

JESUS

Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name *Joshua*, meaning “Jehovah is salvation” (CP Mt 1:21). Jesus is also called *Christ*, from the Greek word *christos*. Meaning *Messiah*, anointed one of God. (For a more detailed teaching on names and titles of Jesus, see author’s study *Name and Titles of Jesus*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**).

No other man, born of woman, has left His name so indelibly imprinted on the minds of men, and been the subject of so many written words and discussions, as Jesus. Though His life, as ordinarily understood, embraces the years He spent on earth as outlined in the four gospels, which are almost entirely the source of evidence for Him, Jesus’ full career spans eternity. This study examines its several aspects: His pre-existence as God; His incarnation; His earthly life, ministry, death, resurrection and His present and future ministry. It must be remembered however, that a general study such as this can touch only briefly on individual incidents and issues, so during the course of the study readers are referred to more detailed teachings by the author on related subjects.

Numerous scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments attest to the pre-existence of Jesus as God, but in the main, New Testament scriptures will be used here (CP Jn 1:1-2). This underlines the pre-existence of Jesus as God and His co-equality with the Father. *The Word* refers to Jesus as the revelation of God. (In the Old Testament God spoke to His people through the prophets, but in the New Testament He spoke through Jesus (CP He 1:1-2). Jesus is the supreme and definitive word or revelation of God in the New Testament (CP Jn 1:18; 1Jn 1:1-2; Rev 19:13)). The phrases *in the beginning* in Jn 1:1, and *from the beginning* in 1Jn 1:1, do not refer to the beginning of time, but to the fact that Jesus existed before there was any beginning whatsoever (CP Jn 17:5). Here Jesus refers to His pre-incarnate glory which He shared with the Father from all eternity – *before the world was* (CP Jn 3:13). Before He came to earth, Heaven was the pre-incarnate Jesus’ home. Jesus came down from Heaven at His incarnation and went back up again at His ascension, after the resurrection (CP Mic 5:2). Here the Old Testament prophet Micah attests to Jesus’ eternal pre-incarnate existence and foretells His incarnate birth in Bethlehem as Messiah.

Jesus’ self-titles of *Alpha* and *Omega* “the beginning and the end” and “the first and the last”, also attest to His eternal pre-existence (CP Rev 1:8, 11; 2:8; 3:14; 21:6; 22:13). *Alpha* signifies that Jesus is the one who brought all things into existence, which scriptures clearly teach (CP Ps 102:25-27; Jn 1:3, 10; Col 1:12-17; He 1:1-3, 10; 11:3). *Omega* signifies that Jesus is also the one who will bring all things to their pre-determined end, which scriptures also teach (CP Isa 51:6; He 1:8-12; 2Pe 3:10-13). The fact that Jesus applied the expression *Alpha and Omega* to Himself is sufficient proof of His pre-existence as God and co-equality with the Father. (For more detailed teachings on this subject refer author’s studies, *Jesus-Eternally God*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**, *Names and Titles of Jesus, God -His nature, His names, His attributes*, and *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**).

The next aspect of Jesus’ eternal existence is His incarnation – when He took on human form ... *and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us* – the event that changed the course of the world (CP Jn 1:14). It was at His incarnation that Jesus became God’s son (CP Ps 2:7 with Ac 13:33; Isa 9:6-7; He 1:5-6; 5:5). Jesus’ incarnation was *the mystery of Godliness* Paul described in 1Ti 3:16, “... *great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh ...*” God was Jesus (CP 1Ti 3:16). The incarnation centres on the virgin birth of Jesus. This is one of the central doctrines of the Christian faith (CP Mt 1:18-25; Lu 1:26-35). Mt 1:18-25 fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy of the virgin birth in the Old Testament, nearly eight hundred years before the Holy Spirit inspired Matthew to interpret the prophecy as applying to the virgin birth of Jesus (CP Isa 7:14). *Immanuel*, meaning “God with us” is further confirmation of Jesus’ Deity and His co-equality with the Father from all eternity.

