

WHO IS JESUS?

*“Of His Son God says:
‘Your kingdom, O God, will last forever and ever’.”*

*God also called Him ‘Lord’ when he said:
‘Lord, in the beginning you made the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands’.”*

Hebrews 1:7,10 Living Bible

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Good News. MINISTRIES
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WHO IS JESUS?

A. Some things Jesus says about Himself.

a. That He always existed.

In John 8:58 Jesus said: *“Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”* Here he used the phrase “I am”, which in Exodus 3:14 God applies to himself, when the following conversation took place—
Moses: *“When I go to the sons of Israel, who shall I say sent me?”*
God: *“I am who I am; say to the sons of Israel—‘I AM has sent me to you’.”*

So Jesus attests to his equality with God, for which the Jewish leaders sought to stone him, but he escaped from them.”

b. He is all-powerful

Some of the last words he said to his disciples before he ascended into heaven: Matthew 28:18-- *“All authority has been given to me, in heaven and on earth.”* Jesus Christ is the ruler of the universe.

c. He gives eternal life

John 11:25: *“I am the one who raises the dead and gives them life again. Anyone who believes in me, even though he died, shall live again. He is given eternal life for believing in me and shall never perish.”*

d. He said He was God

John 14:9: *“He who has seen me has seen the Father. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe me for the sake of the works themselves.”* (namely, His miracles)

e. He said He will judge the nations

Matthew 25:31: *“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. Before Him will be gathered all the nations and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and He will place the*

sheep at His right hand and the goats at the left.

Then the King will say to those at His right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Then He will say to those at His left hand ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Being the judge of all mankind is undoubtedly the prerogative of God—so Jesus is making himself equal to God.

B. He did what only God can do

a. He said He had power on earth to forgive sins.

Luke 5:22 : *“Why do you question in your hearts? Which is easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you’ or to say ‘Rise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.”*

He said to the man who was paralysed: ‘I say to you, rise, take up your bed and go home.’ And immediately he rose before them, and took up that on which he lay, and went home, glorifying God.”

He demonstrated Godly power by healing an incurable disease—claiming to be God.

Jesus often said: *“If you do not believe my words that I am God, believe the works I do.”*

This explains one of the reasons why Jesus performed miracles, in order that these would be proof of His divinity. If God were coming to earth in human form, not distinguishable from other humans, how else would He prove His identity, except by doing things that no human being could possibly to—supernatural things; in other words—miracles.

Jesus said He was God—God the Son—and set about proving it. Let us read what C. S. Lewis has to say about this. C. S. Lewis was a very active atheist, until he looked into the claims of Jesus and became convinced that He was who He said He was.

From “Mere Christianity” by C.S. Lewis

“One part of the claim tends to slip past us unnoticed because we have heard it so often that we no longer see what it amounts to. I mean the claim to forgive sins: any sins. Now unless the speaker is God, this is really so preposterous as to be comic. We can all understand how a man forgives offence against himself. You tread on my toe and I forgive you, you steal my money and I forgive you. But what should we make of a man, himself unrobbed and untrodden on, who announced that he forgave you for treading on other men’s toes and stealing other men’s money? Asinine fatuity is the kindest description we should give of his conduct. Yet this is what Jesus did. He told people that their sins were forgiven and never waited to consult all the other people whom their sins had undoubtedly injured. He unhesitatingly behaved as if He was the party chiefly concerned, the person chiefly offended in all offences. This makes sense only if He really was the God whose laws are broken and whose love is wounded in every sin. In the mouth of any speaker who is not God, these words would imply what I can only regard as a silliness and conceit unrivalled by any other character in history. Yet (and this is the strange, significant thing) even His enemies, when they read the Gospels, do not usually get the impression of silliness and conceit. Still less do unprejudiced readers. Christ says that He is ‘humble and meek’ and we believe Him; not noticing that, if He were merely a man, humility and meekness are the very last characteristics we could attribute to some of His sayings. I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept his claim to be God.’ That is the one thing we must not do. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil from Hell. 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 on 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 patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

C. What others said about Him

a. About 700BC in Isaiah 9:6 God gives through Isaiah this prophecy regarding Jesus, the Messiah to come:

‘For a child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; and the government will rest on his shoulders; and his name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to his government or of Peace.....from then on and forever more. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will accomplish this.’

