



Why the Incarnation?

Written by: His Grace Bishop Moussa
Bishop of Coptic Youth

This is an important question: it is all of Christianity. It is a question that has been raised in every era and in every place. This is a question that required that Divine Inspiration should speak through St John the Beloved in his Holy Gospel and Holy Epistles to make clear the necessity of incarnation for the salvation of humanity and the impossibility of salvation without faith in the Incarnation of God the Word. In the Holy Epistles of St John, he considers (being, of course, inspired of God) that:



**“The fullness of time gave us the Birth
And the Birth gave us Salvation
And the Salvation gave us the Sonship
And the Sonship gave us the Inheritance.”
(Galatians 4:4-7)**

“Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world” (I John 4:2-3).

God intended that St John the Beloved, who often

leaned on the Lord Jesus Christ’s breast, should live to the end of the first century as a faithful witness to sound Christian theological thought, exactly as he had received it from the Lord Himself. Whereas all the rest of the twelve apostles and St Paul died as martyrs before 70 AD, St John the Beloved survived almost to the end of the first century to establish the sound Christian doctrine in the face of numerous heresies such as:

1) The Gnostic Heresy: The Gnostics imagined that salvation could be achieved through intellectual knowledge, Gnosis = Know. They said that rational contemplation purifies the spirit and saves it, and that the

Lord Jesus Christ is merely a man upon whom a sublime spirit descended.

If we believed this we lose everything; salvation through the exercise of reason does away with the



necessity for the Incarnation and redemption. If we assume that the Lord Jesus Christ was only a man, this means that our redemption is finite and incomplete. That is why the Church rejected this dangerous heresy.

2) The Judaization Heresy: This was prevalent for a while in the lives of some Jews who had become Christians because they were unable to be quickly liberated from the glories of their old formal worship with its rituals and symbolic devotions. St Paul stood up to them to explain the glories of the Lord Jesus Christ and Christianity, especially in his Holy Epistle to the Hebrews, the key to which is the word “better”. The Lord Jesus Christ is infinitely better than the angels (Chapter 1 and 2), better than Moses (Chapter 3), better than Joshua (Chapter 4), and better than Aaron (Chapter 5). His promise is more sure (Chapter 6), and the offering of Melchizadek symbolized His sacrifice (Chapter 7); His priesthood better than Aaron’s (Chapter 8), His covenant is better than that of the Old Testament (Chapter 9), His holiness greater than that of the Temple (Chapter 10). Faith in Him is the secret of the patriarch’s salvation (Chapter 11). His law is more perfect than the law of Moses (Chapter 12), and His blood is more precious than the blood of the sacrifices (Chapter 10 and 13).

3) The Docitian Heresy: They imagined that the body of the Lord Jesus Christ was ethereal and mythical, believing that it was improper for matter to be part of God’s life. This heresy was revised in Eutychus’ heresy, and its repercussions are still evident in the questions that are raised about the Incarnation such as:

- A) Is the Incarnation contrary to the nature of God?
- B) Is the Incarnation contrary to the holiness of God?
- C) Is the Incarnation contrary to the power of God?
- D) Why was the Incarnation necessary; was there

no other solution?

- E) What is the significance of the Incarnation in our lives?

There must be answers to these important questions for many reasons:

First: To establish our rock-like faith, on which all the heresies have been broken and destroyed.

Second: To support our brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ on the basis of the fundamental knowledge that is necessary for salvation, for the Holy Bible says: **“my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 3:4).**

Third: Giving up the doctrine of Incarnation is tantamount to giving up our portion in the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Kingdom. As long as God does not condescend to take our flesh, He will not dwell in us. That is perdition itself, for how can we live with Him in the Kingdom if we do not resemble Him?

That is why the apostle said: **“Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh” (I Timothy 3:15).** The Incarnation therefore, is the mystery of human godliness and hence eternal salvation.



According to custom, St Mary wrapped the infant Lord Jesus in narrow strips of cloth called ‘swaddling cloths.’

(Wisdom 7:4)