(It should be noted here that Mary was a virgin in the strictest sense. She had never had a sexual relationship with any man when Jesus was conceived in her womb. She wondered of the angel, Gabriel, how she, a virgin, could give birth to a baby (CP Lu 1:34-35). After Gabriel explained what God had purposed for her and how it would happen, Mary unreservedly accepted it and completely submitted herself to God’s will (CP Lu 1:38, 46-49). However, it should be noted also that Mary was not a perpetual virgin as many believe. Joseph and Mary did consummate their marriage after Jesus was born (CP Mt 1:24-25). Mary had at least seven children to Joseph after she gave birth to Jesus (CP Mt 12:46-47; 13:53-56; Mk 3:20-21; 6:1-3). *Friends* in Mk 3:20-21 (KJV), refers to immediate family members, which is confirmed in V 31-32 (CP Mk 3:31-32; Lu 8:19-20). Many professing Christians deny the virgin birth and are thus denying the plain fact of scripture. No one can be a Christian though after the New Testament order, who rejects the virgin birth of Jesus (CP Isa 8:20; 2Jn 9-10). Christians must accept the virgin birth exactly as recorded in scripture. Although it is contrary to the course of nature, Jesus was Divinely conceived in Mary’s womb by the Holy Spirit. Mary was the only virgin who ever was, or ever will be, a mother in this way).

Jesus was circumcised eight days after His birth, and as required under the Old Covenant law, when Mary’s purification was complete, she and Joseph took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (CP Mt 2:1-11, 13-15, 19-23; Lu 2:1-12, 16-17, 21-22, 25-32, 36-40). After this there is no record of Jesus’ boyhood in scripture other than that of His trip to Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph at the Feast of the Passover, when He was twelve years old (CP Lu 2:41-52). The next record of Jesus in scripture is of His baptism by John the Baptist, when He was about thirty years old (CP Mt 3:1-3, 11-17; Mk 1:1-11; Lu 3:1-6, 15-17, 21-23, Jn 1:6-9, 15, 19-34). Here, represented for the first time in scripture, are the three distinct and separate co-equal members of the Godhead of Christianity. God the Father is represented by the voice from Heaven, God the Son is Jesus and God the Holy Spirit is

represented by the dove. The Spirit, like a dove, alighting upon Jesus as He came up out of the water, was a sign that He was *Messiah*, the anointed one predestined by God from eternity past, who was prophesied by Isaiah in the Old Testament. This was the sign by which God told John the Baptist that he would know Jesus (CP Isa 11:2; 42:1-4; 61:1-4 with Jn 1:32-34). This teaching of a three-in-one Godhead is called the Doctrine of the Trinity, which also is a core truth of the Christian faith and central to an understanding of Biblical revelation and the message of the gospel (see *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, referred to previously).

(Jesus had no need to be baptised by John. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, signifying confession of sin by those who took part in it, and commitment to a Holy life in anticipation of the coming Messiah for whom John was preparing the way (CP Mt 3:1-11). John knew that Jesus was sinless and did not need to be baptised for the remission of sins, but Jesus insisted that John baptise Him to "*fulfil all righteousness*" (CP Mt 3:13-15). Jesus got baptised to identify with sinners, which fulfilled Isaiah's Old Testament prophecy. "*He was numbered with the transgressors*" (CP Isa 53:12). Jesus was to fulfil all righteousness by bearing the curse of the law for sinners, and He took His place with sinners in John's baptism as the pledge that He was ready to go down to death for them (CP Ro 5:8-10; Ga 3:13).

Neither was John's baptism of repentance for the remission of sins the same as the baptism instituted by Jesus (CP Mt 28:19). The difference between Jesus' and John's baptism lies in Jesus Himself and how God's plan of redemption is fulfilled in Him. Neither John nor those he baptised knew anything of this. John only knew that in his baptism, he was preparing the way for the anointed one from God (CP Mt 3:2-5 with Isa 40:3; Mal 3:1; Mt 11:7-15; Mk 1:18; Lu 3:1-6; 7:24-29; Jn 1:6-9, 19-34). In the baptism Jesus instituted, repentant sinners identify with Jesus. Being baptised is their pledge of a good conscience toward God – a conscience reconciled to God by their new-found faith in the resurrected Christ who died for them, and the salvation benefits He has purchased for them with His blood (CP 1Pe 3:18-22). Those who John baptised had no one to identify with – they knew nothing of God's plan of redemption, or the Saviour in whom it was fulfilled. That is why they had to be baptised again after they heard how it was fulfilled in Christ, and they had received Him as their Saviour (CP Ac 2:22-24, 29-33, 36-39; 19:1-5).

