

So this is Christmas...”*And the Word became flesh.*” But where are Mary and Joseph? Where is the manger, the shepherds, the angels? There is no singing here in our text. No little town of Bethlehem. Just these few words, “*And the Word became flesh.*”

If Sunday School children were to have a Christmas pageant using the Gospel of St. John, they could wrap it up in well under one minute. And only one child would really be needed, simply to read these few words. And yet these words say it all.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux was of the opinion that the archangel Lucifer was so enraged by these words that he fell away from God and was thrown out of heaven becoming the devil. Bernard believed that Lucifer gained the knowledge of what God from eternity planned to do, that in the course of time He would become man and not an angel. Yet, as an angel, Lucifer knew how superior angels were to men, and so not only was he angry with God, but he also became envious of mankind.

There might be something to this. For if an emperor were to seat his lords and princes at the lower end of the banquet table and place a lowly beggar at the head of the table, would this not humiliate and infuriate the lords and princes? God does this very thing in passing over the angels to become man instead.

But although Lucifer, lord and prince of the angels, was incensed by this, the good angels rejoiced that God would be so kind and merciful to do this for you and me.

Whether St. Bernard is right or not, it is nonetheless true that our text, “*And the Word became flesh,*” is a powerful weapon against the devil. For consider this, you and I can have the assurance and comfort that our God is not angry with us. If He were angry with us, He would not have taken on our very flesh and blood to become man.

This is the heart and center of Christmas. Listen to the angels singing. See the shepherds hastening to Bethlehem. See Mary and Joseph. But more than anything look into the manger and see a child. He is none other than the very God who created all things, including the angels, including mankind, including you and me. And He takes on the flesh of us poor beggars to seat us with Himself at the very head of the table.

“*And the Word became flesh.*” If you repeat these words daily, the devil will be driven away, for he hates these words. And yet I assure you of this, saying these words will do nothing for you, and will not anger the devil and drive him away, unless you believe them.

The devil knows these words to be true. But they do him no good, for God became man and not an angel. The devil has no Savior, therefore, but you do. For not only did the Word become flesh, His flesh was nailed to a cross, His blood was poured out from that cross, all for you and me.

This is what St. John means when he writes, “*And we have seen His glory.*” He speaks here not of His miracles. He speaks of His cross. The glory of God is seen most clearly as Jesus, the Word become flesh, takes our place in hell on His lowly cross, suffering what we deserve for our sins.

This is why the angels are singing to the shepherds, “*Glory to God in the highest!*” Because He who is the highest of all became the lowest of all. This is no powerful angel lying in that manger. This is God who became flesh so that He would suffer, die, and be raised again for all mankind.

And so, this is Christmas. Rejoice, whether you are happy or not, for “*unto you is born a Savior.*” Far from despising you because of your sins, your God joins you becoming flesh with you, and He takes your sins from you.

Forgiven. This is who you are. All of you are forgiven. If you have flesh and blood, then you have a Savior who bore your sins for you.

No wonder we love Christmas. A blessed Christmas to you all! Amen.