

2- Eternal salvation is given

As man was kept away from God due to his sin, he was condemned for ages in his flesh and soul. However pious man might have been, he was not able to get a ransom and for God to give him the salvation, he had to unceasingly pray. "O, visit me with your salvation", was man's constant prayer. Ps. 106:4; 118:25. In His promise to the people which He delivered through the prophets, He has said, "In returning and rest you shall be saved." Is 30:15 To fulfil His promise, He is born as a Saviour . Thus, the angel has broken the news for the shepherds dispelling their fear, for the coming of Christ is never to impose fear. It is rather to dispel it that he has been born. Lk.2:10-12.

3- Grace and Glory is delivered

As Adam and Eve ate the Forbidden Fruit, they were disgraced and lost their glory. Man, though created in God's likeness, became as ephemeral as the grass and flower of the land which withers away so soon. Isa 40:6. Pious fathers and mothers of the Old Testament period kept asking the Lord to return their lost glory. The Lord God accordingly willed to be born in due recognition of such a persevering repentance, he liberated us from the yoke of slavery and reinstated us to the glory of becoming His children. When the son of God is born of St. Mary, He took the flesh of man only because of the love which words have no power to say. The Magi have presented Him with gifts and bowed for Him knowing that He is the Lord.

4- Life of wandering and of fear is exterminated.

Genuine peace is from God. No one devoid of God is peaceful. Gen.4:13-15. The Life of man for 5 and 1/2 millennia was devoid of God and was a life of wandering; it was a life only of no peace. Praise be to Him, He has given us in His birth the life we have lost for ages. Man and angels have together borne witness of this restoration of heavenly peace in their welcoming song. He himself has also later in His Ministry had said that His peace is not like the one the world might offer. His peace is eternal while that of the world is only ephemeral. Jn.14:27.

5. It became possible to sing with angles

It was angles who chased man out of Garden of Eden when he sinned and they also guarded it with swords of flame. Hence, Adam never returned to Eden. When Christ was born, the two reconciled and sung together. They together praised the incarnate God. This demonstrated the true reconciliation between heaven and earth Lk.2:8-20.

Our church colourfully celebrates this birth of Christ annually. The church teaches industriously about the grand nature of this Holy day. How about us? How are we to celebrate the day? Are we to sing with angles or spend the night in Night clubs? Are we to walk by the spirit or gratify the desires of the flesh? If we opt for such secular feasts, we will benefit nothing to our soul and flesh. **We are set free and we are not to live like animals any more.** When the shepherds were told in the night about the news of His birth, what they said was, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." Luke 2:15. There, they went and found Christ in a manger with His mother. We have to always find ourselves at Bethlehem, the Church, if we want to find the Holy Saviour with His mother.

Let us together sing aloud saying, "Today, our Saviour is born"

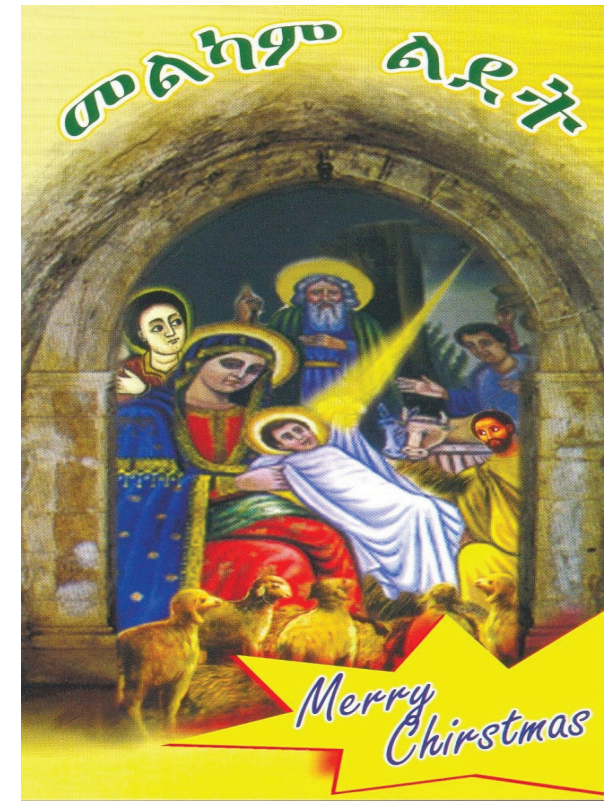
Merry Orthodox Christmas!