Let us go back now and find out what John meant when he said that Jesus would baptise believers with the Holy Ghost and with fire (CP Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lu 3:16; Jn 1:32-34; Ac 2:32-33). We learn from these scriptures that it is Jesus Himself who baptises believers with the Holy Spirit – being baptised *with, in, into* and *unto* all mean the same thing. Being baptised with the Holy Ghost denotes being endowed with power by the Holy Spirit to be witnesses in the world to God's saving grace through the Lord Jesus Christ, which Jesus has promised to every believer (CP Lu 11:9-13; 24:49; Jn 7:37-39; 14:12, 16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15; Ac 1:1-8, 2:36-39). Baptism in the Holy Spirit is generally received subsequent to salvation (CP Ac 8:14-17; 19:1-6). However, it can also be received concurrently with

salvation (CP Ac 10:44-46). While Peter was still sharing the gospel here, Cornelius and all who were with him got saved and were immediately baptised in the Holy Spirit – God did a sovereign work in their midst (CP Ac 11:1-18). The evidence of being baptised in the Spirit is that the recipient will talk in tongues (CP Joel 2:28-29 with Mk 16:17; Ac 2:1-4, 14-18; 8:18-21; 10:45-46; 19:6). For more detailed teachings on this subject see author's studies on *Baptism in the Spirit* in his book, **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith, Signs and Wonders in God's Redemptive Plan** in his book, **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**, and *The Work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament Church* in his book, **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**.

The baptism with *fire* to which John the Baptist also refers in Mt 3:11, is an extended reference to the empowering of believers by the Holy Spirit for service (CP Jn 7:37-39). The analogy of "rivers of living water" in V 38 teaches that believers will have unlimited power to do the work of God through the empowering of the Holy Spirit (CP Lu 12:49). Jesus uses *fire* here figuratively of the Holy Spirit's empowering of believers to proclaim the gospel. Jesus longed for the gospel to be proclaimed throughout the earth, but He had to die first in order for the Holy Spirit to come and empower believers for service (CP Lu 12:50 with Jn 12:23-24; 16:7-15; Lu 24:49 and Ac 1:1-8). Jesus' death and resurrection removed the restraints on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the gospel being proclaimed throughout the earth. But Jesus also knew that the proclamation of the gospel would cause much division and strife, even pitting family members against each other (CP Mt 10:34-36; Mk 10:29-30; Lu 12:51-53).

After His baptism by John, Jesus was taken by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness where He was tempted of the devil for forty days (CP Mt 4:1-11; Mk 1:12-13; Lu 4:1-15). This teaches that it is only by being completely submitted to the authority of God's word as Jesus was, that Christians will be able to overcome the temptations they will encounter in their Christian walk (CP Ps 119:9-16; 2Cor 10:3-5; Eph 6:10-18; He 4:12 with Jas 4:7; 1Pe 5:8-9). Christians must strive to emulate Christ – commit God's word to memory and speak it out over all the circumstances of life by faith. Then Christ's triumph over the devil becomes theirs (CP Rev 12:10-11). *The word of their testimony* here refers to the authority of God's word outworking in their lives – it was the key to their overcoming (for more detailed teachings on this subject see author's studies *Confessing God's Word* in his book, **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith, A Daily Confession for Christians**, and *Making the Impossible Possible* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**).

Now let us look at Jesus' earthly ministry: the main phase of this ministry, which lasted only about three years, began in Galilee after He overcame the devil, and John the Baptist was imprisoned. It was here Jesus gathered to Himself the twelve disciples (CP Mt 4:12-23; Mk 1:14-21; 2:13-14; Lu 4:14-21, 38; 5:1-11, 27-29 with Mt 10:1; Mk 6:7; Lu 6:12-16). It was at Cana in Galilee that Jesus performed His first miracle, three days after He commenced His earthly ministry, and because of it, the disciples believed on Him. He turned

water into wine at the wedding in Cana (CP Jn 2:1-11). This was but the first of many miracles by Jesus during His earthly ministry. There were numerous miracles of healing all manner of sickness and disease. Multitudes got healed (CP Mt 4:23-24; 8:1-4, 5-13, 14-17; 9:20-22, 35; 12:10-16; 14:14, 34-36; 15:21-28, 30; 19:1-2; Mk 6:5-6; Lu 5:15; 6:17-18; 13:10-13; 14:1-4; 17:11-19; 22:50-51; Jn 4:46-54). Jesus commanded the forces of nature to obey Him – He stilled an underwater earthquake and calmed a raging storm (CP Mt 8:23-27). This was an underwater earthquake – *tempest* here is from *seismos*, which means earthquake (CP Mk 4:35-39). *Storm* here is from *lailaps*, meaning heavy rain accompanied by high winds; squalls.

