

HE IS OUR GOD AND KING

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Lesson: Matthew 1:18-25

At Christmas time, one of the most holy parts is when we see tableaux of the birth of our Lord. It is very special for two reasons. First of all, it takes us back to that time so long ago, and we can imagine ourselves in Judea, really seeing the most wonderful things that ever happened. We can imagine that we have seen the angel talking to Mary; that we were in the stable when the baby Lord was first laid in the manger. We can think what it might have been like if we had been shepherds, out in the fields at night, and saw a bright angel coming to tell us special things. We can think how a shepherd must have felt when he saw a whole group of angels out of heaven singing for joy, because the Lord was born. What wonderful things for them to see and hear. We can think what it was like when the shepherds walked through the streets of Bethlehem, looking for the manger, and found one in which was a babe, just as they had been told, and came in to see. We can think of the wise men journeying a long way, led by a star; coming to the wicked King Herod, and at last coming into the house where the Lord was, and worshiping Him, and giving Him their special presents.

That's one reason why the pictures of Christmas are so special, because they take us back to that most wonderful time, and we almost feel that we were there. What makes them special too, though, is that the tableaux are living pictures of the Lord's holy Word. We try to show you these stories just as the Lord wrote them in His Word, because we know that the Lord wrote just those things that He wants us to know. And when we see these pictures, straight out of the Word, with living people, then the angels of heaven, who love the Word, and love to have it seen and heard, they are with us, and make us feel the magic of the Lord's birth.

Now, there is just one thought you can keep with you as you look at these pictures or tableaux. You will see the Lord as a tiny baby, and it will seem to you, as you think of Him as a baby, that He was like other babies. For in one way this is true. He had to be nursed and looked after, and fed, and so on, like other babies are. But as you watch these tableaux, think to yourselves that this tiny baby is the same Person who has made everybody and everything. What a thought! The tiny baby who lay in the manger in Bethlehem was, even while He lay in the manger, ruling over heaven and earth. For He was the Lord God Himself, He had made everyone, and everything, and they all lived because He sent His life into them, every moment of every day.

How could this be? How could a tiny baby, who lay in a manger, be making people, and ruling over them? How could He be watching over people, not just in Bethlehem, but everywhere in this world, and in other worlds, and in heaven as well? That is something you will learn more about as you grow older. But you can know now that the Lord ruled heaven and earth from His spirit, from His soul, even while He was in the manger. Even while He lay in the manger, He was also everywhere else, He was above heaven as the Sun of heaven, He was looking down on each person on earth, and leading them gently towards heaven, He was making new babies and taking new people into His heaven, He was guarding all the people from evil, and ruling over the hells.

And while He was doing all these things, He was also allowing Himself to be born on earth as a tiny baby, so that He might do the most special and wonderful thing that this world has ever known. The angels knew this, and that is why they sang, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men." And we too now know that this tiny baby was the Lord God of heaven and earth, come down to be with men, and to show them the way to heaven, and to fight hell for them. Think of that, as you watch the tableaux, and give thanks to the Lord in your own hearts for what He did, for those wonderful things that you are seeing. For that is what the angels are doing this night, even as they did so long, long ago. *Amen.*