

✝ WHO IS JESUS? ✝

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*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall
make you free" (Jn. 8:32)*

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The only name

Amid all the false religions that originated from the kingdom of darkness, the counterfeit Jesuses emerging from falsifications of Christianity, the deadness of apostate Protestantism, and the deceiving spirits that lead millions of nominal believers astray, the Lord Jesus Christ still stands out as the shining light of a spiritually dark world. He is the only real and lasting solution to a desperately depraved human race that lies in the sway of the Wicked One. In Him and His unique gospel of salvation alone, true life is to be found for all who are dead in their sins:

- † He is the way, the truth and the life to all who find themselves on the road to death, and who can't escape the confusing maze of Satan due to the blinding of their mind and spirit. To all who come to Him He offers life and life abundantly.
- † He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. It is not necessary to continue struggling with the burden of your sins and iniquities, and to make futile efforts to rid yourself of the growing 'cargo of death' that you are carrying with you.
- † He is the eternal and unwavering Rock of the Ages upon whom people can build their lives. The decadent nations of the world are challenged to come to Christ and found their constitutions, social systems and moral norms on the Triune God in these uncertain times.

It is of vital importance to know the Lord Jesus Christ personally – not only as Saviour, but also as the true Friend who will never forsake you, the King who will lead and guide you, the heavenly Bridegroom who will come again to take you to Him, and in all the other wonderful capacities in which He reveals Himself to us. After the life-changing day in which you confessed your sins and invited Him into your heart, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour (2 Pet. 3:18).

The apostle Paul was strongly determined to gain more knowledge and an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, and to dedicate himself to realising this objective. He said: "I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord... that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death" (Phil. 3:8, 10). That should be the great motivating power in our lives:

"...till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:13-14).

The Lord Jesus Christ reveals Himself in all His fullness through His personal and descriptive names recorded in the Bible. If we already know Him as Saviour and Lamb of God, a study of the meanings of His other wonderful names will lead us into to a deeper knowledge and greater appreciation of the Man of Golgotha. To behold the glory of the only begotten Son of the Father will enrich your spiritual life and motivate you to love Him with all your heart.

Translation of names

Before the names of Jesus are discussed, a few observations must be made on the translation of biblical names. Allegations are made by some people that the Grecised names of the Lord, from which correlating names in other languages have been derived, have a connotation with the Greek mythology and Greek idols. Because of this perception, various efforts have in recent years been made to revert to the original Hebrew names:

God is referred to as *El*, like in *El Shaddai* [*Almighty God*] and *Beth-El* [*House of the Lord*], and also as *Elohim*, *Adonai*, and *Yahweh*. Jesus is called *Yeshua* or *Yashua*, sometimes spelled *Y'shua*, while Christ [*The Anointed One*] is *Mashiach*, and Jesus Christ becomes *Yeshua Ha Mashiach*.

One of the problems in this regard is that the original Hebrew text was written without vowels. Linguists are not in agreement on which vowels should be used in every case. The covenant name for God in the Old Testament is written *YHWH (I Am)*. For a long time it was pronounced *Jehovah*, but later more correctly as *Yahweh* or *Yahwah*. There are also those who say that the covenant name must have three vowels and should be *Yahuweh*, and Jesus *Yahushua*.

In the Greek text of the New Testament *Yeshua* has been translated *'Iesous*. The *'I* is aspirated to become a *Y* or *J*, hence *Yesous [Jesus]* or *Jesous [Jesus]* are acceptable renderings. The Old Testament names for God were Grecised and indicated as *Theos* and *Kurios* in the New Testament.

The statement by some people that the Grecised names of *Yahweh* and *Yeshua*, including the related names in other languages, are dishonouring because they originated from the idols in the Greek mythology, must be totally rejected on linguistic grounds. The fact is that most of these names, including Hebrew names such as *Elohim* and *Mashiach*, are generic terms with different applications. Depending on how they are used, terms such as *god*, *lord*, *master*, etc., may refer to humans, false gods as well as the true God.

The very first term used for God in the Bible, is *Elohim*: "In the beginning God (*Elohim*) created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). However, the same term is also used in respect of the idols: "I *am* the LORD thy God (*Yahweh* your *Elohim*)... Thou shalt have no other gods (*elohim*) before Me...Ye shall not make *to be* with Me gods (*elohim*) of silver, neither shall ye make for yourselves gods (*elohim*) of gold" (Ex. 20:2-3, 23).

