

Discourses/Articles

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THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST

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There is a coming into being which is known as the birth of a human individual in this world. There is another kind of coming which is the descent of an incarnation. Both are certain types of coming, but they are totally different in their structural pattern and the purpose for which they manifest themselves.

The human individual at the time of birth is wrenched out of the forces of nature, cut off from the vital powers of the cosmos, and cast into the wilderness of individual existence with a centralised affirming ego called the personality consciousness. This is a human being coming into the world, but the incarnation is a different thing altogether. It is not something cast out from the forces of nature, but a coagulated form, a concentrated essence, as it were, of the potentials of cosmic powers manifesting themselves on the earth plane for achieving a specific purpose.

The kind of incarnation will be appropriate to the kind of mission with which it comes. In Christian theology it is held that the incarnation can be only one. The son of God, come as Jesus Christ, is heaven descending in its totality, once and for all. But Eastern traditions feel that the infinitude of the presence of God can manifest an infinitude of rays as the sun does in the sky; and the intensity with which it manifests itself will depend upon the reason why it manifests itself.

The coming of Christ is the occasion of our sacred observance today. A great radiance congealed itself, descended from heaven, as it were, whereby the One whom we call the Father in heaven projected Himself upon this earth into this world of humanity with the entire force of God Himself, and the incarnation lives veritably like God Himself. An incarnation has no friends, has no relatives, has no belongings, has nothing to call one's own. The incarnation stands by itself as God stands by Himself. God does not require friends. He does not need relatives. He has nothing to call his own. He possesses only Himself.

The representation of such a God in this world is also a practically lonely individual. The word 'lonely' has to be used with great caution. It is spiritually alone to itself, and even socially it is alone. The incarnation does not mix with people, though it redeems people. It sheds light on all people and redresses the sorrows of people without any implements in its hands. It has no instruments of action, the modus operandi of work being the incarnation's personality itself, as the sun shining in the sky has no instruments to act. There are no kinds of apparatus that the sun employs in order to shine and shed heat upon the earth. The very existence of the sun is identical with heat and light.

So is the case with a divine incarnation. Its existence itself is power. The power here is not an outcome of social approbation as is the case with centres of political power. The authority which the incarnation wields is not received by votes of people. It is given to it at the time of its coming.

Human beings when they are born do not manifest themselves as rich people, as powerful individuals. A child that is born is not a powerful child. It is as good as any other child. A king's child and a beggar's child have no distinction as far as their human nature is concerned.

No child is born as a king; no child is born as a beggar. Social conditions determine the further developments of the experiences of a child that is born; but in the case of an incarnation, social conditions do not determine it. On the other hand, the reverse is the case. The incarnation determines the social conditions around that personality.

There is a practical revolutionary activity taking place around the incarnation. When the sun heats up and sheds light, a tremendous activity is set into motion on the earth plane automatically. See what happens in the early morn when the sun rises. Everything wakes up into life. Even the leaves of the tree smile in the joy of witnessing this great force of life rising in the east. There is no announcement necessary for the rising of the sun. The enunciation of the coming of Christ is the declaration of the occasion of the manifestation of God for announcing Himself in His own creation, which forgets its own father.

Social conditions do not condition the operations of the incarnation. I have to repeat that the incarnation's personality determines the social conditions around. Incarnations come like whirlwinds, like strong movements of a gust of air, and sweep everything away in the direction they need. From where do they get this power? A single individual looking like a human being, as is the case with Jesus Christ, a frail physical personality wields such an authority and power. From where does that power come? It comes from every corner of creation. Like vassals paying tribute to a king, the quarters of space from all sides pay homage to this individual.

The incarnation has the capacity to summon the angels of the cosmos. On one occasion Christ made a statement: "Do you not think that if I want, the Father in heaven will send legions of angels for my protection? But, Thy will be done."

