



WHO
IS
JESUS
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*Dedicated to
My beloved grandchildren
With the earnest prayer and hope
That you will come to know
Who Jesus is.
I love you most dearly.*

July 25, 2021.

Who Is Jesus?

Just over two thousand years ago a Child was born into this world and the world would never be the same again. Before this Child was conceived, the angel Gabriel appeared to a young virgin, whose name was Mary, who was betrothed to be married and told her, “you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.... The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God” (Lk.1:31, 32, 35). And then the angel would appear to the husband-to-be and tell him, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.²¹ She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for (it is) He will save His people from their sins” (Matt.1:20-21). Joseph obeyed the angel.

The young couple were told up front :

- That the conceived Child would be “a son”.
- That they must name Him “Jesus”.

- That He will be called the Son of the Most High God and the Son of God.

When the Child was born, angels appeared to some shepherds and told them, “for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Lk.2:11). The word “Christ” is “Messiah”. Actually, the angel said (as recorded by Luke), “who is Messiah-Lord”. The angel did not say, as some suggest, “who is the Messiah of the Lord.” The meaning is, “the Messiah who IS the Lord.” This is a very astounding statement. This Child is not just another deliverer like one of the judges in Israel. This Child is a Savior who is Messiah-Lord.

There is another important point to note here. These shepherds were Jews. They spoke Hebrew or Aramaic. They would have heard the angel saying, “a Savior, who is Messiah-Yahweh.” Note carefully the three titles given to or used to describe the Child : Savior, Messiah, Yahweh. This Child is the promised Messiah who is also Savior and Yahweh. Now note this statement that is found in Isa.49:26; 60:16, “know that I, the LORD, am your Savior.” The capitalized word, LORD, is the Hebrew “Yahweh”.

“Yahweh” is God’s revealed name in the Old Testament. (cf. Exod.6:2-3; Isa.42:8). The angel said to the shepherds that the Child born in Bethlehem is Israel’s Yahweh!!

II

Jesus was born in Bethlehem but He grew up in Nazareth. Like Joseph, Jesus became a carpenter. He lived in Nazareth until He was 30 years. Then He left Nazareth and launched into His itinerant ministry of teaching, preaching, healing, and training His twelve disciples. Now, there are those who make the curious claim that eighteen years in Jesus' life are missing and unaccounted for in the Bible. These 18 years are from age 12 to 30. This claim is nonsense and the suggestions about where Jesus spent those 18 years are equally nonsensical.

Let us consider the following : in keeping with Jewish custom, when Jesus was 12 years old, His parents took Him to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover (Lk.2:41-42). When the celebration was over, we are told in Lk.2:51, "And He went down with them (His parents) and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them." Note the words, "He continued in subjection". They mean exactly what they say, bearing in mind that subjection includes the idea of obedience. In other words, Jesus lived His life under the rule and authority of His parents until the time came for

Him to leave home and begin the work that His Heavenly Father gave Him to do. Now, if Jesus did not live in and grow up in Nazareth, how do we account for the following statements?

Matt.13:54-56, the people of Nazareth were saying, “Where *did* this man *get* this wisdom and *these* miraculous powers? ⁵⁵ **Is not this the carpenter’s son?** Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then *did* this man *get* all these things?”

Mk.6:2-3, “**Is not this the carpenter?**” Jesus is described as the carpenter’s son. And then Jesus is specifically described as “the carpenter”. In other words, the people were saying, He is one of us. We know Him. He grew up among us. So, from where did He get all this knowledge and wisdom and power? In Jn.8:28 Jesus said, “I speak these things as the Father taught Me.” In Jn.12: 49 Jesus said, “the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.”

Lk.4:16, note carefully the emphasis in this verse : “He came to Nazareth **where He had been brought up.**” After

hearing Jesus' "gracious words", the amazed people of Nazareth who knew Him were saying with a sense of puzzlement (vs.22), "Is this not Joseph's son?" The question expects a "yes" answer and can be translated, "This is Joseph's son, isn't it?"

Jn.6:41-42, "Therefore the Jews were grumbling ... [and] were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" Note, "the Jews" is a reference that goes beyond the people of Nazareth. They knew Joseph and Mary and that Jesus was their son.

Jn.7:15, "The Jews were astonished, (at Jesus' teachings), saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?", that is, educated as a rabbi.

