

Moments *for* You

Volume 57, Number 4

Theme: Who Is Jesus?



WHAT DO YOU CALL HIM?

Jesus asked His disciples two questions: “Who do men say that I am?” and “Who do you say that I am?” (Mark 8:27,29). The first question is significant because it allows us to get a read on the minds of the people around us. The second question, however, is *eternal* because it is only by acknowledging Jesus Christ and responding in faith to His gift of forgiveness that a person can live forever.

Isaiah made it very clear that the promised Messiah would fulfill the matchless titles he had prophesied: “Wonderful,” “Counselor,” “Mighty God,” “Everlasting Father,” and “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). Jesus Christ came into the world and proved beyond a doubt that He was the Messiah by fulfilling all those requirements. He was God in human flesh, come to display deity and redeem humanity. On the strength of His ability to fulfill all these things, He made this claim: “No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me” (John 14:6).

This is the heartbeat of the Christian faith: Jesus Christ is God and He came into the world to save sinners. What is your response to that claim and to the evidence that He is the only deliverer for sin-laden, lost people who are the object of God’s love? Will you receive His gift of forgiveness and be saved?

If you are already saved, having been rescued from your sin and its just punishment, will you live under His perfect will and wisdom so that He may guide you into a life that pleases Him?

—*The Amazing Prophecy of Names* by Bill Crowder, RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI.

GLORY REVEALED

“*The glory of the LORD shall be revealed*” (Isaiah 40:5).

The whole concept of the glory of the Lord surrounds the Christmas scene. At the birth of Christ, the angels shouted, “Glory to God in the highest.” And Luke 2:9 says, “The glory of the Lord shone round about them.” The word of Isaiah 40:5 is the Christmas message. The birth of Christ was the revelation of the glory of the Lord, just as Isaiah had promised. “The glory of the LORD shall be revealed.” What does that mean?

To begin with, “the glory of the Lord” is the expression of God’s person. It is any manifestation of God’s character or attributes. In other words, glory is to God what brightness is to the sun. Glory is to God what wet is to water. Anytime God discloses Himself, He manifests His glory.

The heavens declare the glory of God (Psalm 19:1). The beast of the field gives Him glory. Everything He ever made shows His glory in some way or another. God also revealed His glory in a very particular way through the *shekinah*. This was a physical manifestation of divine glory that appeared to the Israelites of Moses’ day as a pillar of light by night and a pillar of cloud by day (Exodus 13:21).

But He also spoke through His Word, given to the prophets and recorded in Scripture (2 Peter 1:21). He thus disclosed His glory in a way that communicated truth and gave instruction to His people. This was the highest and most enduring manifestation of divine glory Old Testament saints had access to. You see, God only whispers in His creation. He

revealed a shadow of His glory in the *shekinah*. But He speaks with absolute clarity in His Word. “God ... spake” (Hebrews 1:1)—and not in a whisper but in full voice.

Still, there was an incompleteness in it all until “[God] hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son” (Hebrews 1:2). Now, that is God shouting! You can’t mistake it. Christ is God, and you see every attribute of God manifest in Him: His judgment, His justice, His love, His wisdom, His power, His omniscience. It’s all there in person as we see Him walk through the world, working His work, living His life. The fullness of God may be seen as it was never seen before in Jesus Christ.

The writer of Hebrews continues in verse 3: “being the brightness of His glory.” Who is Jesus Christ? He is the glory of the Lord. That is what he’s saying here. Jesus is the “express image” of God (v. 3). He is the personal embodiment of the brightness of God’s glory. That’s why it says in John 1:14, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

The message of Christmas is that God came into the world in all His glory, and what was only a whisper became a shout. And someday in the future, as we read in the book of Revelation, He will come back in His blazing glory, which Jesus called “great glory” (Matthew 24:30). When He comes back in second coming glory, the Bible says the shout will be even louder so that every voice in the universe will cry and shout and sing His praises (Philippians 2:9-11; Revelation 5:12,13).