All the angels of the heavens in all the levels of being are ready to manifest themselves for the sake of the work of this incarnation, because we call him the son of Man, or sometimes we call him the son of God. He is the son of God because he manifested himself from God's bosom. All the eternal potential of God is present in the incarnation. Also, he is the son of Man. When we write 'son of Man', we always use a capital M meaning not ordinary man. He is not the son of one particular man, but man-as-such.

It is the cry of humanity that summons God in the form of the incarnation. When the need is felt, it is responded to properly by God. There should be such an utter upheaval in the field of human life to the extent of opposing everything that is divine and godly. Everything becomes mechanistic; everything becomes a routine. Prayer

becomes a machine. God becomes merely a concept, and religion becomes a stereotyped moving on the beaten track on the road. The spirit which is God gets lost when the machine of religiousness takes hold of humanity, and God comes to relieve people from this entanglement in a movement contrary to the requirements of God.

The power of the incarnation is the power of God. There is a very marked and unfortunate difference between a human being and a divine being. The incarnation sees from every direction, whereas the human being sees only in one direction. There are two eyes for a human being, and the human being can see only what is in front. The human being cannot see what is behind or on the sides, but the incarnation has all eyes. Any event is an occurrence taking place due to its presence. Any wind that blows anywhere, in any direction, is due to the action of the sun in the sky. If a wave arises on the surface of the ocean, and the wind blows, clouds gather, and it rains, it is the work of the sun in the sky. This is all-action taking place. So, God's action is Total Action, and so also is the case with the action of an incarnation.

There is nothing which Jesus Christ did not do to glorify God in this world. Every one of his actions, every word that he spoke and every gesture were totally new to the human mind. He was a great example of a person who was entirely misunderstood, as we all are likely to misunderstand God Himself.

The greater you are, the less you are appreciated by the world, and the less also you need the world. These are certain things which we have to bear in mind when we try to imbibe into our own mind the characteristics of divine incarnations. They are incapable of human understanding. We say, "It passeth understanding." Understanding is an instrument of the human psyche, which concocts a kind of synthesis of sensory perceptions and imagines that it knows all things. What the human being knows is phenomena, a network of appearances, but what the incarnation sees is the true noumenon, God descended. The incarnation beholds God everywhere, but the human being beholds only objects of sense everywhere. The human being sees only opposition everywhere; the incarnation sees only the position of God everywhere. The human being sees only the passage of time everywhere; the incarnation sees eternity everywhere. This is the difference between the incarnation and a human being.

The creation of God is a dramatic display of God's joy and beauty. The world of God which He has created is not a curse or an imprecation cast on human beings. There is a divine element present in everything that God touched in His creative act.

From the human point of view, from the standpoint of empirical perception, everything is invested with the instinct of death and destruction; but from the point of view of the divine incarnation, God's presence in things, everything is a movement of eternity—timelessness operating everywhere.

Ugliness is what human beings see in the world; beauty is what the divine incarnation sees. There is a great difference between seeing God everywhere, and seeing your opponent everywhere. Jesus Christ had no opponents. He had only to see people who are miserable due to their ignorance. He came to free them from this ignorance by his noble teachings, which did not enter into the brains of people at that time.

Many things can be said about the circumstances of the coming of Christ. Whatever is written in the gospels is known to you, but you can infer several other things also, which are not written in the gospels, from the conditions prevailing at that time and the impact of his life upon the world as a whole.

He lived for a few years, but he is remembered for an endless number of years in the world. As long as the sun and the moon shine in the sky, the name of Christ will be remembered by people because of the wonder that he worked, the miracle that he performed in the name of God. When eternity enters the time process, everything that happens in the world looks like a miracle, as if iron gets transmuted into gold. He could do that if water could turn into wine, and a dead person could be alive, and a sick one could be made healthy and hale, and the breath of God could be breathed into the mortality of the suffering individual. This is what an incarnation does. God's fingers operating through the events of the world are the incarnations.

Here is an occasion for us, as is the case every year during the time of Christmas, to bring into our memories our great divine heritage which we have brought with us, with which we have to live when we are alive in the world, and which we have to take with us when we depart from this world. God be with us. Hari Om Tat Sat.