Jesus cast demons out of people they possessed (CP Mt 8:28-33; 9:32-33; 12:22; 17:14-18; Mk 1:21-28, 39; Lu 8:2). The lame were made to walk (CP Mt 9:1-8; 21:14; Jn 5:2-9). The dead were raised up to life (CP Mt 9:18, 23-26; Lu 7:11-16; Jn 11:1, 6-7, 11-17, 20-26, 32-34, 38-45). The blind were made to see (CP Mt 9:27-31; 12:22; 20:30-34; 21:14; Mk 8:22-26; 10:46-52; Jn 9:1-7). The deaf were made to hear, and the dumb to speak (CP Mt 9:32-33; 12:22; Mk 7:31-37). Jesus miraculously fed over five thousand people with just five loaves of bread and two fishes, and soon after, over four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fishes (CP Mt 14:15-21; 15:32-38). Jesus counteracted nature and walked on water (CP Mt 14:22-25). Jesus was also responsible for two miraculous catches of fish – the first, just after He began His ministry, before He had chosen the twelve disciples (CP Lu 5:1-11). The second catch was after Jesus' resurrection and the disciples had returned to fishing (CP Jn 21:1-14). These are all the miracles of Jesus recorded in scripture. They have been listed here to show Christians that these are the works that Jesus promised that Christians can not only likewise do, but that they will do even greater works (CP Jn 14:12-14).

The next aspect of Jesus' earthly ministry is His teachings. His many discourses, sermons and conversations cover a wide variety of themes and are filled with abiding instruction and charges, admonitions and exhortations, for Christians in all ages. They are too numerous for all to be included here, but we will look at a small cross-section of them. First are the principles of the Kingdom of God Jesus laid down (CP Mt 5:1-11). These declarations of blessedness Jesus pronounces upon Christians in this, His Sermon on the Mount, which takes up Mt Ch 5-7, are known as *the Beatitudes*. They define the characteristics of Christians as expressed by Jesus. They are a code of ethics and a standard of conduct for all professing Christians. They contrast Kingdom values with worldly values, and superficial faith with the faith by which Jesus expects Christians to walk (CP also Lu 6:20-23). The Beatitudes are not multiple choices. Christians cannot choose to regard some and disregard others – they must be conformed to as a whole for anyone to inherit the Kingdom of God. The clear teaching is that only those in whom all the principles of the Kingdom are manifest, will inherit the Kingdom (for a detailed teaching on this subject see author's study *The Beatitudes – The Principles of the Kingdom of God*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**).

Much of Jesus' teaching was in parables, which are sayings that teach truth by comparison. They are stories drawn from nature or human circumstances to teach a moral or spiritual truth. Jesus taught in parables extensively because they have a double use – they reveal the truth to those who want it, and conceal it from those who do not (CP Mt 13:10-17, 34-35; Mk 4:33-34). The purpose of parables is to arrest and hold the attention of the hearer. The meaning of the parable has to be studied – it is not the story that is of value but the lesson it teaches. There is a comparison being made and the hearer has to perceive the likeness of the thing compared to learn the lesson. For example, disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus and asked Him why His disciples did not follow the Old Testament religious practice of fasting (CP Mt 9:14). Jesus responded with a parable (CP Mt 9:16-17). This is called the parable of old and new cloth and wineskins. Here Jesus foretells the abolition of the Old Covenant and its complete replacement with a New Covenant. In using the principles of new cloth as a patch upon an old garment tearing away more, and new wine bursting old wineskins, Jesus made it clear that He did not come as a reformer to patch up the old worn-out Old Covenant, but that He would replace it in its entirety with a New Covenant (for a detailed teaching on the abolition of the Old Covenant, see author's study *The Old Covenant – Fulfilled in Christ and Completely Abolished*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**).