The same generic nature is shared by the New Testament terms of *Theos* and *Kurios*. In Acts 7:40, *theos* refers to idols, and in 1 Cor. 8:5 *theos* and *kurios* also refer to foreign gods. In 2 Cor. 4:4 it is said that the god (*theos*) of this world (the devil) has blinded the minds of people. However, the same verse also refers to the true God (*Theos*).

It all depends what content is given to a term such as *lord* or *god*, as is evident from the context within which it is used. That is the reason why God often qualifies Himself in the Bible as the Almighty God, the Creator of Heaven and earth, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Holy One of Israel, the eternal I Am, etc.

If a name or term is poorly described and inadequately qualified, it loses some of its meaning. In that event *Jesus* can become *another Jesus* (2 Cor. 11:4) and *Christ* can be re-identified to become a *false Christ* (Mt. 24:5). For this reason it is very important to know the names and attributes of God and the Lord Jesus. If you know exactly who you are worshipping you will never confuse the God of heaven and earth with the god of this world, or the true Christ with the Antichrist and the many false christs.

The allegation that the names of Greek idols were introduced to the Bible by heathens (the non-Jews, or *goyim*), is also historically incorrect. Some of these names were used in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) in the third century before Christ. In c. 270 B.C. 70 Jewish scholars of Alexandria translated the Old Testament to make it accessible to Greek-speaking Jews. *Septuagint* is derived from the Latin word for 70, as the translation was done by 70 persons. It is obvious that this translation was done under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The 70 persons worked independent from one another, but after completion there manuscripts were identical.

The integrity of the Septuagint, in which the Grecised names for God were used, could never be questioned. The Lord Jesus Himself quoted from it, and also the authors of the New Testament books. It is therefore not justified to start a campaign about the names of God. We must rather take care how we identify, understand, use, respect, and honour these names. Safeguard yourself from any falsifications or narrowing of its meaning. His name is called Wonderful (Is. 9:6). Have you discovered His wonderful names?

NAMES OF THE LORD JESUS

The names of the Lord Jesus Christ can be divided into four categories, viz. His personal name, His names as God, His official name and official titles, and His descriptive names:

Personal name

The name *Jesus* (*The Lord [Yahweh] is Salvation*; Heb. *Yeshua*) was given by God Himself to His Son. An angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph and said:

“Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Mt. 1:20-21).

To meet God’s standard to be the Saviour of Israel and the whole world, Jesus had to be the perfect God-man. He had to become man and be born in a human generation (the royal lineage of David) to be *the Son of man*. That would enable Him to substitute fellow men and atone for their sins. For this very reason, Jesus couldn’t be begat by any man so as not to inherit the depraved nature of fallen man (“there is none that doeth good, no, not one” - Ps. 14:3). The heavenly Father begat Jesus through the work of the Holy Spirit so that He, as man, could also be *the Son of God*. That is why He was born from a virgin:

“...and the virgin’s name *was* Mary... And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also the Holy One who shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Lk. 1:27, 35).

Jesus, the exalted Son of God, was prepared to humble Himself to be sent by His Father to earth to take on the lowly form of man. As the *Son of man* He explicitly subjected Himself to the authority and will of His Father (Mt. 26:39).

His name as God

In His capacity as God, Jesus is equal to and one with the Father; hence He could say: “I and *My* Father are one” (Jn. 10:30). To His disciples He said: “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father” (Jn. 14:9). The prophet Isaiah gave the promise that to the people of Israel a Son would be born who would also be God and one with the Father:

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace: (Is. 9:6).

In John 5, the equality of Jesus and His Father is confirmed in a sevenfold way. They are:

- ◆ equal in works (v. 19);
- ◆ equal in knowledge (v. 20);
- ◆ equal in quickening power (v. 21);
- ◆ equal in judgement (v. 22);
- ◆ equal in the honour due to them (v. 23);
- ◆ equal in recreating power (v. 24); and
- ◆ equal in self-existence (v. 26).

The apostle Paul realised the full extent of the revelation of God the Father through God the Son: “For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9).

It is important to know that God the Son has co-existed for all eternity with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. This is not a bond that was established at the birth of Jesus as the Son of man: “[His] going forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2).

John says that the Word that became flesh existed from the beginning with God, and that the world was created through Him:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light

shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not... And 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” (Jn. 1:1-5, 14).

Paul adds to the divine revelation of the Lord Jesus:

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible... And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist” (Col. 1:15-17).

