



**Lesson 11**

**THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS CHRIST**

In the previous lesson we saw that God promised Abraham a descendant who would bring a blessing to all peoples. God also promised to King David a special Son, who would reign as king for ever. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who fulfils all these promises (see Luke 1: 32,33).

The name and title 'Jesus Christ' means 'Saviour, Anointed One'. The Hebrew word for 'Christ', or 'Anointed One' is 'Messiah', and for many centuries before Jesus was born the Jews were looking for their Messiah, the Son of David, who would conquer their enemies and give them a place of honour among the peoples of the world.

The miracles which Jesus did convinced many that he was indeed the Messiah, and when he entered Jerusalem only a few days before his death, the crowds welcomed him with joy, shouting,

*"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"* (Matthew 21:9).

The Jews expected that Jesus would use his miraculous powers to lead them to victory over the Romans, who had conquered the land about a hundred years before. Earlier, the people had even thought of making him king by force (John 6:15).

They did not understand the words of their own prophets, who foretold that Messiah must first die upon the cross to save his people from their sins:

*"He was despised and rejected of men . . . he was pierced for our transgressions . . . he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken."* (Isaiah 53:3-8).

It is at his Second Coming that he will fulfil the promises about his kingship:

*"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."* (Revelation 11:15).

**The man Christ Jesus, Son of God**

The angel Gabriel said to Mary that the Lord God would give her son Jesus the throne of his father David, and that his kingdom would never end *"How will this be,"* Mary asked the angel, *"since I am a virgin?"* The angel answered:

*"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."* (Luke 1:31-35)

The human mind cannot understand this miraculous conception of Jesus: but if we believe that God created the universe, we can believe that His power is sufficient to perform such a miracle, something beyond the ordinary course of nature.

*"But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman . . ."* (Galatians 4:4). So Jesus was a man, "born of a woman"- Mary, of the house of David. He is therefore Son of David and Son of God. It is important to understand that although he was miraculously conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, he was also truly human, sharing our human nature. *"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity . . ."* (Hebrews 2:14). The expression which he most often used of himself was 'Son of Man'.

*"For if the many died by the trespass of the **one man** (Adam), how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by grace of the **one man**, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!"* (Romans 5:15)

The failure of the **man** (Adam) is here set in contrast with the victory of the **man** (Jesus Christ), who never sinned. It was a man who brought death upon mankind, and it is a man, Jesus Christ, who brings hope of life to all whom he calls to a life of faith.

*"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."* (1 Timothy 2:5)

Here the humanity of Jesus is again underlined, and we can also begin to understand the relationship between Jesus and his Father. There is a clear distinction drawn between the one God and the man Christ Jesus.

**Son and Father**

Almost everywhere in the Christian world it is taught that Jesus is God the Son, who is in every sense the equal of God the Father; that God is actually three persons, all equal, the third person being God the Holy Spirit. This is the doctrine of the Trinity, which was not fully defined until around four hundred years after

the death of Christ. It is not taught in the Bible, and it was not taught among the early generations of Christians.

The true relationship of Son to Father is expressed in these words:

*“During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.”*  
(Hebrews 5:7,8)

Such a prayer was made in the garden of Gethsemane: *“Father, if you are willing, take this cup (of death) from me; yet **not my will, but yours, be done.**”* (Luke 22:42)

With regard to the supposed equality of Son and Father: Jesus said, *“The Father is greater than I . . . I do exactly what my Father has commanded me”* (John 14:28,31). Some have argued that such a relationship was true only during his earthly lifetime; but even after his resurrection he referred to the Father as *“my God”* (Rev. 3:12). Paul wrote, *“. . . the head of Christ is God.”* (1 Corinthians 11:3)

The clearest possible statement that the Son is not equal to the Father is to be found in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians. Referring to the coming time when Christ will reign, he writes,

*“Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power . . . When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.”* (1 Corinthians 15:24,28)

Jesus was made perfect through suffering:

*“Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him”* (Hebrews 5:8,9).

If he was made perfect through suffering, it is not possible that he could have lived in heaven, as God the Son, before he was born of Mary. If he had been God the Son, he would have been already perfect. Jesus was a man; he became tired, he was sometimes hungry and thirsty, he was tempted in the same way as we are. Yet because he was the Son of God he was able to resist all temptation and remain sinless. It was because of this obedience, and not because he was already God the Son, that he was raised from the dead.

*“. . . he humbled himself and became obedient to death . . . Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . to the glory of God the Father”* (Philippians 2:8-11).

### **Summary**

Jesus is the Son of God, born of a virgin, not by a human father, but by the power of God. He is also truly man, but unlike other men he was also sinless, and was made perfect through suffering, in obedience to the will of his Father. The relationship between Jesus and God is truly that of Son to Father. Because of his obedience God raised him from the dead to eternal glory at His right hand.

### **Questions**

L1 Write out two verses which show that Jesus is not equal to the Father.

L2 Why did God raise Jesus from the dead?