Jesus also used parables to teach the qualifications of discipleship (CP Lu 14:28-35). Jesus told these three parables to stress the importance of His teaching on the qualifications of discipleship in V 26-27 (CP V 26-28; also Mt 10:37-39; Lu 9:23-25). Jesus demands that His followers' love and loyalty to Him be greater than any other attachments they may have, including even their attachment for their families. Their commitment to Him is meant to be total. His claims on His followers apply equally to every follower (CP Mk 10:17-31). Followers of Jesus must radically re-evaluate their lifestyles for they have to choose between the things of the world and the things of God (CP Mt 6:19-33). (For detailed teachings on the parables, and qualifications of discipleship, see author's studies, *The Parables of Jesus* and *The Cost of Discipleship: Forsaking All for Jesus*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**).

Jesus places demands upon His followers that shift their focus from a material to a heavenly perspective (CP Mt 5:38-48; 6:1-6, 16-18). Jesus is explicit in His teaching that it is lack of faith that makes His followers opt for earthly rather than heavenly treasure (CP Mt 6:27-33). Essentially, what Jesus is saying to His followers here is that if they truly believe in Heaven, they would spend their time preparing for permanent residence there. In Jn 4:34-36 Jesus likens saving souls to harvesting grain (CP Jn 4:34-36). Jesus impresses upon His followers here the urgency of getting souls saved. He uses the Samaritans sent by the woman He spoke to at the well at Sychar as an object lesson to stress the urgency of harvesting souls for the Kingdom (CP V 5-42). For more detailed teachings on the subject of Christians and wealth, see author's studies, *Christians and Wealth*, in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith** and *Christians – Flee from Idolatry* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**.

For more detailed teachings on the subject of getting souls saved, see author's studies, *The Christian Calling – Winning Souls to Christ*, in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith** and *Redeeming the Time – Winning Souls to Christ*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**.

Let us look now at some of Jesus' prophetic teachings: On His death and resurrection (CP Mt 9:15; 12:38-40; 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19; 21:33-39; Lu 9:22; 18:31-33; Jn 3:14; 12:27, 31-33). Jesus predicted the fact and the manner of His death. He taught that His death had a universal significance (CP Jn 3:16; 12:32). Jesus linked His incarnation and His death together (CP Jn 12:27). Jesus is the only one whose sole purpose for living was to die (CP Jn 10:18). No one took Jesus' life – He gave it. (For a detailed teaching on the resurrection, see author's study *The Resurrection*, in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith**). On His coming again to take all the saints of God, both living and dead, back to heaven with Him (CP Jn 5:28-29; 14:1-3). These are only partial revelations by Jesus in scripture of what is known among Christians as the rapture. (For detailed teaching on this subject, see author's study *The Rapture*, in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith**). On the great tribulation (CP Mt 24:3-8, 23-26; Mk 13:5-8, 14-23; Lu 21:7-24). A great many Christians believe that the church will go through the tribulation, but the church is not appointed to wrath (CP 1Th 1:10; 5:9). The tribulation is God's wrath poured out upon sinners – not saints. (For detailed teachings on this subject see author's comments on Mt 24: 1-3 and Rev Ch 6-18 in his book **A Question and Answer Study on the New Testament**). On his Second coming (CP Mt 24:29-31; 25:31-46; Mk 13:24-27; Lu 21:25-28). At His Second coming Jesus defeats Antichrist and the armies of his confederation of nations at the Battle of Armageddon and commences His thousand years reign on earth. (For more detailed teachings on these subjects see author's comments on Mt 24: 1-3, Rev 19:11-21, and 20:4-6 in his book **A Question and Answer Study on the New Testament**).

We will now look at the events leading up to Jesus' death. In the hours leading up to His death Jesus partook of the Passover with the disciples, during which He instituted the Lord's Supper, or communion, as it is generally called (CP Mt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-24; Lu 22:19-20 with 1Cor 11:23-26). Paul received the revelation of communion from Jesus Himself. The significance of the Passover is that it was an Old Testament type of which Jesus is the New Testament anti-type. The unblemished lamb sacrificed for the Passover prefigured Jesus as the supreme sacrifice (CP Jn 1:29; 1Cor 5:7; 2Cor 5:21; 1Pe 1:2, 18-20; Rev 5:5-10). The whole of the Old Testament sacrificial system prefigured Jesus' sacrifice of Himself in the New Testament. (For more detailed teachings on this subject, see author's studies *Communion*, in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith**, and

The Old Covenant – Fulfilled in Christ and Completely abolished, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**).