—Condensed from “The Glory of the Lord” by John MacArthur.

THE PROPHESED ONE

“To Him give all the prophets witness” (Acts 10:43).

Centuries before Christ was born, His birth, life, and sufferings were all described in the Old Testament. Christ is the only person ever born into this world whose ancestry, birth time, forerunner, birthplace, birth manner, infancy, manhood, teaching, character, career, preaching, reception, rejection, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension were all prewritten in the most marvelous manner centuries before He was born.

Who could draw a picture of a man not yet born? Surely God, and God alone. Let us briefly trace a few of the outstanding points in the comparison of Old Testament prediction and New Testament fulfillment.

THE PROMISED MESSIAH

The work of redemption was to be accomplished by one person, the central figure in both Testaments, the promised Messiah. As the seed of the woman, He was to bruise Satan’s head (Gen 3:15; Gal 4:4). As the seed of Abraham (Gen 22:18; Gal 3:16) and the seed of David (Ps 132:11; Jer 23:5; Acts 13:23), He was to come from the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10; Heb 7:14).

The Messiah was to come at a specific time (Gen 49:10; Dan 9:24,25; Luke 2:1,2) and be born of a virgin (Isa 7:14; Matt 1:18-23) in Bethlehem of Judea (Mic 5:2; Matt 2:1; Lk 2:4,5). Great persons were to visit and adore Him (Ps 72:10; Matt 2:1-11). Through the rage of a jealous king, innocent children were to be slaughtered (Jer 31:15; Matt 2:16-18).

He was to be preceded by a forerunner, John the Baptist, before entering His public ministry (Isa 40:3; Mal 3:1; Matt 3:1-3; Lk 1:17).

MESSIAH'S MINISTRY

He was to be a prophet like Moses (Dt 18:18; Acts 3:20-22) and have a special anointing of the Holy Spirit (Ps 45:7; Isa 11:2; 61:1,2; Matt 3:16; Lk 4:15-21, 43). He was to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Ps 110:4; Heb 5:5,6). As the servant of the Lord, He was to be a faithful and patient Redeemer, for Gentiles as well as the Jews (Isa 42:1-4; Matt 12:18-21).

The Messiah's ministry was to begin in Galilee (Isa 9:1,2; Matt 4:12-17, 23). Later He was to enter Jerusalem (Zech 9:9; Matt 21:1-5) to bring salvation. He was also to enter the Temple (Hag 2:7-9; Mal 3:1; Matt 21:12).

His zeal for the Lord was to be remarkable (Ps 69:9; Jn 2:17). His manner of teaching was to be by parables (Ps 78:2; Matt 13:34,35), and His ministry was to be characterized by miracles (Isa 35:5,6; Matt 11:4; Jn 11:47). He was to be rejected by His brethren (Ps 69:8; Isa 53:3; Jn 1:11; 7:5) and be a "stone of stumbling" to the Jews and a "rock of offense" (Isa 8:14; Rom 9:32,33; 1 Pet 2:8).

MESSIAH'S REJECTION

The Messiah was to be hated without a cause (Ps 69:9; Isa 49:7; Jn 7:48; 15:25), rejected by the rulers (Ps 118:22; Matt 21:42), betrayed by a friend (Ps 41:9; 55:12,13; Jn 13:18,21), forsaken by His disciples (Zech 13:7; Matt 26:31, 56), sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zech 11:12; Matt 26:15) and His price given for the potter's field (Zech 11:13; Matt 27:3,7). He was to be smitten on the cheek (Mic 5:1; Matt 27:30), spat upon (Isa 50:6; Matt 27:30), mocked (Ps 22:7,8; Matt 27:31,39-44) and beaten (Isa 50:6; Matt 26:67; 27:26,30).