Jesus is not only man but *Lord* (*Kurios* – Acts 10:36), and *God* (*Theos* – Rom. 9:5). It is important to address Him in these capacities when we pray to Him or speak to others about Him. Before His resurrection, ascension, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was only addressed as *Master* (*Didaskalos*, *Kathegetes*, *Rabbi*, or *Epistates*). Only a few of His disciples realised that He was the promised Messiah (*Mashiach* or *Christ*) and the Son of God (Mt. 16:13-17). His glorification was followed by the full revelation of His Godhead. After this, He was not only addressed as *Master* but as *Lord* and *God*.

In his letter, Peter writes about “God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:1). John says that “Jesus Christ... is the true God, and eternal life” (1 Jn. 5:20). Paul also refers to Jesus as “Lord” (Eph. 1:15).

We should really not talk about Jesus without tying His personal name to His Godhead (*Lord Jesus*), or to His official name (*Jesus Christ*), or to both names (*the Lord Jesus Christ*). In the light of the widespread denial of the virgin birth and Deity of the Lord Jesus we should always worship and proclaim Him as Lord and God.

We should also refrain from only talking about *Christ* (*The Anointed*). It is not wrong but people often refer to *Christ* and the *Christian life* in a rather formal and impersonal way. One gets the impression that many of them don't know Him personally and therefore don't use His personal name.

You must remember that there is no other name under

the heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of *Jesus* (Acts. 4:12). Call upon the name of Jesus while always recognising his position as Christ and Lord:

“Therefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *those* in heaven, and *those* on earth, and *those* under the earth; and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11).

Compared to the disciples, we have the advantage of a fuller revelation of the Lord Jesus. They were amazed at His power and authority, but did not know Him in all His fullness. On the sea they exclaimed: “What [kind] of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?” (Mk. 4:41).

The Holy Spirit gives believers more insight into the unsearchable riches of the greatness, omnipotence and the saving grace of their Saviour, “that ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3: 18-19). We don’t have to live in ignorance about the wonderful attributes and love of God.

His official name

The Lord Jesus is also *The Anointed One* (Heb. *Mashiach*, Gr., *Christos*, Eng. *Messiah* or *Christ*). According to a messianic prophecy in Isaiah, He was to be anointed for His special mission to the world:

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD [*Adonai Yahweh*] is upon Me; because the LORD [*Yahweh*] hath anointed Me to preach good tidings” (Is. 61:1).

Christ is an inclusive official title that represents seven titles, or official capacities, for which He was anointed and sent to the world.

OFFICIAL TITLES OF JESUS CHRIST

The seven offices for which Christ was anointed, and the titles associated with them, are as follows:

1. Lamb of God

The most important reason why Jesus Christ was anointed and sent to the world, was to redeem fallen humanity from their sins. To be able to do this He had to come in the appearance of man that He could offer Himself as a sacrifice for our sins by shedding His blood and physically dying on the cross. He had to become the sacrificial Lamb of God:

“For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Therefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared for Me... Then said I, Behold, I come [in the volume of the book it is written of Me], to do Thy will, O God... By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*” (Heb. 10:4-5, 7, 10).

The spiritual law that “without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Heb. 9:22; Lev. 17:11) was impressed on Israel 1500 years before the coming of the Messiah. Thousands of sacrificial animals were slaughtered according to the Old Testament laws in order that Levitical priests could atone for the sins of the people.

All these sacrifices were only shadows that pointed to the slaying of the Lamb of God in the fullness of time. It was John the Baptist who announced the coming of the Lamb:

“Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world” (Jn. 1:29).

He made the final sacrifice, thereby terminating all the recurrent and incomplete sacrifices of the Old Testament: “[*Christ*] needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins and then for the people’s: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself” (Heb. 7:27).

Isaiah prepared the people of Israel long before the time for the great sacrifice of the Messiah as the ultimate Lamb of God:

“But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed... He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He was [led] as a lamb to the slaughter” (Is. 53:5, 7).

Do you give due recognition to the atonement for sins that the Lamb made through the shedding of His blood and the giving of His life on the cross? Have you accepted it in faith and was your life completely changed? Consider the deep significance that this sacrifice *should* have to you.

At the institution of the Holy Communion the signs of the bread and the wine were meant to be a poignant reminder of the broken body and shed blood of the Lamb (Lk. 22:19-20). The question is whether we vividly experience the Lord Jesus with regard to the great sacrifice that He made on our behalf. No conception of Christ is complete without the significance of His blood:

“Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood... that He might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 3:25-26).

