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CHRIST

Background

God the Son (the second person of the Trinity) became a human being. He was and is truly divine and truly human; he is the only Saviour of fallen men and women. So he was named 'Jesus' ('Yah [Jehovah] is Salvation'). He came to live a perfect life and die on the cross as the substitute for sinners so that they might be reconciled with God (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17–21). To do this he had to be the 'anointed one' ('Messiah' from the Hebrew or 'Christ' from the Greek). Though born in Bethlehem, as God he was in existence before his human birth and indeed even before the creation of the world (cf. John 1:1–3; 8:56–58; 17:5, 24; Philipians 2:6; Colossians 1:15–16; 2:9; Hebrews 1:2–3). Jesus Christ is LORD!

The Old Testament

The Old Testament foretells Christ's first coming. (See Psalm 110:1; Isaiah 9:6–7; 42:1–3 [cf. Matthew 12:18–21]; Daniel 9:25; Malachi 3:1–2.) At various points in the Old Testament, occasions are recorded which are interpreted by some as signifying that the Son of God appeared to people before his Incarnation – 'Christophanies'.

Prophets, priests and kings were anointed, and Jesus was anointed to hold all those three offices – he was anointed with the Holy Spirit (not oil); and his crown was made of thorns (not gold and jewels).

Leviticus 8:12 (cf. Hebrews 4:14); Deuteronomy 18:15, 18–19 (cf. Acts 3:22–26); 1 Samuel 16:12–13; 2 Samuel 7:16 (cf. Luke 1:32–33); Psalm 110:4 (cf. Hebrews 5:6, 10); Isaiah 61:1–2 (cf. Luke 4:18–19); Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 1:1, 23; 2:1–6; 3:16–17; 21:5; 27:29.

His Holy Life

Adam, the first man, disobeyed God and drew all humanity into his sinfulness – see Genesis chapter 3. Jesus, the Son of God (born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem) became the second Adam but did not succumb to sin. Jesus Christ fulfilled all righteousness and went about doing nothing but good.

Isaiah 7:13–14; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:35; John 8:46; Acts 10:38; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22.

His Atoning Death – the Crucifixion

For six terrible hours Jesus hung upon the cross, voluntarily dying for the sins of mankind. Although he was in indescribable physical pain, in an even more terrible way he was in a position of temporary alienation from his Father – because he was the sin-bearer for us. This is something that no human can truly understand (see Matthew 27:45). Jesus looked out over the city that had cast him out to die. The soldiers at his feet threw dice for his clothes. The priests were glad at their 'victory'. The holiday crowd looked on. 'The world in type and reality was there before him – the world for which he was dying.' (Joe Church)

Because of the perfect humanity and divinity of Jesus, he was able to offer himself on the cross as the substitute for sinners, bearing the penalty for their sins, making it possible for fallen people to be reconciled to God – redeemed people, members of his body.

Psalm 22:1–21; Isaiah 50:4–7; 52:13–53:12; Zechariah 11:10–13; 13:7; Matthew 20:28; 21:42; 26:31; 27:9–10, 29; 33–50; Mark 15:22–39; Luke 23:27–48; John 12:32; 19:17–19; Romans 4:25; 5:6–11; 2 Corinthians 5:17–21; Galatians 3:13.

His Life-Giving Exaltation

The astonishing work of Christ went further than dealing with the objective guilt of sinners, and death, the penalty for sin. By the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ, and through the work of the promised Holy Spirit, the pardoned are given new spiritual life. By adoption and grace, believers could now know the Spirit of sonship (see Romans 8:15). The only-begotten Son of God, the Son of Man, was raised from the dead and exalted – now those who are led by the Spirit can cry, 'Abba, Father'.

Acts 1:8; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5; 11:26; 1 John 2:27.

His Second Coming to Reign

Moreover, the exalted Christ will one day return as King and Judge of all, thus ushering in a new order. Jesus Christ is 'King of kings and Lord of lords'. Every knee shall bow before him.

Matthew **24:27–31**, **39**; **25:31–46**; Acts **1:9–11**; **17:31**; 1 Timothy **6:14–16**; 2 Timothy **4:8**; Revelation **11:15**; **17:14**; **19:16**.

Jesus is also given other titles in Scripture which further reveal his character

EMMANUEL = *God with us* (Isaiah **7:14**; Matthew **1:23**).

THE WORD = *Logos*. To the Hebrews, a word was more than a mere sound, it had active power – as when God spoke the world into existence (Genesis **1**). To the Greeks, 'logos' meant both the 'inward' thought and its 'outward' expression. Since the Son of God is God and his manifestation in human form, we can see that 'the Word' was a perfect title for Christ – God making himself actively known to mankind. John **1:1–4**; Hebrews **1:3**; Revelation **19:13**.

THE LORD 'Kurios' [Yahweh/Jehovah]. See Luke **10:1**; John **21:7**; Acts **10:36**; Romans **1:4**; **10:9**; 1 Corinthians **15:57**; Philippians **2:11**.

SON OF GOD A title highlighting his deity. See Matthew **4:3**, **6**; **27:43**; Mark **15:39**; Luke **1:35**; **22:70**; John **1:14**, **3:16**; Philippians **2:5–11**; Titus **2:13**; Revelation **2:18**.

SON OF MAN A title highlighting his humanity (some 80 times in the New Testament). See Daniel **7:13–14**; Matthew **8:20**; **24:37–44**; Luke **19:10**; John **3:13**.

LAMB OF GOD The substitutionary sacrifice for sinners, the ultimate Passover Lamb. See John **1:29**, **36**; 1 Corinthians **5:7**.

LAST ADAM The source of a new redeemed humanity – to those who will trust in him as Saviour. See 1 Corinthians **15:45–49**.

Note

For more free material on Jesus, see the Glory to Glory Publications' website, and *The Birth of Christ*, particularly chapter 6.