

The Impossibilities of the Incarnation
Christmas 2019
John 1:1-14

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.
- 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
- 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.
- 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.
- 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.
- 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.
- 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
- 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. KJV

Introduction:

Moses began the first book of our Bible with “in the beginning God.” John the apostle was no stranger to the Hebrew scriptures and knew full well that he was speaking in a parallel fashion to Moses here.

This is the time of year when (supposedly) many worship what John was describing, “the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,” and while many contemplate some version of this story, it seems that many miss many of the numerous issues associated with that event and the Absolute Impossibility of it All unless there actually is a God and that Jesus Christ is the Second Person of that Triune Being.

Today I am going to attempt to build an altar of worship for us all, but I am not going to use stones as the ancient Hebrews did or brass as Moses and Solomon did. I want to build an altar of ideas that have been revealed to us by God in His Word. But my altar has the same purpose as those early ones, to be a place of worship for your soul and a place for us to gather together in communion with one another. I call upon you to Worship God around those Impossible Things that He has been working on since Time Immemorial.

First of all, let us establish together that God has never done anything without a Perfect

Plan.

Peter mentioned that Plan as it concerned Jesus in Acts 2:23.

Acts 2:22-23

- 22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:
- 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: KJV

If the Crucifixion of Jesus was ordered by the counsel of God then all that led up to it must, by necessity, have been planned as well.

And, if God arranged the Crucifixion imagine all of the millions of other things He arranged as well, down to the very identity of the least important person associated with His Death.

The saddest event of the day apart from the Death of the Son of God was the awful betrayal of Peter and even that was in the plan of God. You will remember that Jesus spoke with him about that and indicated that He had intervened in the process and had ordered the realities of it.

Luke 22:31-32

- 31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:
- 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. KJV

He determined not to prevent Satan from 'sift'ing Peter in a similar manner to which He had allowed Job to be tested, but, like Job, He had set certain limits on his actions and had protected Peter from being destroyed spiritually by the event.

The scripture further tells us that, from the beginning, God had ordained a Redemption for His Children.

Rom 8:29-30

- 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
- 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. KJV

Eph 1:3-12

- 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:
- 4 According as **he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

- 5 Having **predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself**, according to the good pleasure of his will,
6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.
7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;
8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;
9 **Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:**
10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:
11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being **predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:**
12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. KJV

There is no way to honestly read these statements of scripture and not realize that God had a plan in mind from long before He determined to create the world.

Having a Plan meant that He could make promises concerning Jesus from the very beginning of what we call the history of human race. You will recall that in pronouncing the penalty for His broken Law to Adam and Eve in the garden He said to Eve that her ‘seed’ would ‘bruise the head’ of the serpent, who was at that moment identified directly with Satan. His designation as ‘the serpent’ follows him all the way through God’s Word to the very last book.

God also made significant promises to Abraham which are explained to us in the New Testament as being fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Gen 22:18

- 18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. KJV

Gal 3:16

- 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. KJV

God is revealed to us as One Who Never Lies and Who always keeps His Promises and this Promise to Abraham was possibly the Greatest Promise He ever made to anyone.

He made a similar promise to David which is realized in Jesus Christ.

1 Kings 2:1-4

- 1 Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying,
2 I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man;
3 And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself:

4 That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel. KJV

Matt 21:6-9

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,
7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.
8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.
9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. KJV

And, of course, there were those promises to Israel through Isaiah.

Isa 7:14

14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. KJV

Isa 11:1-5

1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:
2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;
3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:
4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.
5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. KJV

And then there was that great passage in chapter 53.

Isa 53:5-6

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.
6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. KJV

In the New Testament we discover that God also made **promises to individuals** concerning Him beginning with Zacharias the father of John the Baptist.

Luke 1:15-17

- 15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.
- 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.
- 17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. KJV

And then Mary

Luke 1:30-33

- 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
- 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.
- 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:
- 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. KJV

Joseph

Matt 1:18-21

- 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.
- 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.
- 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.
- 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. KJV

Simeon

Luke 2:21-26

- 21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.
- 22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;
- 23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)
- 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

- 25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.
- 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. KJV

Anna

Luke 2:36-38

- 36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;
- 37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.
- 38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. KJV

And, of course, we have no idea how many other people were visited by God with personal revelations concerning Jesus.

There is that strange story of the Magi from Persia who had some awareness of the Promise of Christ and some revelations concerning the star which, apparently, no one but them could see. (It was *not* some bizarre alignment of the planets.

All of these promises required a prior purpose and plan which, if they were to be fulfilled, had to work out in extraordinary and very complex ways.

In order for these Promises to be Fulfilled, a series of Impossible Things (to the human mind) would be necessary.