† **Our salvation and rebirth is based on the blood:**

- ◆ We are *justified by His blood*, and saved from the wrath through Him (Rom. 5:9).
- ◆ In Him we have the *redemption through His blood*, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace (Eph. 1:7).
- ◆ We are *redeemed with the precious blood of Christ*, as of a lamb without blemish or spot (1 Pet. 1:18-19).
- ◆ Jesus Christ *washed us from our sins in His own blood* (Rev. 1:5).
- ◆ We are included in a *New Testament in the blood of Christ* (1 Cor. 11:25).

- † **Our continued cleansing is also based on the blood:**
- ◆ If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and *the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin* (1 Jn. 1:7).
 - ◆ *The blood of Christ purges our consciences from dead works to serve the living God* (Heb. 9:14).
 - ◆ When Jesus gave Himself as *a sacrifice for sins*, He perfected forever those who are sanctified (Heb. 10:12, 14).
 - ◆ A little leaven leavens the whole lump. *Purge out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed for us* (1 Cor. 5:6-7).

† **The blood is also a mighty weapon in the spiritual battle against the enemy of our souls:**

- ◆ The martyrs of the great tribulation will overcome Satan and the Antichrist *by the blood of the Lamb*, by the word of their testimony, and by not loving their lives to death (Rev. 12:11). Also to us, there is power in the blood of the Lamb.

It is evident that the capacity of the Lord Jesus as the Lamb of God who gave His life for a dying world, forms the basis for all His offices. Because He paid the ransom for our sins, He confirmed the promises in His prophetic ministry that He would save and lead His people, and ultimately also reign with them. It enables Him to serve as High Priest, Mediator between God and man, Shepherd, Head of His redeemed church, and King over His inheritance. He can also be the Judge of his own servants who were appointed by Him, and on judgement day He will judge all people who have rejected His work of atonement on the cross.

In the book Revelation, it is the Lamb who is mentioned 26 times as the One who will judge the world in the great tribulation because the people are in rebellion against Him. The kings and their subjects will flee to the mountains, hide in the caverns, and say to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on

us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath has come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:16-17).

On the other hand, there will be those who were faithful to the Lamb and who will in gratitude exclaim:

"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10).

Many people put their trust in a 'popular gospel' that is not based upon the blood atonement of the Lamb. They have various substitutes, or false foundations, such as a covenant theology based upon baptismal regeneration (salvation through baptism), moralising (to live a good life), or works holiness (the earning of salvation by good works). We must refrain from any form of self-righteousness and honour the Lamb for the priceless work that He did on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins, and also for the continuous cleansing and sanctifying power of His blood.

2. Prophet

A *prophet* is a person who announces or proclaims the word of God to people, i.e. a *preacher*. Jesus Christ had a strong prophetic ministry. Among His most well-known sermons are the sermon on the mount, the parables, and His prophetic discourse. Many of the great truths about God's plan of salvation were proclaimed during the healings that He performed, at meals, in instruction sessions to His disciples, and in answer to questions asked to Him by people. He revealed truths that were unknown before:

"I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (Mt. 13:35).

An Old Testament rule for prophets is that they had to

be trustworthy messengers who were only to speak the words of God to the people. Nothing should be changed, added or taken away from the message so that it did not become distorted or incomplete. That is the reason why biblical prophecies are the 100% accurate and true words of God. The false prophets were stoned and their prophecies rejected:

“But the prophet, who shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die” (Deut. 18:20).

In His capacity as Prophet, Jesus only uttered words given to Him by the Father:

“For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father who sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak” (Jn. 12:49-50; see also 17:8).

3. High Priest and Mediator

In the Old Testament, the High Priest was the mediator who stood between the people and God. Once a year on the Day of Atonement he entered the Holy of holies to make atonement for the sins of the nation. No other priest was allowed to enter the area where the ark of the covenant was.

Jesus Christ is the High Priest and Mediator of the New Testament (Heb. 8:1-6, 9:15). To hold this office He had to identify with humanity by becoming man Himself, being prepared to be tempted in order to have mercy for the tempted:

“Therefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to [rescue] those who are tempted” (Heb. 2:17-18; see also Heb. 4:15-16).

