

Post-Christmas Fatigue

(Zechariah 9:9-10) *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. ¹⁰I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.*

I'm pooped! It's been quite a week, what with all those announcements, and coordinating the "Heavenly Hosts". All-in-all, I guess it came off pretty well, although the choir was late (You know how choirs are!), and I had to make the initial announcement to the shepherds without them.

Oh, and I was really nervous about the "Glory of the Lord." Standard procedure is to keep a supply of spare projector bulbs on hand; but our "tech crew" somehow got to the "gig" without any. Fortunately, we didn't need one, and it went quite well.

(Chuckle) You should have seen the look on the shepherds' faces! I wish I'd had a camera!

(Musing) Hmmmm. Quite a week.

Actually it all got started about sixteen months ago. **The Boss** called a meeting of the Archangel Council to announce a new plan. **The Boss** is always coming up with plans of some kind.

Anyway. **The Boss** created this universe with a very specific vision in mind: unity—everything working in harmony, flowing smoothly—cooperation—coordination... Quite a vision; and it all worked perfectly until **The Boss** created what was supposed to be the "crowning glory" of creation: male and female created in the divine image.

And that's when the trouble started. I tried to tell **The Boss** it would never work—this "free moral agency" stuff. If you give people free choice, they always have the option of choosing to do wrong—even choosing to do evil.

But **The Boss** just nodded and said, "I know. That's the way I want it." Told me, if you're going to have choice, it has to be free. That's the only way it can work. **The Boss** said "choice" was the only quality not yet created. The only real difference between humans and other animals, aside from appearance, *is* "moral choice": the ability to understand the difference between right and wrong and to choose one's behavior on the basis of those choices. **The Boss** said without "moral choice" there could be no real relationship between the creator and the created; and that was the whole purpose of creation.

But, sure enough, the first shot out of the bag: the very first male and female—up against the first moral choice [“Don’t eat the apple!”]; and they failed the test. In fact, every human being since then has failed the test of moral choice.

That’s where all those plans started to enter the picture. You see, **The Boss** loves this planet; calls it our little blue/green jewel. And it is gorgeous; like a precious stone, set on a field of star spangled black velvet. (Pause)

Oh; but I digress. **The Boss** loves this planet, and all the creatures on it; but especially humanity. After all, they bare the image of the one who created them. **The boss** has tried everything to get them to come back into fellowship. But it’s that “free moral choice” thing. No matter what **The Boss** does, those humans keep thinking’ they can do it on their own. And boy! Have they got things messed up.

So **The Boss** came up with the idea of a covenant—spell everything out. He called this human fellow—Abraham, and made a covenant with him. I mean **The Boss** kept trying’ to keep up that covenant for I don’t know how many generations of earth humans. They kept fouling’ up; and **The Boss** kept bailing’ ‘em out. They got enslaved in Egypt, and **The Boss** called a fellow named Moses to lead ‘em out and back to the land they called theirs.

Oh, it went on and on. **The Boss** sure loves those human creatures. Keeps coming up with plans to invite them back to live within the moral provisions he set up—for their own good. But they keep trying to do it their way. And **The Boss** accepts them as they are; lets them live out the consequences of their moral choices.

More than once I’ve seen **The Boss** in tears because those humans he loves so much make such ill-advised decisions.

Well, finally, about fifteen months ago, like I was saying’, **The Boss** called for a meeting of the Archangel Council, and presented a plan that supposedly was foolproof. Called it “**Operation Incarnation.**” Said we’d send **The Boss’ Son** to the earth to assume human nature—to show them the right way to live. He’d even take all the consequences for their poor moral choices upon himself—sort of a surrogate Lamb of sacrifice. I never heard anything more loving.

The Boss put me in charge of earth operations, and sent me with a message. I made two trips; because I was sure there was a mistake. The one **The Boss** sent me to was just a kid—maybe fifteen, maybe younger. I told her she was about to have a baby; and she told me she was a virgin! Well, I didn’t know how **The Boss** was going to pull it off; but I learned eons ago: **The Boss** will find a way.

Anyway, it all came to a head last week. I made that announcement to the shepherds, and we had it all set up with the angelic choirs and heavenly hosts.... Like I said, the choir came in late, but other than that, everything went off without a hitch.

I sure have a lot of questions to ask **The Boss**. Why choose such a backward place—an occupied land and an oppressed people? Why a poor teenage girl, instead of some mature woman of nobility? And a poor carpenter? Why was **The Boss's** son born in a barn—instead of a palace? And why did the news first come to poor shepherds? Why not use the king's heralds to spread the news throughout the world?

I mean, if you're trying to persuade all humankind to come back into relationship with you, why not go to a leading nation? And why not to nobility and royalty—scholars? You've got to get the word out.

Anyway, I think **The Boss** may finally be getting the message. There's a caravan on the way to visit the newborn Son, and there's nobility in that caravan: Magi from what once was Babylon. They're scholars who've found in the ancient archives of their culture stories about a people held captive there almost 600 years ago—stories that include prophecies of a king who would be born in the homeland of those ancient captives. These Magi also are astrologers who read the skies, and the planets are aligned such that they announce, "This is the time."

A few days ago they arrived at the palace of King Herod, and had an audience with him. He told them to report back to him when they found the baby, so he could go and worship him, too. Now we're getting somewhere!

Now the Magi are arriving at the house where the baby is; so, please excuse me. I've got to read my next assignment.

(Read. Look troubled and confused. Ponder)

It's a strange assignment; in two parts. I'm to appear to the Magi and tell them not to return to Herod, because he plans to kill the baby. And then I'm to appear to Joseph and warn him to flee to Egypt to avoid Herod's hideous plan.

And there's a personal, hand-written note:

"My Loyal Gabriel; I know you question my procedure; and I understand. But I must get my message out through those who are poor, and those who suffer—those who have no power or influence—because, you see, as long as people have wealth or power or other resources, they think they have all they need; and so they won't really hear a message of salvation and deliverance. Those who are well have no need of a physician; and those who think they are well think they have no need of a physician.

But my Son will teach—and will demonstrate with his own life—that life can be full and abundant without material resources. In fact, he will teach that life's fullness and abundance is totally unrelated even to such basic things as security and social acceptance.

You see, Gabriel, I don't want people to respond to me because of the influence and persuasiveness of the powerful. I want people to respond to me because they choose to do so—because it's good and right to do so—because they acknowledge my love, and accept my love as an empowering force in their lives: empowering them to fulfill the potential I've created within them.

(Refold paper; musing)

Hmmm. **The Boss** sent His Son so people will follow him. I still think you've got to push people a little. I don't know. You people are the ones all this is for. How's that working out for ya'?