29 Tahisas, 2002 E.C
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MERRY ETHIOPIAN CHRISTMAS!



In the name of the
Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit,
One God. Amen!

There is born to you a Saviour! Luke 2: 11

The laws and prophecies had said a lot about the much longed-for time of the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It has got its fulfilment 2002 years ago when Christ was born from Virgin Mary in the City of David, in Bethlehem, Ephrata.



“When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His son...” Gal 4:4. **His Birth was a moment of jubilation in which angels and men sung in unison saying " Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, peace and goodwill towards men," heralding the end of the Age of Condemnation and the beginning of the Age of Salvation.**

It was a moment of praise, hymn and thanksgiving. In that moment, the angels of the Lord revealed themselves to the shepherds who were guarding their herd of Sheep. The angels came to the shepherds to tell them the grandest news of happiness which mankind has been waiting for millennia since his condemnation. It was awe-inspiring for the shepherds to see a magnificent Light dominating the darkness and to talk to an angel. Their fear was removed by the angel's comforting words: **" Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For unto you is born a Saviour”** Luke. 2:10,11. Before this time, man was living in Condemnation due to the Sin man committed which threw him into hell where he lived in utter disgrace for 5 and 1/2 millennia.

Though created in the likeness of his Lord, man transgressed; hence demons ruled over him instead

of the gracious will of the Lord. The power of the demons over man made his body to decay in the grave and his soul to languish in hell. **For man totally detached himself from God's will, the desire of his flesh dominated him and he relegated himself into the status of animals,** about which St. David has lamented saying, " Man, though in honours, does not remain [for] he is like the beasts that perish." Ps. 49:12.

To ransom man who disgraced himself so appallingly as such, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ willed to be and was born of the virgin St. Mary. With the divine power with which He equals the Father and the Holy Spirit unaffected, i.e., without any relegation in His divinity, He became a Babe and cried as a new born. This fulfils the prophecy which runs, " Behold, we heard of Him in Ephrata; we found Him in the fields of the woods." Ps. 132:6.

This Birth has completely changed man's history. Man is indeed transformed to his original grace due to this Divine Birth. To redeem man, our Lord was conceived and was born, of St. Mary all in virginity. Up until the Birth of Christ, from the time of being a foetus, any mortal was ill-fated to inherit Adam's Condemnation through the Original Sin. This was revoked once and for all when the Second Adam was born, of impeccable Mary who was born free from the Original Sin, and remains a Virgin, of the Holy Spirit in Her flesh and soul, in and out.

Emmanuel is born needing no man's seed from this Virgin who was prophesied to be pure and holy enough to serve as His abode. She being **"the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High, God is in the midst of her ; she shall not be moved."** ps.46:4-5. A man's birth is to his advantage in that, provided he passes his days in good faith and away from evil in accordance with God's commandments, he shall inherit the heavenly kingdom which before the creation of the earth God has made ready for man. Emmanuel's Birth is not for Himself; it is rather for the glory of man. Looking for the

exiled Adam, to find the prodigal son, to bring him back to the flock he belonged to, to mend the broken, to be light to those in darkness, to feed the hungry, to quench the thirsty by the water of life, to liberate those in hell, to guide those in transgression to the right, to take the downtrodden to the high place of glory, **Emmanuel was born.**



For mankind: due to this a Divine Birth of Christ:

1-The hovering darkness is removed.

For man's heart was filled with sin, his life before was in darkness, " They so not know, nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness," it was said of us in the psalms (Ps.82:5). Man was, hence, living in sorrow. As one treading in darkness could not tell the plain from the escarpment or the vice versa, man was not able to differentiate the good from the evil as he was fully overcome by the darkness. When Christ is born, the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them, a light have shined (Is.9:2). God is light. He lives in Light and is praised by Angles of Light. Being Light, God shines in the heart of man. In the Birth of the Living Light, Christ, from the Virgin Mary, a living light has shined for man. **"... the glory of the Lord shone around human beings”** Luke2:9; 1Jn.1:5; 1Tim.6:16.