After they had eaten the Passover and Judas Iscariot had left to betray Him, Jesus went to the garden of Gethsemane to pray. He was in such agony over His impending separation from God, which would happen while He was on the cross as the sin offering, that He sweated blood (CP Lu 22:39-44 with Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34). Jesus' blood was literally mingled with His sweat. This is a condition called *Hermitidrosis*, which affects people going through extreme mental anguish and stress such as Jesus was going through in His agony in the garden, which He himself said had brought Him to the threshold of death (CP Mt 26:38; Mk 14:33-35). *Hermitidrosis* is a dangerous condition in which the walls of the subcutaneous capillaries – hair-like blood vessels under the skin – rupture and infuse blood into the perspiration of the one affected. While Jesus was in the garden He was arrested (CP Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-50; Lu 22:47-54; Jn 18:1-13).

All the disciples fled after Jesus was arrested. Only Peter and one other followed to where He was taken, but when accused of being with Jesus, Peter denied it three times, which Jesus had earlier foretold would happen (CP Mt 26:31-35, 69-75; Mk 14:26-31, 66-72; Lu 22:31-34, 54-62; Jn 18:15-27). After a mock trial and scourging, Jesus was taken away to be crucified – nailed to a cross and left to die. Crucifixion was the most painful and degrading form of capital punishment in the ancient world. This was how the Romans publicly displayed criminals, and they treated the Son of God the same way to appease the Jewish religious leaders (CP Mt 27:15-26, 32-50; Mk 15:9-15, 20-37; Lu 23:13-25, 26-46; Jn 19:5-16, 17-37). Jesus was crucified with two thieves, one on the left of Him, and one on the right as recorded in Mt 27:38, Lu 23:32 and Jn 19:18. (Note that Luke records that Jesus saved the one who acknowledged that He was the Son of God, and had done no wrong (CP Lu 23:39-43)).

At the instant Jesus died, the veil of the Temple rent in two; the ground shook and rocks broke up; graves were opened and the dead in them rose to life. After Jesus' resurrection they came out of their graves and went into Jerusalem, where they were seen by many people (CP Mt 27:52-54; Mk 15:38). These bodies could not have come out of their graves until Jesus was resurrected, because He was ordained to be the first-begotten from the dead (CP 1Cor 15:20-23; Rev 1:5). The significance of the veil in the Temple being torn in two from top to bottom when Jesus died, meant that every Christian from that time on can enter into God's Throne of Grace in heaven through Jesus' atoning death. The veil represented Jesus' flesh (CP He 4:14-16; 10:19-23). The veil also represented the middle wall of partition that kept Jews and Gentiles apart (CP Eph 2:14-18). When the veil rent in two it broke down that wall, and from then on, regardless of who they are, Christians are all one in Christ (CP Ga 3:28). After He died, Jesus' body was claimed by Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, and was laid in his tomb (CP Mt 27:57-60; Mk 15:42-46; Lu 23:50-53; Jn 19:38-42).

With the death and burial of Jesus, the narrative of His earthly career comes to an end, but with His resurrection on the third day, He lives on as the exalted

Lord (CP Ac 2:32-36; 5:30-32; Php 2:5-11). It should be noted though before we look at His resurrection, that between His death and resurrection, Jesus went and preached to the spirits in prison (CP Pe 3:18-20). It is not material to this study who the spirits in prison are, and what Jesus preached, but for a detailed teaching on this subject, see author's study *Who are the Spirits in Prison*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)** and *The Significance Of Jesus' Post Resurrection Appearances Prior To His Ascension To Heaven* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 3)**). The risen Christ revealed Himself first to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary when they went to the tomb to anoint His body with spices before sunrise on the Sunday morning following His burial (CP Mt 28:1-10; Mk 16:1-10; Jn 20:1-18). Jesus then appeared to the disciples – first to two of them on the road to Emmaus (CP Mk 16:9-13; Lu 24:13-35). Secondly, to the eleven (CP Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:14-18; Lu 24:36-48; Jn 20:19-23). And lastly, to the seven disciples fishing in the Sea of Tiberius (CP Jn 21:1-24).

