

# Thoughts of Jesus

## Jesus, the Christ

IF WE knew Jesus only as the sweet babe of Bethlehem, the patient carpenter of Nazareth, the master teacher of Galilee, the holy Martyr of Calvary, the transcendent character of history, this would not be sufficient to explain His power over men. He is more than this. He is very God.

This is the key that unlocks the mystery of his miracle working Figure who came into this world without assets of any kind. He did nothing to make a name for Himself until after He was thirty years of age. Then for a brief span of three and a half years He spoke about the kingdom of heaven to the multitudes who flocked to hear Him, and He healed their sick. Often in contention with the religious leaders of the day, He enunciated a new way of life that shocked their ecclesiastical scruples. Hence they fiercely opposed Him and finally falsely accused Him as a disturber of the peace before the Roman ruler, who condemned Him to a shameful death upon the cross.

The little flock of disciples, distraught by the happenings they had little understood, were scattered and disheartened. Thus He came to an early end of His life, apparently an utterly defeated soul.

Then something happened. He burst the tomb, rose from the dead, and went forth to gather up the fragments of his life work. He instilled hope in the little flock, and commissioned them to carry on His teaching. Finally He told them He must return to His heaven Father above, and promising to come again, He suddenly was taken up from them and disappeared in the clouds.

Startled by this turn of events, still feeling fearful and forsaken, the distressed company of believers retired to an upper chamber and talked over their experiences. They prayed, and waited many days for further counsel.

Then we read: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:1-4.

Peter explained this phenomenon as evidence that Jesus of Nazareth had been exalted to the right hand of God. This gave them courage to go forth as He had commanded them to, and preach in His name. As they did so, great numbers of believers were added to the little flock, and soon the name of Jesus as Savior was known throughout the Mediterranean world.

Since then, in spite of persecution, interdiction, and apostasy, the Christian way of life has spread to all lands of earth. Christ has become the mightiest influence for good in all the world.

How do you explain all this? Is it because of the great momentum that a strong, human personage initiated? There have been other more dominant men, far greater in their influence during their lifetime than He, but their names have had no power to inspire men to greater works or to create miracles of transformation.

Was He merely another Confucius, Plato, Buddha, Alexander, or Napoleon? Not at all. Human indeed was He, fully identified with the lot of men, but He also was Almighty God who had spoken the worlds into existence and who took the form of man.

Jesus was conscious of His divine prerogatives. He knew in His soul that He was the Son of God. He admitted as much on several occasions. Furthermore, He acted like, the Son of God.

The very name Jesus means Savior. (Matthew 1:21, margin.) He became familiar with the Old Testament prophets early in life. He knew the prophecies of the coming of One "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," as Micah declared. Micah 5:2.

He was thoroughly acquainted with -the scroll of Isaiah, the gospel prophet of the Old Testament. It was from this that He read at His first recorded Sabbath service a chapter that told of the coming Messiah's work. After having read it He said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4:21.

He knew the words of Isaiah that read, "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, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. And Mary, His devout mother, must have told Him about the wonders of His birth and the glorious happenings that took place at that time.

He knew that portion of Isaiah that depicted the sacrificial work of the Messiah as found in Isaiah 53. He no doubt used this prophecy and others to help the two discouraged disciples on their walk to Emmaus. The Holy Word states, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:27. And of His crucifixion He said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Verse 26. There can be no doubt that Jesus fully understood His divine appointment."

Jesus did not go about declaring, "I am the Son of God." That would have defeated His purpose and created a gulf between Him and those about Him. He wished to live close to men and to the lowliest of them. But He never once denied that He was the Son of God.

At His baptism God reminded Him of His Son ship, and Jesus went forth to meet Satan with that thought in mind. He knew that the world's salvation was dependent upon His behavior, and He dared not make a misstep when He was dealing with the subtle prince of this world.

Jesus referred to himself mostly as "the Son of man," wishing especially to impress His followers that, He was one with them, but He used this term in such a way as to make anyone understand that He believed also that He was the Son of God. We note this in the following verses:

"And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27, 28.

"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matthew 13:41-43.

"As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:27.

"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." Matthew 25:31.

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:36.

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he." John 8:28.

Jesus knew of His coming crucifixion, death, and resurrection. He spoke of this to His disciples on several occasions.

“And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again.” Matthew 17: 22, 23.

When the time drew near He said: “The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.” John 12:23, 24.

On one or two occasions Jesus drew His disciples out on this question. In the early part of His ministry He asked them, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” When they answered, “Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some Elias; and others, Jerernias, or one of the prophets,” He then pressed them for an answer. “But whom say ye that I am?”

Peter answered and said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Christ did not deny this statement, but rather said, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 16:13-17.

On a later occasion He spoke to the Pharisees and said, “What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?” And as He entangled them in their answer He left the impression that as David spoke of Him as Lord, so He believed Himself to be. (Matthew 22:41-45.)

At one time when the Jews took up stones to stone Him, He said to them, “Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemed; because I said, I am the Son of God.” John 10:36.

Not until His mission was almost fulfilled did He answer directly the question “Are you the Son of God?”

On the day of His trial, as He stood before the council of chief priests and scribes, He was asked the question, “Are you the Christ?” As He evaded this question and told them that it would hardly be of any use to reply to it, they again pressed Him with the question, “Art thou then the Son of God?” To this He simply replied, “Ye say that I am,” meaning, “Ye say it because I am.” To this the high priest said, “What need we any further witness? For we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.” Luke 22:71.

And as He hung on the cross His persecutors cried, “He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.” Matthew 27:43.

And as some of those that stood about the cross looked upon His holy face and remembered the works that He had done and the accusations that had been made against Him, they solemnly said, “Truly this was the Son of God.” Verse 54.

Yes, Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God. And now He is sitting at the right hand of God as our intercessor and blessed Savior.

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.