In this statement we have the concept of a child being born who will be

- Responsible for everlasting government—that is, ruler of the universe
- Wonderful Counsellor—this is the name given to the Holy Spirit in the Bible
- Eternal Father—the name of God
- Prince of Peace—the name of the Son of God

Clearly Jesus will be Almighty God come to earth, being born as a child—and born how?

Isaiah 7:14—*“Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and she will call his name Immanuel (God with us).”*

So Jesus was to be born of a virgin and the Holy Spirit of God—being both human and divine.

b. In about 600BC Daniel writes in 7:9 that he saw a vision of the Ancient of Days (namely God)_ taking a seat.

Verse 13: *“and behold, with the clouds of heaven one like a Son of Man was coming and he came up to the Ancient of Days, and was presented before him.*

And to him was given glory and a kingdom that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away, and his kingdom will not be destroyed.”

Jesus called himself the Son of Man quite regularly—whose kingdom will be over all people and last forever.

Daniel also in Chapter 9 predicts the actual time of the Messiah’s coming and also the exact date of his death in 33AD—that it would be 476 years after Artaxerxes proclaimed the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem following the Jewish exile in Babylon in 444BC.

This sets Jesus Christ, the Messiah, firmly in Jewish history, and in world history.

In John 1:29 we read that John the Baptist declared Jesus to be *“The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”* This is clearly a reference to a sacrificial lamb *“who will die for the sins of all people”* just as in the Old Testament the sacrifice of a lamb *without blemish* was a token of repentance and therefore, forgiveness.

Jesus said at the Last Supper as He passed the wine-- *“This is my blood which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.”*

c. The First and the Last

a. There is a reference to Jesus at the very beginning of everything, and also at the very end, as set out in the Bible.

Just after Adam and Eve succumbed to Satan’s tempting, we read in Genesis (God speaking to Satan):

“From now on you and the woman shall be enemies, as will your offspring and hers. You will strike his heel, but he will crush your head.”

This refers to the fact that Satan will greatly tempt and harass Jesus, but he will conquer Satan.

Even before this there is another indirect reference to Jesus in Genesis 1:26—

“Then God said, Let us make a man, someone like ourselves to be master of all life upon the earth, and in the skies, and in the seas.”

He uses the plural to indicate that God is not just one person, but three persons in one Godhead. These are very subtle references to Jesus in the Beginning of the Bible, and the beginning of all things. But in the New Testament we have a specific reference.

John 1:1 *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.*

John 1:14 *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld His glory, glory as of the only Son of the Father/”*

So Jesus is

- ❖ the Word of God, and is God
- ❖ the creator of all things
- ❖ the light of the world
- ❖ truth
- ❖ life

Jesus said (speaking of His heavenly Father)—

“Thy Word is Truth.”

In the last few verses of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, Jesus speaks about his coming again to bring his rewards with him for those who persist in faith. He also says, *“I am the first and the last”* —the alpha and the omega.

In Revelation 1:8 we read (Jesus speaking) *“ I am the Alpha and the Omega says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”*

In Revelation 21:6 we read (Jesus speaking) *“He who sits on the throne said, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end; I will*

give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost'. “

In Revelation Chapter 22 we read (Jesus speaking)

Verse 12-- *“Behold I am coming quickly, and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”*

Verse 16—*“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things...I am the root and offspring of David, the bright morning star.”*

b. God refers to himself as the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega.

In Isaiah 48:12 we read—(God speaking): *“Listen to me, I am He, I am the first and I am also the last. Surely my hand has founded the earth, and my right hand spread out the heavens.”*

In Isaiah 44:6 we read—*“Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the first and I am the last and there is no God beside me.”*

What does God mean when he says he is the first and the last? Surely he means he is the beginning and end of everything, and everything in between—as Paul says—‘ALL IN ALL’.

D. CONCLUSION

From all we have seen it is clear that Jesus is the great God, who came to earth as a child, lived a perfect life of service, died as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, rose from the dead, and now rules supreme over everything. He will come again to set up his everlasting Kingdom.

In Daniel we read that he will have a *'kingdom that will never pass away'*.

In Isaiah we read that there will be *'no end of his government'*.

In Philippians 2:6 (from the Living Bible) we read:

"Though he was God, he did not cling to his rights as God, but laid aside his mighty power and glory, taking the disguise of a slave, and becoming like men. And he humbled himself even further, going so far as to die a criminal's death on a cross. Yet it was because of this that God raised him up to the heights of heaven and gave him a name which is above every other name, that 'at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.'"

That God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Trinity, in one Godhead is a mystery which our finite minds cannot fully grasp, but it is true nevertheless.