

That Baby in the Manger

A.W. Tozer:

One of the most beautiful descriptions of our Savior to be found anywhere is that given by Isaiah in the 53rd chapter of his prophecy: "He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground" (verse 2).

Those who have at any time been close to the soil will see at once a young shoot just pushing through the ground and will feel the exquisite precision of the word "tender" when applied to it. The delicate sprout appears to be mostly water, held together one scarcely knows how, and so brittle that it will snap asunder at the slightest touch. Only after the passing of several days does it toughen up enough to endure external pressure without damage.

While a newborn babe is not as fragile as the tender plant just emerged from the soil, the likeness is too plain to miss, and the prophet spoke well when he compared the one to the other. The helpless, crying human thing is vulnerable from a thousand directions and is wholly dependent for its very life upon parents, neighbors and friends. No one can pick up a day-old baby and not sense the pathetic frailty of it--a barely conscious blob of sweet, perishable life only now arrived from the ancient void of nonexistence.

So our Lord came to the manger in Bethlehem that first Christmas morning, not out of nonexistence, but from eternal pre-existence; not as a son of man only but as Son of Man and Son of God in the fullest sense of both terms; a tender plant and a root out of a dry ground.