MESSIAH'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION

The Messiah's death by crucifixion is given in detail in Psalm 22, and the

meaning of His death as a substitutionary atonement is given in Isaiah 53. His hands and feet were to be pierced (Ps 22:16; Zech 12:10; Jn 19:18, 37; 20:25); yet not one of His bones was to be broken (Ex 12:46; Ps 34:20; Jn 19:33-36). He was to suffer thirst (Ps 22:15; Jn 19:28) and be given vinegar to drink (Ps 69:21; Matt 27:34) and He was to be numbered with transgressors (Isa 53:12; Matt 27:38).

The Messiah's body was to be buried with the rich in His death (Isa 53:9; Matt 27:57-60) but was not to see corruption (Ps 16:10; Acts 2:31). He was to be raised from the dead (Ps 16:10; Acts 13:33) and ascend to the right hand of God (Ps 68:18; Lk 24:51; Acts 1:9; Ps 110:1; Heb 1:3).

CONCLUSION

This brief sketch of Old Testament messianic prophecies with their New Testament fulfillments is, of course, far from complete. There are actually 333 predictions concerning the coming Messiah in the Old Testament!

Since these great realizations of prophecy are true and provable, it is the duty of each individual to trust Christ for his own salvation, surrender to His Lordship and live for Him. Since the Bible tells us that man's eternal destiny depends on trusting Christ—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

It should be our great desire to witness to others of these facts and make them aware that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

—Condensed from *The Prophets Still Speak* by Fred John Meldau, published by The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry Inc., Bellmawr, NJ.

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

Is any other question so far-reaching and important as the question, who is Jesus? Is He or is He not God? If Jesus is *not* God, then there is no Christianity, and we who worship Him are nothing more than idolaters. Conversely, if He *is* God, those who say He was merely a good man are blasphemers.

The deity of Christ is the key doctrine of Scripture. Reject it, and the Bible becomes a confused jumble of words devoid of any unifying theme. Accept it, and the Bible becomes an intelligible and ordered revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

CHRIST'S POWERS AND PREROGATIVES

The *attributes of deity* are ascribed to Him in the Scriptures. He Himself laid claim to *omnipotence*: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). On occasions He exhibited this power over nature (Matthew 8:27), over demons (Luke 4:36), over angels (Matthew 26:53), over disease (Luke 4:40), and over death (Mark 5:41,42).

Omniscience is implied in the statement "Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men" (John 2:24; see also John 4:29; 16:30; Colossians 2:3).

The promise included in our Lord's Great Commission involves the *omnipresence* of Christ. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20).

He asserted His own *self-existence* in these words: "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (John 5:26; see also John 8:57-58; Revelation 1:8).

Actions are ascribed to Christ that are possible to Deity alone: creation (Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:10),

resurrection (John 5:28,29), and judgment (John 5:27). When Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28), Jesus did not rebuke him for blasphemy, but accepted his ascription of deity without objection. Contrast this with the reaction of the angel, when John fell down to worship him (Revelation 22:8,9).

THE WITNESS OF CHRIST'S CLAIMS

In the first words recorded of Him, He offsets the words "My Father" against His mother's "Thy Father" (Luke 2:41-52), surely an indication of His consciousness of a unique relation existing between Himself and God.

The gospel narratives are so thoroughly saturated with the assumption of His deity, that it sometimes appears in quite unexpected ways and places. For example, in three passages in Matthew's record, He is represented as speaking most naturally of "His angels" (Matthew 13:41; 16:27; 24:31).

To the horror of the Jews, He even went so far as to assume to Himself the sacred divine name—"I Am." "Before Abraham was, I Am" (John 8:58; Exodus 3:14; see also John 6:35; 8:12; 10:7-11). These are undoubted assumptions of deity, as is His claim to possess the divine resources to meet all human need (Matthew 11:28; John 4:14; 7:37,38; 10:28).

—Condensed from *The Incomparable Christ* by J. Oswald Sanders, published by Moody Press.

You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. —C. S. Lewis

JESUS IS SAVIOR

“The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (1 John 4:14).

