

“THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME JESUS”

“And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save His people from their sins. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” – Matthew 1:21-23

The prophecy, quoted from Isaiah 7:14, is only one of many predictions that were fulfilled in the events surrounding the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. On the surface, it is an unusual prophecy. The Evangelist records that he was named “Jesus” to fulfill a prediction that he would be named “Emmanuel.” Which name was it to be?

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

It is generally recognized that Jesus is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name Joshua, and that the meaning of that name is “Savior.” But, in fact, the meaning is deeper than that.

Joshua was a rather common name in Israel in Bible times. But, next to Jesus, the most famous Joshua of history was the great Israelite warrior-leader who succeeded Moses. It is interesting to note that his original name was not Joshua, but he was given that name by Moses. We read of this name change in Numbers 13:16—

“And Moses called Oshea the son of Nun, Jehoshua.”

Oshea, or the more common Hosea, means “Savior.” All Moses did was add the prefix “Je,” the contracted form of Jehovah, the great God of Israel. The name “Joshua,” therefore, takes on the meaning of “Jehovah saves.” Thus we see how it fulfills the Scriptural prediction of being named “Emmanuel, God with us.”

“GOD WITH US”

This close identification of Jesus with God was the secret of the success of his entire ministry. His motto from the day of his baptism into Jordan was always that expressed in Hebrews 10:7—

“Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God.”

Again, Jesus testified to the same thing in John 6:38—

“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me.”

“I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE”

So total was this dedication to the will of God that he could express the unity he had with his Father in the most complete terms. In John 10:30 he said, **“I and my Father are one.”**

An illustration of this close relationship between Father and Son is found in a unique word introduced by the Apostle John in the first verse of his Gospel—

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

The Greek word here translated “Word” is **“Logos.”** When applied to a person, the term was used to describe an official employed by certain kings. These rulers would shield themselves from the populace by sitting behind large screens and their expressions to the people would be repeated by an individual placed before the screen. This person was called a “Logos.” He was a complete representation of that king.

In keeping with this, we note the following words of William Barclay, a noted prelate and Professor of Divinity and Biblical Criticism at the University of Glasgow in Scotland:

“When John said “the Word was God” he was not saying that Jesus is identical with God” he was saying that Jesus is so perfectly the same as God in mind, in heart, in being, that in Jesus we perfectly see what God is like.”

“HE THAT HATH SEEN ME HATH SEEN THE FATHER”

So successful was Jesus in this portrayal to man of what his Father in heaven was like, that on one occasion he said to the Apostle Philip, as recorded in John 14:9—**“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”**

Further, showing the distinction between Jesus and his Father, while at the same time showing their unity, our Lord defends his own right to receive honor in John 5:23 –

“That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father Which hath sent him.”

THE IMAGE OF GOD

It was this very oneness with God which man originally possessed in the Garden of Eden. When the first man walked in all of his pristine beauty he had abundantly fulfilled God’s intention: **“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”**

But how quickly, once sin entered and man was expelled from the perfect living conditions of the Garden, he fell and departed from this God-like image. It is not again until the time of Jesus that we see these words being repeated of another human being.

But of Christ it is recorded in Hebrews 1:3: “Who being the brightness of his glory and the **express image** of his person.”

Not only did Jesus bring back to earth that glorious image and oneness which man once possessed, but he also encouraged his disciples to be like him—to “deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow me.” (Matt. 16:24)

These, in turn, make the same commitment he made – “I come to do Thy will, O God.” To the extent that they carry out that will in their lives, to that same extent they become copies, not only of their Lord and Master, but a God himself. To that same extent they may one day also say, “He who hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

“ONE AS WE ARE ONE”

It is just this type of unity that was the burden of the last prayer of Jesus while on the earth. Note his words in John 17:21 –

“That they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in Three, that they also may be one in us.”

It is worth noting that the unity between Jesus and his followers was to be of the same type as that which exists between Jesus and his Heavenly Father: “**as thou Father, art in me.**”

MARRIAGE

Perhaps a simpler illustration of oneness can be shown in the picture of an ideal marriage. Two separate people from diverging backgrounds, through the marvelous alchemy of love, gradually lose their individuality and think as a unit, as one. Quoting from Genesis, the Apostle Paul speaks of this relationship in Ephesians 5:31 –

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.”

IDENTIFY WITH CHRIST

May each of us in considering the life of Christ, strive to identify with it, to make it a real part of our own life. If we do so, if we “become one as they are one,” perhaps one day we can truly say, “I and my Father are one.”

ADAM

(balance scale)

JESUS

**THE RANSOM
A Corresponding Price**

One of the keys to the understanding of the role of Jesus at his first advent is the concept of ransom. The Apostle Paul uses this word to describe the death of Christ in 1 Timothy 2:5, 6 –

“For this is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, Who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.”

The Greek word here used, anti-lutron, literally means a corresponding price. This is well illustrated by the balance scales above. Adam sinned and plunged the whole world into sin and death. As a corresponding price, Jesus died to lift up Adam and his entire race from sin to the place where Adam was. A perfect human life for a perfect human life will give men perfect human lives. Again, Paul summarized it succinctly in 1 Corinthians. 15:22 –

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ
shall all be made alive.”