Jesus did not hold a Levitical priesthood as the Levites were mortal men who succeeded one another. They were also sinful men who first had to sacrifice for their own sins and then for that of the nation. Jesus has an eternal and perfect priesthood:

“[For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec]: By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this *Man*, because He continueth forever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest became us, *who* is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the peoples’: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself. For the law maketh men high priests who have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore” (Heb. 7:21-28).

Do you know this Mediator, Advocate, and High Priest who can sympathise with our infirmities, having already atoned for our sins, and who only lives to make intercession for us? Do you realise your responsibility to follow in His footsteps, to live holy and consecrated to God, and to intercede for others at the throne of grace? Do you enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus on the new and living way that He opened for us through the veil to the mercy seat? (Heb. 10:19-22). Are you a regular visitor here?

We are a royal priesthood who are called to proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light (1 Pet. 2:9). A priest has to address the people on behalf of God (preach), and also intercede at the

throne of grace on behalf of the people (pray). He must live a holy life and be very cautious not to sin and grieve away the Holy Spirit in his life. If he has sinned, he knows where to find grace, and should act immediately:

“If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn. 2:1-2).

4. Shepherd

As the Shepherd of His flock, Christ is absolutely committed to their well-being because He has redeemed them at a very costly price:

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep” (Jn. 10:11).

He gave the following sound assurance:

“I am the door of the sheep... by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved” (Jn. 10: 7, 9).

It is to be appreciated that if He sacrificed His life for the sheep, He will also provide in their every need. That includes protection against their arch-enemy, the devil, who is a thief and a murderer:

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I have come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly” (Jn. 10:10).

The Shepherd leads His sheep by showing them the way, and they follow Him (Jn. 10:4). It is in their own interest to follow the Shepherd, obey His voice and stay near to Him. If they follow their own ways and go astray the devil will attack them and put them in disarray (Jn. 10:12). From this backslidden position there is only one way to take, and that is the way back to the Shepherd who is able to fully restore the lost and wounded sheep:

“For ye were as sheep going astray; but have now returned to the Shepherd and [Overseer] of your souls” (1 Pet. 2:25).

The Shepherd remains faithful and will always meet His obligations towards His flock:

“The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou *art* with me” (Ps. 23:1-4).

We must remember that we live in an evil world that lies in the sway of the devil (1 Jn. 5:19). Temptations, attacks by the enemy, and deadly perils often come our way. The Lord knows which trials are necessary for the testing of our faith, and He allows it. During such afflictions we should always anew surrender ourselves to the “great Shepherd of the sheep” (Heb. 13:20).

We shouldn’t allow any bitterness to enter our hearts if things don’t work out according to our own plans. The ways of the Lord are higher than our ways. We can rest assured that He will make all things, also the afflictions and disappointments, work together for good to those who trust in Him and faithfully dedicate their lives to Him.

The Shepherd also leads us by appointing able people to perform certain functions in the care of His flock:

“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints” (Eph. 4:11-12).

The pastor, in co-operation with the church council, is the shepherd of the congregation. He does not only teach the Word of God, but has pastoral duties to encourage and motivate his members, to give guidance in all important decisions, to counsel those who are in difficult situations, to pray for the sick, to admonish the passive, stubborn and wayward members, and to warn against spiritual dangers:

“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for

filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:2-4).

5. Head of the church

The office of Jesus as Head of the church was a mystery that was only revealed after the establishing of the church. The bond between Him and the church is likened to a marriage relationship:

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body... This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:23, 32).

In Ephesians 5:25-27 it is clearly stated that Christ gave Himself to sanctify and cleanse the church that it should be holy and without blemish. He is our Head and Bridegroom and we must walk in holiness, our garments being without spot or wrinkle. We must be worthy on the day when we will appear before Him. He is the only one who can make us worthy, but it needs our willingness and full co-operation.

The concept of *holiness* also means *to be set apart for the service of the Lord*. In this context we are seen as members of the body of Christ. We all fulfil different but complementary functions in the realisation of the mission and functions of the church of Christ on earth:

"For as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another" (Rom. 12:4-5; for an exposition of the functions of members, see Rom. 12:6-8 and 1 Cor. 12:12-31).

Perform your task and calling only in the power and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. "For by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13). You must also realise that the authority for your spiritual calling is in Christ

who is the Head. In Him you are in a position of victory:

“The God of our Lord Jesus Christ... raised Him from the dead, and set *Him* at His own right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* the Head over all *things* to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:17-23).