It is a well-known truth that God is the Savior of His people. In the exodus from Egypt we see how God brought about “the salvation of the LORD” (Exodus 14:13). And this caring and saving love of God, who time and again delivered Israel from the hands of their enemies, can be traced throughout the history of God’s chosen people. It is particularly in the book of Isaiah that God is called the Savior of His people (Isaiah 43:3,11; 45:15,21; 49:26; 60:16; 63:8).

God is also the Savior who delivers from far greater hostile powers that are threatening man, namely Satan, sin, and death. He saves His people from all their uncleanness (Ezekiel 36:29). He opens the wells of salvation for them, and clothes them with the garments of salvation (Isaiah 12:3; 61:10). It is obvious that in these Scriptures the word *salvation* has a deep spiritual meaning, and implies much more than a temporary deliverance.

The New Testament fits in with this, as is obvious from Matthew’s explanation of the meaning of the name Jesus: “Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). The name Jesus means “the LORD is salvation.” Here the evangelist clearly links the meaning of this name with the salvation of God’s people from their sins. Christ was the promised Savior, who was born in the city of David (Luke 2:11). And Zechariah prophesied about His entry into the city: “Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation” (Zec. 9:9).

But He is more than just the Savior of the Jews: He is also the Savior of

the world—as the Samaritans rightly acknowledged (John 4:42). All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. But there is also free grace for all through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. He gave Himself for us, to redeem us from our sins. Because of who He is, the sacrificial death He accomplished on the cross, and His glorious resurrection, Jesus is truly “the Saviour of the world” (1 John 4:14). In Him alone we can find full salvation, purification of our sins, and deliverance from the power of sin.

In Him the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men (Titus 2:11). Salvation is to be found in Him alone: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). We can rightly say that He is our Savior and our Redeemer, if we confess our sins and believe in Him. “Every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:40).

As Christians we are looking forward to Christ’s second coming. The apostle Paul makes this clear in his letter to Titus. We are “looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:13,14).

—Adapted from *Reflections On The Greatness Of Our Lord Jesus Christ* by Hugo Bouter.

He who thinks he has no need of Christ, has too high thoughts of himself. He who thinks Christ cannot help him, has too low thoughts of Christ. —J. M. Mason

CHRIST TO THE BELIEVER

“My meditation of Him shall be sweet” (Psalm 104:34).

It is impossible to fully estimate what Christ is to the redeemed. But let us see from a few Scriptures something of what He is to us now.

CHRIST IS OUR LIFE

“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory” (Colossians 3:4). In John 10, He speaks of giving eternal life to His sheep, and in chapter 5 those who hear His Word and believe on God who sent Him, have everlasting life. He died because we were dead in trespasses and in sins, but now He lives again, and is forever beyond the domain of death. We are linked with Him in that deathless realm, and when He comes again, He will lift us up into that sinless, sorrowless sphere of glory, to enjoy His hallowed presence fully and eternally. Then we shall be able to comprehend, in all its fullness, the wealth of that expression: “Christ who is our life.”

CHRIST IS OUR PEACE

“He is our peace” (Ephesians 2:14). All who have everlasting life ought to have peace. Peace is the result of knowing Christ as my Savior. If you have seen Christ meeting God’s righteous wrath that was due to you, and beheld Him bearing your sins in His own body on the tree, and seen Him go down into death for you, and seen Him rise from the gloomy grave for your justification, you have peace. He has “made peace through the blood of His cross” (Colossians 1:20). Jesus made peace on the cross, but we obtain it by faith (Romans 5:1).

CHRIST IS OUR HOPE

“Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope” (1 Timothy 1:1). Hope has to do with the future, and the existence

of hope proves that satisfaction has not been reached. In 1 John 3:2 the Apostle says: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

Being “like Him” and “seeing Him as He is,” is a twofold hope, “and every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1 John 3:3). When Christ comes again, all our scriptural hopes will be realized, and all our Spirit-wrought desires be satisfied, for He is the originator, and embodiment of them.

