

CHRISTMAS EVE COMMENTARY

God is **great**. God is **glorious**. God is **in heaven**. God is **big**. God is **powerful**. God is **everywhere**. God is **exalted**. God is awesome. God is **mighty**. God is **God**.

No. No. No. Here God is **fragile**. God is **inglorious**. God is **on earth**. God is **tiny**. God is **weak**. God is **right here, not exalted**, not awesome, not **mighty**. God is **Man, infant Man**. **What foolishness! Why light a candle for Him?**

When God is **hungry**, He cries. When God is **thirsty**, He cries. When God is **tired**, He cries. When God's **swaddling clothes are soiled**, He cries. When God **needs His mommy**, He cries. **What foolishness! Why light a candle for Him?**

God **rests in a cow town in a cattle shed with the cows**. God **sleeps in hay**. God's only companions are filthy shepherds and no-name Nazarenes. God has **no crown, no throne, no castle**. God **reclines in the lap of His mother**, unable to so much as **lift His head**. **What foolishness! Why light a candle for Him?**

Look at His **little head**, formed in His mother's womb to be pierced with thorns. Look at His **little hands and feet**, formed in His mother's womb to be pierced with nails. Look at His **little side**, formed in His mother's womb to be pierced with a spear. Look at His **little back**, formed in His mother's womb to receive the lashes of an ungrateful world. Look at His **little eyes**, formed in His mother's womb to see the hatred of those for whom He's come. Look at His **little mouth**, formed in His mother's womb to speak words to fall on deaf ears. Look at His **little ears**, formed in His mother's womb to hear that He is not welcome here. Look at His **little heart**, formed in His mother's womb to **throb, throb, throb** with a love that none of this can **quell**, that none of this can **crucify**, that none of this can **kill, shame, or unravel**.

The angels sing. They know our lost condition. They see the stark contrast between our blackened hearts and His, both human though they be. The angels sing. **They saw paradise lost. They long to see it restored, and they know this is the One whose Body will rebuild it.**

“Unto you,” the angels sing, longing they could hear us sing the same to them. But no, only we can be serenaded “unto you,” for God has become our Brother, the divine has assumed our flesh and jumped in our mud puddle.

“Unto you!” Let our hearts **throb, throb, throb** with new love—love for this Child, your Brother, love for all those who share your now highly exalted flesh and blood.

Glory to God, but peace to you. Peace. Real peace. Not the artificial kind you hear about in the news. **The real kind that shouts down the raging of wars and the lies of the devil, the sorrows of suffering and the shames of sin.** “What of that! What of that!” this peace shouts in the midst of chaos. “I am **lonely**, but God is my Brother. I am **poor**, but God is my Brother. I am **sick**, but God is my Brother. I am **slandered**, but God is my Brother. I am **exhausted**, but God is my Brother. I am **whatever the devil and world may throw at me**, but God is my Brother, **born today to die tomorrow to rise three days later and to rule forevermore.** The angels sing to me. The angels sing of the peace and joy that is mine. What of all the rest! **Heaven has come low, and I have been brought high, for God has wrapped Himself in my weakness and been born into my suffering.** I do not walk alone. I do not suffer alone. I will not die alone. And I will rise, **flesh and blood with the flesh and blood of my infant God.**”

“Unto you!” Uncork your ears. There may not have been room in the inn, but let there be room in your heart for Him **whose tiny arms are yet long enough to include you in their warm embrace. God is your Brother. God is your neighbor’s Brother.** Let us live as the family of God. Let us love as the family of God. Let us be loved as the family of God, for that is what we are today, not by our birth, but by His, and through faith. See your God today. **You keep that candle lit. Foolishness? Only to a fool.** Amen.