

Spring History & Heritage -- #5 (April 28)

Fourth Eclogue --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 137-148)

This first century BC poem, one of Virgil's pastorals in which shepherds converse, was taken as a cryptic prophecy of Christ's Advent by Christians of later times? In verse Virgil proclaims the dawning of a new age, actually the end of the ages, in which a new humanity arises to live justly and peaceably under a renewed reign of the gods (Saturn particularly). Moreover, mankind's renewal is inaugurated by the miraculous birth of a child, seemingly a god-man.

Messiah as Triumphant King --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 137-148)

This 1st-century messianic expectation, held by popular as well as elite Jewish opinion, was utterly confounded by the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth? The expectation, faithful to biblical prophecy in part, heralded a messiah glorious in bearing, a liberator from foreign domination, a restorer of Israel's fortunes, an invincible servant-ruler who establishes everlasting peace. What the Jews missed, however, was the depth of the Servant's sufferings, to atone for man's sins, that had to precede His glory.

Epiphany --- (Grant/Wilbur; *Christian Almanac*, Jan. 6)

This Christian holy day, the last of the so-called twelve days of Christmas, is observed in accordance with tradition on January 6? The word marking the day indicates a "revelation" or "sudden unveiling" of something, alluding to the time when Christ, then just a babe in Bethlehem, was made known to the Magi, Persian astrologers whose long journey to His birthplace was guided by a star. Thus, the day suggests the One born "King of the Jews" was also appointed "A Light to the Gentiles."

Golden Rule --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 137-148)

This descriptive title has long been attributed to Jesus' famous ethical exhortation to "do unto others as you would have others do unto you"? Various teachers of various religions, including Jewish rabbis like Jesus' near contemporary Hillel, had formulated the principle negatively in terms of what one ought not to do. Yet the "positive injunction" of Jesus, writes Kirk, "is more compelling, and requires higher sacrifice," bringing to light the full implications of God's law.

The Nations Embrace Christianity --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 137-148)

This historic outcome of Christian witness and preaching, seen all over the Roman world in the first three centuries after Christ's crucifixion, defies ordinary explanation? Christianity's meager beginnings (a small band of Jews), moral rigor (be perfect), anthropology (no man does good), and soteriology (Christ's cross alone saves) hardly commended it to most men. That they believed to the extent history records, other factors aside, can only be attributed to the power of God.

(sources for the Q&A's are indicated; any errors of judgment are those of Veritas history teacher Mr. Zaffini, writer of this post for his students and their families)