CHRIST IS EVERYTHING TO US

“Christ is all, and in all” (Colossians 3:11). Here we reach the very summit of the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ for the believer. The Apostle Paul wrote, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21). If he remained on earth he would live for Christ and preach of Christ, but if he departed he would be with Christ. To leave life’s raging battlefield, and to rest in the calm of His blissful presence would indeed be inestimable gain to him who labored on in “weariness and painfulness” and suffered “deaths oft” (2 Corinthians 11:23-27). But he was willing to fight with “beasts” at Ephesus, languish in a Roman prison, or be decapitated by the command of the heartless Nero, or in whatever way Christ would be most magnified, “whether it be by life, or by death” (Philippians 1:20). This valiant soldier of Christ proved by his words and his ways that to him, Christ was “all, and in all.”

It is surpassingly precious to be in that attitude of soul that counts Him “everything.”

—From *Meditations on Manifold Glories of Christ* by C. C. Crowston.

JESUS IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES

“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27).

- In Genesis, He is the Creator God.
- In Exodus, He is the Redeemer.
- In Leviticus, He is your sanctification.
- In Numbers, He is your guide.
- In Deuteronomy, He is your teacher.
- In Joshua, He is the mighty conqueror.
- In Judges, He gives victory over enemies.
- In Ruth, He is your kinsman, your lover, your redeemer.
- In 1 Samuel, He is the root of Jesse.
- In 2 Samuel, He is the Son of David.
- In 1 Kings and 2 Kings, He is King of kings and Lord of lords
- In 1st and 2nd Chronicles, He is your intercessor and High Priest.
- In Ezra, He is your temple, your house of worship.
- In Nehemiah, He is your mighty wall, protecting you from your enemies.
- In Esther, He stands in the gap to deliver you from your enemies.
- In Job, He is the arbitrator who understands your struggles and has the power to do something about them.
- In Psalms, He is your song and your reason to sing.
- In Proverbs, He is your wisdom.
- In Ecclesiastes, He is your purpose, delivering you from vanity.
- In the Song of Solomon, He is your lover, your Rose of Sharon.
- In Isaiah, He is the Wonderful Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace.
- In Jeremiah, He is your balm of Gilead.
- In Lamentations, He is the ever-faithful One upon whom you can depend.
- In Ezekiel, He is the One who assures that dry bones will come alive again.
- In Daniel, He is the ancient of days, the everlasting God who never runs out of time.
- In Hosea, He is your faithful lover, always beckoning you to come back.
- In Joel, He is your refuge, keeping you safe in times of trouble.
- In Amos, He is the husbandman, the One you can depend on to stay by your side.
- In Obadiah, He is Lord of the Kingdom.
- In Jonah, He is your salvation, bringing you back within His will.
- In Micah, He is judge of the nation.
- In Nahum, He is the jealous God.
- In Habakkuk, He is the Holy One.
- In Zephaniah, He is the witness.
- In Haggai, He overthrows the enemies
- In Zechariah, He is Lord of hosts.
- In Malachi, He is the Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings.
- In Matthew, He is king of the Jews.
- In Mark, He is the servant.
- In Luke, He is the Son of Man, feeling what you feel.
- In John, He is the Son of God.
- In Acts, He is Savior of the world.
- In Romans, He is the righteousness of God.
- In 1 Corinthians, He is the rock that followed Israel.
- In 2 Corinthians, He is the triumphant One, giving victory.
- In Galatians, He is your liberty.
- In Ephesians, He is head of the Church.
- In Philippians, He is your joy.
- In Colossians, He is your completeness.
- In 1 Thessalonians, He is your hope.
- In 2 Thessalonians, He is the righteous judge.
- In 1 Timothy, He is your faith.
- In 2 Timothy, He is your stability.
- In Titus, He is the Great God and Savior.
- In Philemon, He is your benefactor.
- In Hebrews, He is your perfection.
- In James, He is the power behind your faith.
- In 1 Peter, He is your example.
- In 2 Peter, He is your purity.
- In 1 John, He is your life.
- In 2 John, He is your pattern.
- In 3 John, He is your motivation.
- In Jude, He is the foundation of your faith.
- In Revelation, He is the coming King.