6. King

Because the Lord Jesus has all power in heaven and on earth, He also holds the office of King. Within His permissible will the nations can, in this dispensation, rebel against His authority as indeed they do. God allows these actions because He has given man a free will to choose between good and evil. In practice the wrong choices predominate as most people love darkness more than the light because their works are evil (Jn. 3:19). The god of this world (the devil) has blinded their minds (2 Cor. 4:4) and deceived them to follow the way of darkness. Consequently, “the whole world lieth in wickedness” (1 Jn. 5:19).

As Christians we are living in an evil world that hates, oppresses and rejects us because of our faith (Jn. 15:18-19; 16:33; Lk. 6:22-23, 26). We are strangers and pilgrims in a God-rejecting world (Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 2:11) and have a calling to shine as lights in the midst of a wicked and perverted generation.

We are members of a kingdom that is not of this world. The Lord Jesus is our King and we experience His peace in our hearts. But our lives in this world are characterised by conflict against the adverse and hostile forces of darkness (Mt. 10:34). Satan and his kingdom is actively targeting the Christians in an effort to harm the kingdom of heaven.

The situation will dramatically change when Jesus comes to reveal His kingdom on earth and to reign as King:

“And the seventh angel sounded: and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever” (Rev. 11:15).

From the viewpoint of His position as King, three very important events will occur at the second coming of Christ:

○ **Destruction of the enemies of God during the battle of Armageddon**

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns... And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron... And He hath on His [garment] and on His thighs a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS... And I saw the beast (*Antichrist*), and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was [captured], and with him the false prophet who [worked] miracles before him, with which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast, and those who worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat on the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of His mouth” (Rev. 19:11-21).

○ **The restoration of the throne of David in Jerusalem**

“After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: *so* that the rest of [mankind] might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord” (Acts 15:16-17).

○ **Establishing of the millennial reign on earth**

“But in the last days it shall come to pass, *that* the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Mic. 4: 1-3).

“An I saw an angel... and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled... Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:1-3, 6).

To be accounted worthy to reign with Jesus Christ in the millennium, we have to accept and serve Him *now* as the Lamb of God. We must demonstrate to the world that we serve a King who can really change the lives of those who come to Him for salvation.

Our citizenship is in heaven from where we expect the soon coming of Jesus Christ as the King of kings. He will destroy the power of the principalities and rulers of the darkness of the present world and set up His millennial kingdom on earth. The sun of righteousness will rise over a troubled world and completely dispel all the vestiges of darkness and unrighteousness.

7. Judge

The office of the Lord Jesus as Judge is in the first place related to His church (see the booklet *The judgement seat of Christ*). Although Christ will also judge the nations and all lost sinners of all time, His judgement will begin among the believers:

“For the time has *come* that judgement must begin at the house of God: and *if* it first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1 Pet. 4:17).

Christians won't be judged in the sense in which sinners will be judged who will appear before the great white throne on the final judgement day. Believers will only appear before the judgement seat of Christ (the *bema*) where their works will be judged and rewards given to the faithful ones who served the Lord through the power of the Holy Spirit:

“For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). “So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12).

A Christian is not saved by works, but by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8). But after salvation we are needed and used of the Lord in the extension of His kingdom on earth. To these works of dedication He does not only call and command us, but also gives us the power of the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8).

It is of this aspect of our lives that we will have to give account. Those without proper works (the fruit of the Holy Spirit) will appear before the Lord empty-handed, saved as by fire (1 Cor. 3:15). While others will receive the crown of glory, the crown of righteousness, the incorruptible crown, or the crown of life, the servants who hid their talents will only be full of excuses. It will be proved on that day that they didn't seriously regard the following commands given by Christ to His church:

- † “As *my* Father hath sent Me, even so I send you” (Jn. 20: 21).
- † “Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).
- † “...be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).
- † “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thes. 5:17).
- † “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season” (2 Tim. 4:2).
- † “Ye are the salt of the earth... [*and*] the light of the world... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Mt. 5:13-16).
- † “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Mt. 26:41).

A Christian life lived according to these precepts will render your appointment at the judgement seat of Christ a most wonderful experience. “Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing” (Mt. 24:46).

There are also other occasions when Christ will be the Judge. After His second coming He will judge the nations:

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats” (Mt. 25:31-32).

After the millennium, the Lord Jesus Christ will judge all unsaved sinners:

“For the Father judges no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son: That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father who hath sent Him” (Jn. 5:22-23).

