

PORTRAITS OF THE SAVIOUR

Lk.2:8-13

The Bible is a photo album of God's Son. Let us behold Him in His beauty.

Beholding Jesus as a Baby

The first snapshot of the Jesus' birth in the Bible is a snapshot foreseen by the Old Testament prophet Isaiah, 750 years before its actual occurrence. Isa. 7:14, *"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."*

When the fullness of time came, an angel of the Lord, appearing to shepherds, said: *"Do not be afraid. I bring good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger (Lk.2: 8-13)."*

John 1:1, 2, 3, 14 makes it perfectly clear who the child was, stating: *"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

That little baby, that child, unable to take care of Himself, was God Himself, Creator of all. Charles Wesley wrote:

*Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel!*

The holy baby was destined to become the Savior of the world and take away the sins of those who would believe in Him. Because, over that tiny cradle, loomed the cross.

Beholding Jesus as a Youth

There is only one snapshot to be found during the years of His obscurity, that period from His infancy to his manhood; when He officially steps out into public ministry. Read Lk. 2:41-47.

At the age of twelve we see a portrait of Jesus, baffling the most intelligent minds of His day. In vs. 48-49, His reply to His mother's question, *"Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you"* is, *"Why were you searching for me?" "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"*

With that answer, Jesus is affirming His Sonship by calling God His Father. This meant that He had clear consciousness of His identity and mission. His relationship with His heavenly Father was above the relationship of His human family.

Beholding Jesus as God-man

In picking out one gospel, Mark's, we behold pictures of Jesus as the tireless servant of God. Mark's portrait is a depiction of the miracle-worker/wonder-worker! Jesus could be no other than God and man at the same time.

Mark's "*Kodak Moments*" of the marvelous life of Jesus on earth, are vivid, colorful, and graphic. Let us look at some of these breathtaking snapshots (gleaned from W. Graham Scroggie's: *A Guide to the Gospels*, Pickering & Inglis, 1948).

In the first chapter, we see Jesus casting out demons and healing a demoniac. Here, He displays His almighty power over evil spirit forces.

In the same chapter, we see Jesus healing a leper. Here, He displays the removal of sin's disgusting defilement.

In the second chapter, we see Jesus healing a paralytic. Here, He displays the removal of sin's helplessness and disability.

In the third chapter, we see Jesus healing a man with a shriveled hand. Here, He displays the enablement that He gives man to work for Him.

In the fourth chapter, we see Jesus stopping the waves and silencing the wind. Here, He displays his power over the forces of nature.

In the fifth chapter, we see Jesus raising Jairus' daughter from the dead. Here, He displays his power over death.

In the sixth chapter, we see Jesus multiplying the fish and loaves. Here, He displays the satisfaction that He alone, brings to the hungry soul.

Moreover, in this chapter, we see Jesus walking on water. Here, He displays divine law dominating natural law.

In the ninth chapter, we see Jesus on a mountain, transfigured and glorified. Here, He displays His heavenly Glory.

In the tenth chapter, we see Jesus healing two blind men. Here, He displays the illumination that He brings to darkened souls.

In the eleventh chapter, we see Jesus cursing a fig tree and making it wither. Here, He displays the destiny of those who persist in their unfruitfulness.

For three and a half years He demonstrated all kinds of proof of who He really was. Nonetheless, when the time came for people to accept or reject His claims as Messiah, as King, as Son of God; the verdict was against Him.

John, chapter 19, confronts us with a disheartening snapshot of Jesus at His trial before the Supreme Court of Rome. Following the beatings Pilate said to the crowds, "*Behold the man.*" Then, in mockery, he went on to say, "*Behold the King!*" Pilate was hoping that the spectacle of this man (Jesus) disfigured and disabled by severe flogging, dressed in a purple kingly robe, and crowned with thorns; would satisfy His accusers.

But, chief priests and other antagonists were not pacified. Actually, they became even more enraged. In a deafening fury, they yelled, "*Crucify him! Crucify Him!*" The Jewish leaders insisted, "*We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God.*" Then, He was savagely led off to be crucified.

Beholding Jesus as Dying Savior

In Is. 53:5-6, we find a portrait etched in eternity, of the Son of God.

*But He was pierced for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him,
and by His wounds we are healed.
We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on Him
the iniquity of us all.*

He died for our sins. He was our substitute on the cross. Have you trusted Him for your salvation? Have you repented of your sins? Be healed by his wounds! He died that we might live.

Beholding Jesus as Empowering Lord

Jesus not only saves us from our sins but He enables us to become His beloved people.

Turn to Gal. 2: 20. Paul writes: *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I, who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.”*

Jesus not only died on the cross; He rose from the dead. And now He takes up residence in the hearts of all His people, loving us, empowering us, enabling us to live righteous lives before Him.

Beholding Jesus as Final Judge & King

Now listen carefully; Kodak can give us pictures of yesterday and today, but only God can give us a picture of the future. Look at these snapshots that are yet to be taken.

This same Jesus, Creator yet infant, crucified yet risen, will return! And when He returns; He will come not as a weak, helpless infant, but as the Final Judge of all mankind.

“Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of Him. So shall it be! Amen (Rev. 1:7).”

John the Apostle, in Rev. 19:11-16, says, *“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice He judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on His head are many crowns. He has a name written on Him that no one knows but Him Himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and His name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following Him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On His robe and on His thigh He has this name written:*

“KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” ”

