

The Birth of a New Community

Key Verse: *“Thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.”*
—Matthew 2:6

Selected Scripture:
Matthew 1:18-2:23

Our Lord was publicly recognized as the Savior as a babe; but it was only when he would fully complete his sacrifice at Calvary that he had the full right, and would become owner, or Lord. A life-giver is a father; Jesus is to be the “everlasting Father” to the world. (Isa. 9:6) The good tidings of a Savior shall eventually be to all people (Luke 2:10,11), but the special salvation from sin and death will come only to his people, to those who believe on him.

The church’s salvation begins now in the sense of reformation and rest in the Lord’s promises. “Not only

IN ORDER FOR THE POSSIBILITY of a new community to exist, there had to first be an actual opportunity for the old order of things to end. This was made a reality by the birth of Jesus, whose name means ‘Savior,’ and signifies life-giver. The entire work of our Lord Jesus is summed up in the meaning of the name Jesus. “He shall save his people from their sins.” (Matt. 1:21) So, when Jesus was born, the first step was taken in the Divine plan for our salvation from sin and death.

they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope.” (Rom. 8:23,24) This involves the deliverance of the church from the bondage of corruption into the wonderful liberty of sonship. This special group—members of the new community—will not actually be delivered from the power of death until the resurrection. If faithful, they will be raised to the Spirit condition, to the perfection of the Divine nature with its glory, honor, and immortality. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”—Rev. 20:6

It is of vital importance that each one who wishes to be his people makes sure that they have accepted him. “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6) We must be drawn first before we can come to Jesus, and then we must come to Jesus before we have access to the Father. In this manner, a believer can be “accepted in the beloved” by the Father, as sons. (Eph. 1:6) They have been “called according to his purpose.” (Rom. 8:28) This glorious purpose is to use his faithful ones as agents for the blessing of all mankind.

This will lead to a fulfillment of the prophecy “in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 28:14) In this wonderful promise lies the opportunity for all members of our human family to return to harmony with God. They will have the privilege of being “taught of God” (John 6:45), and live on a restored perfect earth forever. “The ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”—Isa. 35:10 ■