
- ★ Are you daily filled with the Bible's words?
- ★ Do you partake of God's body and blood readily and frequently?
- ★ Do you attend spiritual meetings regularly?
- ★ Do you read spiritual writings regularly?

The exclusion of any of these means from our life is an exclusion of the channel through which the Spirit is poured out and the glory of the fellowship with God is manifested!

Reckon yourself and start anew!

3- Glory of the Fellowship in Divine Nature:

The Lord granted us very great and precious promises by which we become *“partakers of the divine nature”*

3HV- √.

What great glory! It even exceeds the when he asked the Lord to **“Show me** put Moses in a cleft of a rock & hand until He passed His goodness took away His hand and Moses saw ***shall see Me and live”*** ([~ - √.



glory Moses was granted **Your glory**. The Lord covered him with His before him. Then He God’s back for **“No man**

Even the glory of those who saw the Lord in the flesh **“The Word become flesh and dwelt among us and we have beheld His glory”** - Q- - √. How many of the Jews and Gentiles beheld the Lord’s glory in His miracles , teachings, crucifixion and resurrection without believing in Him? Even those who were **“eyewitnesses of His majesty”** 3HV- √ at His transfiguration on the mount, even before the crucifixion, resurrection, and Eastertide, witnessed a glorious Christ without being united to Him!

But now...**“Christ in you (is) the hope of glory”** &RO- √ for He dwells within us:

- ☉ **“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”** - &RU - √.
- ☉ **“If a man loves Me. He will keep My word; and My father will love him, and We will come to him and make our home with Him “** - Q- √.

In this way, the Triune God, the One in essence, dwells in man’s heart... How glorious! God dwells in us and we dwell in Him forever!! It is a great grace poured on mankind. It does not mean that man becomes a god, for he should by no means monopolize the Spirit, nor the Father nor the Son. Rather God would grant us His work and dwell in us, just as the sun shines inside a certain room without being monopolized by the room.

4- The Legacy of Eternal Glory:

This is the eventual glory about which the Lord says, **“The glory which you gave me I have given them, that they may be one just as we are one”** (- Q-). Can you imagine- dear friend-that the Lord gives us the same glory He has?!

- ☉ **Glory of immortality.**
For Christ is immortal!

- ☯ Glory of **sonship**.
For Christ is the Son, the Word!
- ☯ Glory of **kingship**.
For Christ is the King!
- ☯ Glory of **holiness**.
For Christ is the Holy!
- ☯ Glory of **happiness**.
For Christ is our Joy!

Now...

Dear Friends,

This is Christmas Joy!
Christmas is your own birthday!
The birth of light in your life!
The birth of your immortality and eternal glory!

Don't you feel that you need...
To kneel at the Divine Infant's feet.
And sing with the angels, shepherds and Magi,
And offer Him the gifts they offered?

- ☯ **The angels offered singing...**
Let's sing to Christ!
- ☯ **The shepherd's offered sacrifices...**
Offer up your life as a sacrifice to the Lord!
- ☯ **The Magi offered gold...**
Offer up the dearest thing you have!
- ☯ **They also offered frankincense...**
Offer the Lord your prayers!
- ☯ **And myrrh...**
Offer the Lord your struggle and pains!

Come...

Right now...

Don't wait...

The Lord is waiting for you!