These verses are sufficient to prove that :

- (1) The claim that there are 18 missing years in Jesus' life is nonsense.
- (2) The claim that the Bible is silent about those years in equally nonsensical.
- (3) Jesus was brought up in Nazareth and became known as Joseph's son, and as "the carpenter".

III

When Jesus began His ministry, He made claims about Himself that no Jew ever made in the history of Israel. He made claims, that in the minds of monotheistic Jews, were blasphemous. He claimed to be God. He claimed to be the Son of God. Consider these verses :

Jn.5:17-18, (emphases mine), “[Jesus] answered them, “**My** Father is working until now, and I Myself am working. For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God **His own** Father, making Himself **equal with** God.” Jesus was not saying here that God is the Father of all. The Jews would have accepted that. Jesus was claiming that God is “**My** Father” in a very special and unique way. That claim meant Jesus was of the same nature as His Father. This involved divinity and equality with the Father. The Jews who were listening clearly understood what Jesus was saying. And to these Jews, this was blasphemy and worthy of death.

Jn.10:33, “The Jews answered Him, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out *to be* God.” This statement is emphatic. What the Jews actually said was : “You, being man, make Yourself God!” The context here goes back to vs.30 where Jesus said, “I and the Father are one.” This statement emphasizes Jesus’ essential unity with the Father. He and the Father belong together. The Jews clearly understood the implications of what Jesus said and vs.31 says, “The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.”

The word “again” takes us back to Jn.8:58-59. Jesus said to Jews, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM” (Gk. *ego eimi*). “Truly” (literally, “Amen”) is the solemn and emphatic formula for saying, “I tell you the truth”. “Truly, truly” doubles the solemnity and emphasis. The Jews clearly understood Jesus’ “I AM”. (cf. Exod.3:14). To the Jews, Jesus’ “I AM” would be blasphemy. The Jews understood that the name “I AM” identifies God (Yahweh) as the self-existent, self-sufficient, eternally present One. And so, they said to Jesus, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen

Abraham?” And then they picked up stones to throw at Jesus.

Jn.19:7, “The Jews answered [Pilate], “We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out *to be* the Son of God.” The penalty for blasphemy was death.

In Matt.26:63 the high priest put Jesus under the most solemn oath that compelled Jesus to answer and tell the truth. The high priest said to Jesus, “I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.”⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, “You have said it *yourself*.” In other words, YES!”. Now note the response of the high priest in vs.65, “Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has blasphemed!”” The high priest had no interest in truth.

IV

Was Jesus blaspheming? Or was Jesus telling the truth? Let us look at the Biblical testimony. We begin with Jn.1:1. John (a Jewish monotheist) wrote, “In the beginning was the Word.” “The Word” (Gk. Logos) is a reference to Jesus. “In the beginning” can be paraphrased “before the world was created” or “before time was”. So John was saying, “In the beginning (that is, before the world was created and before time) was the Word.” This statement references Gen.1:1, “In the beginning God created....” In the beginning, that is, before time and creation, God was already there and He created. Now John is telling us that in the beginning, before time and creation, the Word was already there and He created (vs.3). Anyone who exists before time and creation is eternal. Gen.1:1 tells us God is eternal. Jn.1:1 tells us the Word (Jesus) is eternal.

Note now the verb “was”. The verb “was” is a Greek imperfect tense and expresses timeless (eternal) existence. John’s first statement is telling us that the Word, who has existed timelessly (eternally), was present in the beginning. You would note that John used the verb “was” four times

in vss.1 & 2. God is eternal, which means God has neither beginning nor end. And the Word is also eternal. In Rev.22:12-13 Jesus said, “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” (see also Rev.1:8; 21:6).

Secondly, John wrote, “and **the** Word was (eternally) toward **the** God.” (I have used here a literal translation of John’s Greek statement.) Take note of the definite article, “the”, with Word and God. What is John telling us here? Firstly, John is telling us that **the** Word and **the** God are two distinct eternal Beings. “The God” is obviously “the Father”. Secondly, John is telling us that the Word has existed eternally “toward”, that is, in the closest possible face-to-face personal relationship with the God. John has lifted the curtain to give us a peek into the God-Head. What does that peek tell us? In the God-Head you would find two distinct eternal Beings, the God (the Father) and the Word (Jesus).