Forty days after His resurrection, Jesus ascended to Heaven (CP Mk 16:19-20; Lu 24:50-51 (also Ac 1:1-9)). Christ's ascension to Heaven was predicted in the Old Testament by King David (CP Psa 68:18 with Eph 4:8-10; Psa 110:1 with Mk 16:19). The *captivity* Jesus led captive in Psa 68 and Eph 4, were the souls of all the saints of God from Abel to Christ who had died and been held captive by Satan, including those who were resurrected after Christ (CP Mt 27:52-53 with He 2:14-15; 12:23). Since Jesus' ascension, when Christians die, their souls go straight to Heaven awaiting the resurrection of their bodies (CP 2Cor 5:1-4; He 12:22-23; Rev 6:9-11 with 1Cor 15:20-23, 42-44, 51-58). The gifts in Eph 4:8 which Jesus gave to men when He "ascended on high" were the gifts of the Spirit and ministry gifts for the church (CP V 8 with 1Cor 12:1-11(A) and Eph 4:11-16). For detailed teachings on these subjects see author's comments on 1Cor 12:1-11(A) and Eph 4:11-12, in his book **A Question and Answer Study on the New Testament**). Jesus' earthly ministry subject of this study is but an infinitesimal part of His overall ministry recorded in scripture, and even that, according to the beloved disciple John, is also but an infinitesimal part of His actual ministry. To quote John, "and there are also many other things which Jesus did, to which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written, Amen" (CP Jn 21:25). What has been included here of Jesus' earthly ministry will suffice for the purpose of this study.

Let us look now at Jesus' present ministry. The first aspect of His present work was sending the Holy Spirit to lead His people in the way of everlasting life, to convict sinners of their need of a Saviour (CP Jn 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-15), and to empower Christians for service to God (CP Mt 3:1-2, 11; Mk 1:1-6; 16:17-20; Lu 3:2-3, 16; 24:49; Jn 1:32-34; 7:37-39; Ac 1:4-8; 2:1-4, 38-39; 10:44-46; 19:1-6). For more detailed teachings on this subject see author's studies *Baptism in the Spirit*, in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith, Signs and Wonders in God's Redemptive Plan**, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**, *The Work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament Church*, and *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, in

his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**).

But the present work of Christ that is emphasised the most in the New Testament is His intercessory ministry on behalf of Christians with God. He is their advocate, mediator, high priest and intercessor (CP Ro 8:33-34; 1Ti 2:5; He 7:25; 8:1; 9:11-14; 1Jn 2:1). Jesus has made it possible through His shed blood for Christians to come confidently to the Throne of Grace where He sits at God's right hand. They can know that they will obtain mercy and grace in their time of need (CP Col 3:1; He 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2 with He 4:14-16). Mercy and grace are dispensed to Christians from the Throne of Grace through Christ's intercession for them with the Father (CP Eph 2:18; He 10:19-22). *Through the Veil, that is to say His flesh* in He 10:20 refers to when Jesus died on the cross – as we learned in our study on Jesus' death – the veil in the temple that symbolically separated men from God's presence tore in two, signifying that the way was now open for all who believe in Jesus to have direct access to the Throne of God (CP Mt 27:50-52). God's children no longer have to go through priests to obtain mercy and grace in their time of need (CP 1Jn 1:8-10).

The future ministry of Jesus includes the resurrection of all the saints of God, Old Testament and New Testament alike, living and dead, and taking them back to Heaven with Him (CP Jn 5:28-29; 14:1-3; 1Cor 15:51-58; Php 3:20-21; 1Th 4:13-18; 5:1-11; 2Th 2:1-3; 2:6-8). These scriptures all refer to the first resurrection, or the rapture, as it is known among Christians. The events that take place in those scriptures all signify the end of the church age. (For detailed studies on this subject see author's comments on the above scriptures, in his book **A Question and Answer Study on the New Testament**, and his study *The Rapture*, in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith**). The next aspect of Jesus' future ministry is to judge Christians after He has taken them to Heaven. This is called the Judgement Seat of Christ. This judgement is not to determine punishment, but the believer's place in Heaven. It is where Jesus will judge every Christian's earthly works, and how those works stand or fall will determine the believer's position in God's eternal Kingdom (CP Ecc 12:14; Ro 14:10-13; 1Cor 3:11-15; 4:5; 2Cor 5:10; Eph 6:1-9; Col 3:16-4:1; Jas 1:2-4, 12, 19, 21; 2:1-4, 9; 1Pe 1:3-7, 17; Rev 22:7, 11-12). Everything Christians have ever done during the course of their Christian life, whether good or bad, will be revealed at the Judgement Seat of Christ. (For a detailed teaching on this subject see author's study *Coming Judgements of God*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**).

