The First Christmas – A Libertarian Event, Too

Written by Skyler J. Collins in 2009.

Christmastime is arguably the best time of the year. We all know the reasons why, though many forget. My intention with this short essay is not to examine those, the most important parts. Rather, what I thought I'd share here are the details that make the Christmas story a libertarian event, too.

The mere birth of Jesus Christ upset the local government authority, King Herod. In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 2, we read, "Now when Jesus was aborn in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Herod immediately schemed to slay the babe because he believed he was a threat to his throne. As we can plainly see, Christ's first enemy was the state.

Thankfully, this scheme was revealed, "The angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." One of the first events in the new child's life is nothing less than a protest against the aggressive hand of government. Just how aggressive is this hand? You decide, "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men." The state is often on the giving end of such atrocities, and Christ survived it.

As James Redford described the situation, "If it were not for Joseph and Mary's intentional act of defying that which they knew to be king Herod the Great's will and escaping with baby Jesus from out of Herod's mid as fugitives to the land of Egypt, then Jesus would have

been mercilessly killed and needless to say His ministry and the fulfillment of Scripture would have never come about. Thus in the most fundamental of regards, there is a great antagonism from the very start between Jesus and government (to say the least): Jesus was born into the world as a criminal and would later be killed as a criminal–a criminal as so regarded by the government, that is."

As wonderful and important as the first Christmas was, it would have been for naught had the family not defied and escaped the grasp of Herod. Let us not only remember the true meaning of Christmas, but also this very important lesson from the birth of the Savior of the world.