No man can escape bowing the knee before Jesus: He is either the Saviour of your soul or the Judge of your soul.

DESCRIPTIVE NAMES OF JESUS CHRIST

There are also a number of descriptive names of the Lord Jesus in the Bible. In these names, emphasis is placed on specific aspects of His Person and work. In this way we can know and understand Him better and love Him more. The following is not a complete list of descriptive names, but only a number of the most common ones:

Light of the world

One of the most telling symbols of the kingdom of heaven is that of light. God Himself dwells in unapproachable light whom no man has seen (1 Tim. 6:16). In His perfect holiness He is exalted and far removed from the depraved lives of mortal men on earth.

Jesus came as the light from on high to shine on those who live in darkness (Lk. 1:78). He could truly say:

“I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (Jn. 8:12).

The fact that so many people still walk in darkness can only be attributed to their wicked hearts that incessantly draw them away from Him who is the light of the world:

“And this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they [were done] in God” (Jn. 3:19-21).

Bread and water of life

The true bread and water of life that alone can satisfy the deep spiritual needs of man come from heaven:

“For the bread of God is He who cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world. Then they said unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am

the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst” (Jn. 6:33-35).

We are not only dependant on Jesus for the rebirth, but also for the daily strengthening and sustaining of the new life. He wishes to be our fresh manna from heaven, day after day, building us up in our most holy faith. He feeds us through the living word. That is why He said, “the words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life” (Jn. 6:63).

Jesus still invites all who are thirsty to come to Him:

“If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink. He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his *heart* shall flow rivers of living water” (Jn. 7:37-38).

Rock and foundation

Jesus Christ is the Rock of Ages that was cleft for us. From His broken body, the blessings of God are flowing to us. The rock at Horeb was a clear type of Christ (the Messiah). God said to Moses:

“Behold, I will stand before thee there on the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink” (Ex. 17:6).

Paul confirms that the smiting of the rock was a type of the body of the Messiah that was broken to release God's blessings to the people (1 Cor. 10:1-4). The water that flowed from the cleft rock was a prophetic indication of the Holy Spirit that was poured out after the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross (cf. Jn. 7:39). We can drink of His boundless mercies, His forgiving love, and His renewing grace.

“Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life” (Ps. 36:8-9).

The Rock of Ages is also a foundation rock. It is a place to build upon. If your life is built upon the Rock Jesus Christ, you are safe for time and eternity.

“For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11).

A wise man builds his house on the Rock (Mt. 7:24-25). To him, the Lord is his rock and fortress. On the day of his salvation he was established on the Rock of Ages:

“He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings” (Ps. 40:2).

The way, the truth and the life

Jesus is the only way to heaven as nobody can go to the Father but by Him (Jn. 14:6). He also said: “I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved” (Jn. 10:9). There is no other entry into the kingdom of heaven. Only one name has been given under the heaven through which we can be saved, and that is the name of Jesus (Acts 4:12).

He is also the truth, His word is the truth, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth who witnesses about Jesus and leads us in all truth (Jn. 16:13).

Furthermore, Jesus is the resurrection and the life (Jn. 11:25-26). Only through Him can a person who was dead in his sins and iniquities be made alive spiritually:

“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light” (Eph. 5:14).

All sinners are subject to the punishment of eternal death, and it is only by virtue of the finished work of Christ on the cross that the punishment of eternal death is regarded as fully served for those who believe in Him:

“The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).

“The chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed” (Is. 53:5).

He died that we may live. Because He rose from the dead on the third day, the resurrection into a new life is given to those who trust in Him as their Saviour. He is the way, the truth and the life to a lost, deceived, and spiritually dead human race.

The living vine

“I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing” (Jn. 15:5).

The vine is used as a symbol of the most sacred things, its juice being the type of Christ’s blood, and its stems and branches the most perfect figure of the mystery of godliness, Christ’s union with His people.

The expression “in Me” denotes the justification that is accounted to us when we are grafted into the vine. The expression “I in you” refers to our deeper union with Christ in sanctification. He becomes our entire life.

Another truth conveyed here is communion: “Abide in Me.” We must keep up fellowship with Christ. It is not a life of drift and impulse, but a moment by moment dependence upon Christ. Paul says: “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him” (Col. 2:6). Our abiding depends upon our obedience: “If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love.”

Sanctification

“But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30).