The next aspect of Jesus' future ministry is at His second coming. This involves the Battle of Armageddon in which Jesus single-handedly defeats Antichrist and the armies of his confederation of nations, together with Satan and the false prophet. Antichrist and the false prophet are cast alive in the Lake of Fire – the final destiny of all the ungodly – where they will be tormented day and night forever (CP Rev 19:11-21). Satan is bound in chains and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years (CP Rev 20:1-3). For detailed teachings on these subjects see author's comments on Rev 19:11-21 and Rev 20:1-3, in his book **A Question and answer Study on the New**

Testament). Next Jesus judges the nations to determine who of them will go into the eternal Kingdom (CP Mt 25:31-46). This is called the Judgement of the Nations – *Nations* in Greek, also means Gentiles. The basis of this judgement will be the failure of the Gentiles to extend mercy to the Jewish believers during the tribulation. (For a detailed teaching on this subject see author’s study *Coming Judgements of God*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**). Then comes the millennial age. This refers to Christ’s kingdom on earth where He will rule and reign for a thousand years (CP Dan 2:44-45; 7:13-14, 23-27; Zech 14:1-9; Eph 1:10; Rev 5:8-10). At the end of this period Satan is loosed for a time and will deceive nations hostile to God into joining him in the last great rebellion against God. God will send fire down from Heaven and destroy them. Satan will then be cast into the Lake of Fire to suffer eternal punishment (CP Rev 20:7-10). For a detailed study on this subject see author’s comments on Rev 20:4-6, in his book **A Question and Answer Study on the New Testament**).

The purpose of Christ’s thousand year reign on earth is to rid the earth of all the enemies of God, and all rebellion against Him. At the end of the thousand years all the unrighteous dead will be raised up to life and Christ will judge them at the Great White Throne Judgement. They will be cast into the Lake of Fire together with Satan, Antichrist and the false prophet (CP Rev 20:11-15). The Great White Throne Judgement and the Lake of Fire signifies the end of Christ’s millennial reign pursuant to Him handing the Kingdom over to God (CP 1Cor 15:23-28). For more detailed teachings on this subject see author’s study *Coming Judgements of God*, in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**, and his comments on Rev 20:11-15 in his book **A Question and Answer Study on the New Testament**).

Contemporaneous with the Great White Throne Judgement, Heaven and earth will be loosed from their present corrupt state and made new as to character (CP 2Pe 3:7, 10-12 with Rev 20:11 and 21:1). For more detailed teachings on this subject see author’s comments on 2Pe 3:1-7 and Rev 20:11 in his book **A Question and Answer Study on the New Testament**).

The final aspect of Jesus’ future ministry is that He will rule and reign with God throughout eternity from His seat of government in New Jerusalem which will come down to earth from heaven after the Great White Throne Judgement. New Jerusalem will also be the home of all the saints of God (CP Rev 21:2-3, 9-10; 22:3-5). New Jerusalem is a literal city measuring fifteen hundred miles – twelve thousand furlongs – long, fifteen hundred miles wide and fifteen hundred miles high. It has more than enough room for every saint of God from Abel to the very last soul saved in the tribulation, who will inhabit it. The city and its streets are made of pure gold which is transparent, like clear glass. The wall surrounding the city is over two hundred feet – sixty five metres – high. It has twelve gates, each one a pearl. There is no temple as an object of worship in New Jerusalem – God and Jesus will be the objects of worship. There will be a temple however, where God will have His Throne; it will be His Throne forever. New Jerusalem will be the capital of God in the earth throughout eternity. The city has no need of the sun and moon, for the glory of God will illuminate it, and Jesus will be its light. The city gates will never be shut because it will always be perfectly secure; there will never be any darkness there (CP Rev 21:12-18, 22-25). For more detailed teachings on these subjects see author’s comments on Rev 21:2, 21:12-18, 21:23-25 and 22:3-5 in his book **A Question and Answer Study on the New Testament**).

This study on Jesus is now complete, but the story of Jesus is not over; it will extend throughout eternity, Amen.