Thirdly, John wrote, “and the Word was (eternally) God.” John did not write, “and God was the Word.” John’s

statement is not reversible. The definite article with “Word” identifies for us the subject of the verb “was”. John did not write, “and the Word was a god.” That would be an idolatrous statement and John, a monotheistic Jew, would not make such a statement. If the Word is “a god”, then how would you explain Isa.45:5, “I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God”? (see also vs.6, 14, 18, 21, 22; 46:9).

Now it has been claimed that the absence of the definite article, “the”, with “God” presumes the presence of the indefinite article “a”. That is completely erroneous. Firstly, the Greek language does not have an indefinite article. Secondly, there is no such grammar rule in the Greek language. Thirdly, if this rule was true, then it would be impossible to say in the Greek, “the Word was God.” Fourthly, if John had said, “the Word was the God”, he would have contradicted his second statement in which he distinguished the Word from the God. So what is John telling us? John is telling us in the most emphatic manner about the nature of the Word. The Word is God. The Word is fully God. The Word is distinguished from the God but He is also fully God. The infinite eternal mystery of God!!

Now just in case you missed John's point, John repeated all he said in vs.1 in one brief statement in vs.2 (literal), "This One was in the beginning with the God." And then in vs.3, John identified the Word as the Creator. I want you to note John's literal emphasis, "apart from Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being." So you ask : who is the Creator? God the Father or God the Son? The answer is "both". The Bible teaches the Father created through the Son. (see Col.1:16; Heb.1:1-2).

Jn.1:1 connects naturally to vs.14 with the use of the word "and". John wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, **and** the Word was with the God, **and** the Word was God.... **And** the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." In vs.14, John changed his verb. The verb "became" tells us the Word, who is the eternal God, entered time or creation. And so, we can paraphrase, "And the Word entered time (or creation) as a real flesh (and blood) human being, and took up residence with us." Mystery of mysteries, the eternal God became Man!!

Now note vs.18, "No one has seen God at any time; **the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father**, He has explained *Him*." (Emphasis mine). John is describing

Jesus as “the only begotten God” or “the one and only God.” One writer said we can also say, “God, the One and Only, who is in the bosom of the Father.” The statement is utterly radical. Only the Son, who has the very nature of God, is able to give an authentic exposition of God to man. (cf. Heb.1:3). The same word, “begotten” is used in Jn.3:16. Jesus is “His only begotten Son”, that is, God’s only, unique, one-of-a-kind Son. I do not want you to miss it, so I will repeat : Jesus is the only begotten God. Jesus is the only begotten Son.

We go now to Jn.12:37-41, “But though He (Jesus) had performed so many signs before them, *yet* they were not believing in Him. ³⁸ *This was* to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: “LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?” ³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, ⁴⁰ “HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM.” ⁴¹ **These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.**” (Emphasis mine).

Whose glory did Isaiah see? John is referencing here Isa.6:1-3, “In the year of King Uzziah’s death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple.² Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.³ And one called out to another and said,

“Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts,
The whole earth is full of His glory.”

Isaiah saw the “Lord” (Heb. Adonai) who is “the LORD (Heb. Yahweh) of hosts”. John is telling us that the “LORD” Isaiah saw was Jesus. John is identifying Jesus with Yahweh and saying that in his vision Isaiah saw Jesus’ glory and spoke of Jesus. Pause for a moment and meditate on this.

We go now to Jude 1:5 which says, “Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.” This is the New American Standard Bible (NASB 1995) translation of this verse. But in its marginal notes, the

NASB gives us an alternative reading, “that Jesus, after saving a people out of Egypt.” I checked with the Greek New Testament (Aland & Aland 5th Revised Edition 2014) and it has “Iesous” (Jesus) in this verse. The notes in the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (27th edition) states, “The reading Iesous enjoys the strongest support from a variety of early witnesses.” Now take note of the following translations :

- Lexham English Bible (LEB) (2012), “Now I want to remind you, *although* you know everything once and for all, that Jesus, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, the second time destroyed those who did not believe.”
- New Living Translation (NLT) (2015), “So I want to remind you, though you already know these things, that Jesus first rescued the nation of Israel from Egypt, but later he destroyed those who did not remain faithful.”
- New English Translation (NET) (2019), “Now I desire to remind you (even though you have been fully informed of these facts once for all) that

Jesus, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, later destroyed those who did not believe.” The textual notes in the NET are too long to quote but definitely worth reading.

- English Standard Version (ESV) (2007), “Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.”

I want you to note what Jude is saying. He is writing to an audience who “fully knew” that it was Jesus who rescued Israel from Egypt and judged the unfaithful in the wilderness. This is an astounding claim.