Jesus is not only our justification and redemption, but also our sanctification. He sets standards for holy living and enables us through His Holy Spirit to make continuous progress to higher levels of sanctification. He promises us the victorious life if we are obedient to Him. The golden rule is: “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16).

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1).

Wisdom

“We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto those who are called... Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor. 1:23-24).

To know God and the Lord Jesus is the beginning of wisdom. Your mind is enlightened to understand and appreciate God’s love and His provision of the salvation of sinners. God’s wisdom is Jesus Christ. People who despise this Wisdom are fools:

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Prov. 1:7).

Through Christ Jesus, God gives us the spirit of wisdom and enlightened eyes of the mind that we may understand the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints (Eph. 1:17-18). The wisdom must also increase in us as we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3; 2 Pet. 3:18).

Servant

As the Son of man, Jesus is the Servant of God who came to earth to do a great work of salvation. Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament announced His coming:

“And now, saith the LORD that formed Me from the womb *to be* His Servant, to bring Jacob again to Him... It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth” (Is. 49:5-6).

“Who *is* among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of His Servant? (Is. 50:10).

“By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many: for He shall bear their iniquities” (Is. 53:11).

The characteristics of a servant is humility and subservience. Jesus warned His disciples strongly against pride and self-exaltation:

“Ye know that those who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whoever will be great among you, shall be your [servant]: and whoever of you will be [great among you], shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be [served], but to [serve], and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Mk. 10:42-45).

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God... made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:5-8).

The bright morning star

In the last chapter of the Bible Jesus says about Himself:

“I am the root and the offspring of David, *and* the bright and morning star” (Rev. 22:16)

The morning star is a symbol of prophetic hope. It is an expectation of a new day that will dawn over this dark and troubled world. In Jesus Christ we have a future of hope. We can look beyond the anxiety, hardships, and sin of the present world to a new world in which righteousness will dwell. Do you have this future vision of hope? Even though it may still be dark around you, the Morning Star will remind you of the soon rising of the Sun of Righteousness:

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star [*the morning star*] arise in your hearts” (2 Pet. 1:19).

Bridegroom

The association between Jesus Christ and His blood-bought saints is so intimate that He likens it to a marriage relationship. He calls Himself the Bridegroom and the true church His bride. At the rapture He will be united with His betrothed bride, never to be separated from her.

Will you be one of the members of the bridal church who will participate in the marriage feast of the Lamb? Not all Christians live holy lives and are well prepared for this occasion. Some of them backslide into spiritual adultery and in so doing disqualify themselves from the future glory of the church. Paul said to the Christians in Corinth:

“I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you* as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent [deceived] Eve through his [craftiness], so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” (2 Cor. 11:2-3; see also 1 Thes. 5:23).

John says that he who has the hope of the coming of the heavenly Bridegroom purifies himself even as He is pure (1 Jn. 3:3).

Just think about the wonderful and most illustrious feast that the Bridegroom has prepared for His marriage:

“Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into Thy lips: therefore God hath blessed Thee forever... Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. All Thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made Thee glad.

“Kings’ daughters *were* among Thy honourable women: upon Thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir... So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for He *is* thy Lord; and worship thou Him... The King’s daughter *is* all glorious within: her clothing *is* [woven with] gold. She shall

be brought to the King in [robes of many colours]; the virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought to Thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace" (Ps. 45:2-15).

Conqueror

Jesus Christ conquered Satan, death and hell! He disarmed principalities and powers and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them (Col. 2:15). He is the mighty Saviour who can break the bonds of every sinner and deliver him from the power of the Evil One. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (Jn. 8:36).

Are you still afflicted by sins, infirmities, and vile habits? Then come to the only Saviour who can forgive you, set you free from the power of sin, and cleanse you from all unrighteousness (1 Jn. 1:8-9). As a liberated person you must put on the armour of light (Rom. 13:12) and guard against new forms of bondage in your life:

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).

"Now thanks *be* unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (2 Cor. 2:14).

You can indeed be more than a conqueror in Christ!

Epilogue: This booklet on the Person and work of the Lord Jesus was written under the deep impression of the fact that we will never be well equipped for the spiritual battle if we only have knowledge about the enemy and his plans. What we primarily need is an intimate knowledge of and relationship with our Saviour and King, Jesus Christ. Only He can endow us with the power of the Holy Spirit to achieve the victory in His name. If we are not spiritually strong, we will never prevail against the forces of darkness. He is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6). "*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*" (Jn. 8:32).