Let us begin, if you will, with the very idea that the Eternal, Immortal and Invisible God would even contemplate having the kind of relationship with a *creature* that the Incarnation of Jesus would ultimately secure.

Rev 21:3

- 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. KJV

Other translations read 'be among them,' 'dwell with them' and 'live with them.'

The contemplations of God were such that would never be imagined by human minds, a close, eternal residing of Deity with creature in an intimate relationship.

There is an immense gulf between God and creature, even between God and Adam as he originally existed. There is no imagining how far God stooped to commune with a sinless man. Even in his sinlessness, though, Adam was less than perfect because when presented with the temptation he made the conscious choice to sin against God.

So, then the consideration moved from God communing with that which was less than perfect to Him purposing to create a way to enter into actual and vital *union* (beyond the communion in the Garden) with creatures who were sinful and unholy.

These are not merely difficult things to consider, *they are impossible*. The accomplishment of them would test the *Omnipotence* of God. Personally, I have often wondered if a part of His motivations in this whole thing was to test for Himself whether He could actually *do the impossible* for that is certainly what He was considering doing there in Eternity Past.

Consider, if you will, the *Impossibility* of a human woman carrying *Deity* in her womb.

Think about *Deity* compressed into a single cell, which is the beginning stage for every human.

(By the way, this as much as anything we know proves that the child in the womb is a totally separate being from its mother. Jesus never was in any way Mary's body. I have never heard this offered as an argument against the modern contention of so many.)

Meditate, please, on the *Impossibility* of Deity existing in a created body.

Try to picture the image that Paul painted of this incredible act.

Phil 2:5-8

- 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
- 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:
- 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:
- 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. KJV

Phil 2:4-8

- 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,
- 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,
- 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.
- 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. NASU

Phil 2:5-8

- 5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
- 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

- 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.
8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death- even death on a cross! (from New International Version)

Phil 2:5-8

- 5 Your attitude should be the kind that was shown us by Jesus Christ,
6 who, though he was God, did not demand and cling to his rights as God,
7 but laid aside his mighty power and glory, taking the disguise of a slave and becoming like men.
8 And he humbled himself even further, going so far as actually to die a criminal's death on a cross. TLB

This is Impossible - and yet God did it. To allow these impossibilities to become commonplace, ordinary and even boring thoughts to our minds may be one of the most profound acts of ***Sacrilege*** that humans ever commit. To have one who claims these impossibilities as his hope of a Right Relationship with God commit this ***Sacrilege*** is beyond the pale of rational expectations.

Further.... consider the ***Impossibility*** of Deity knowing and experiencing the temptations of a human. Yet this is exactly what we are told.

Heb 4:14-16

- 14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.
15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.
16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. KJV

Heb 4:14-16

- 14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.
15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.
16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. NASU

Then, think about the ***Transference*** of one person's guilt to another in such a way that the ***Perfectly Just and Holy God*** would accept the arrangement.

I want you to understand that God is not limited in any way. He is ***Perfectly Sovereign*** and can do whatever He pleases. But also understand that He, in His Sovereignty, has made some decisions from which He will never vary. ***He will not approve that which is Unjust, Unrighteous or Unholy.***

He will not, simply out of Love, do a thing which is not Perfectly Proper. I fear that many people presume that He will because they will.

But God did transfer our guilt to Jesus in a way that was Completely Satisfactory to Himself.

2 Cor 5:20-21

20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. KJV

1 Peter 2:24

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. KJV

Think of the **Impossibility** of one man's death satisfying the **Perfect Justice** of God on behalf of a multitude of sinners.

Or the **Impossibility** of predicting the details of such an event centuries before it occurred.

Or the **Impossibility** of a **Union** between one individual and another such that the sins of the one become the sins of the **Other** and the **Holiness** of the **Other** being transferred to the one who had been guilty.

Think of the **Impossibility** that such an act could be **So Perfect** that **Absolute and Holy Justice** would be satisfied with it.

Do you understand that this is **Literal Impossibility** wrought by the Living God in **His Omnipotence** so that you might be saved because there was no other way?

Do you ever bow before Him and weep for gratitude that He was willing to do this for you and then **Worship and Adore** Him in Humility and Thanksgiving?

Then, think of the **Impossibility** of a person raising Himself from the dead with a **Glorified and Holy** body fit for the **Presence of Infinite Glory**.

Think of the **Impossibility** of a person Ascending, in His own power, from this world into the **World to Come**.

I am sure that this is only a tiny portion of the impossibilities that God worked on His way to bring us to an eternal home where we might have everlasting communion with Him.

But these few prove to us that we serve a **Mighty and a Loving God Who is Worthy of Our Absolute Devotion**.

My exhortation to myself as well as to you is, **Do not commit Sacrilege by offering to Him less than He deserves and has proven Himself Worthy to Receive**.