Now finally, I want to turn your attention to three passages that make the same point. Bear with me in my necessary use of the Greek. You do not have to know Greek to follow this.

2Thess.1:12, “*to* (of the) *theou* (*God*) *homon* (*of us*) *kai* (and) *kuriou* (Lord) *Iesou* (Jesus) *Christou* (Christ).” The verse says (literal), “of **the** our God and Lord, Jesus

Christ.” The verse does not say, “of **the** our God and **the** Lord, Jesus Christ.”

Tit.2:13, “*tou (of the) megalou (great) theou (God) kai (and) soteris (Savior) humon (of us) Iesou (Jesus) Christou (Christ).*” The verse says (literal), “of **the** great God and Savior of us, Jesus Christ.” The verse does not say, “of **the** great God and **the** Savior of us, Jesus Christ.”

2Pet.1:1, “*tou (of the) theou (God) humon (of us) kai (and) soteris (Savior) Iesou (Jesus) Christou (Christ).*” The verse says (literal) “of **the** our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” The verse does not say, “of **the** our God and **the** Savior, Jesus Christ.”

The statements in these verses consist of two parts. I have italicized the first part in each statement so that you can identify the two parts. The word “and” (*kai*), repeated in each statement, connects the two parts in the statement. Note carefully that each expression begins with the definite article in the genitive case, “of the” (*tou*). The one definite article, “the”, governs the entire statement and makes the two parts into one. The one definite article tells us only ONE person is being described here, and that is, Jesus

Christ. Jesus Christ is being described as “God and Lord” and “God and Savior”. In the words of Paul, “the Christ according to the flesh ... [is] God blessed forever. Amen” (Rom.9:5). If there were two definite articles, then, it would mean that two specific individuals were being identified : the God and the Lord; the God and the Savior. The three statements, with one definite article, are clearly teaching us that Jesus Christ is God, Lord, and Savior. This brings us full circle to where we started in Lk.2:11.

Now, I want you to note what the apostle Paul does in his letter to Titus.

In Tit.2:13 he described Jesus as “of the great God and Savior of us, Jesus Christ.”

In Tit.3:4 he described God (Father) as “of the God our Savior.”

In Titus 3:6 he described Jesus as “through Jesus Christ, the Savior of us.”

The Father is our God and Savior. Jesus is our God and Savior.

In Tit.3:5 he mentioned the “Holy Spirit.”

All three members of the Triune God-Head are mentioned from Tit.2:13 – 3:6. With the greatest of ease, Paul, a monotheistic Jew and a former Pharisee among Pharisees

(Acts 23:6; 26:5), identified the God who is one, Yahweh (Deut.6:4), as the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

As I bring this section of the study to a close, let me say that the New Testament is filled with passages that clearly teach that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the eternal God who became the God-Man, a real flesh and blood human being. John wrote his gospel to prove that “the Christ, the Son of God, is Jesus”, the Man from Nazareth. (Jn.20:31; cf. Acts 2:22). I deliberately chose the passages above because they are the ones that are used by unbelievers and cults to try to prove that Jesus is not God.

V

Who is Jesus? He is the I AM. He is the eternal God. He is the eternal Son of God. He is the second member in the Triune God-Head. He is the Son of God who became a real flesh and blood human being. He is the God-Man, fully God and fully Man, unmixed, in the same Person. You say, “I do not understand all of this.” Who told you that your puny finite mind would be able to fully comprehend the infinite eternal God who fills heaven and earth? (cf. Jer.23:24).

Who is Jesus? He is the only Savior of sinners. The angel said, “for it is He who will save His people from their sins” (Matt.1:21). Paul wrote, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1Tim.1:15). Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; **no one** comes to the Father but through Me.” And Peter said to the Jewish religious leaders, “there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). In Exod.3, Moses asked God, “What is [Your] name?” And God answered, “I AM” (vs.14). Jesus said in Jn.8:24, “unless you believe

that I AM, you will die in your sins.” You must make the confession Thomas confessed to Jesus, “My Lord and My God!” (Jn.20:28).

Jesus asked His disciples the question, “Who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt.16:15-16). Now you must answer the same question :

Who do you say Jesus is? Your answer to this question may well determine your eternal destiny when you stand before Jesus in the final judgment. Acts 17:31 says God “has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.” That Man whom God raised from the dead is Jesus.