

WHEN WE COME TO CHRIST: TO WHOM HAVE WE COME

(**Bold** type and underlining of scripture text have been added for emphasis)

(Your questions and comments are welcome)

When we come to Christ, to whom specifically, have we come? As Jesus ministered among the Jews, a frequent question arose concerning His identity.

In chapter eight of John's gospel, as Jesus taught in the temple, He was asked, "Who art thou?" (v-25). As Jesus continued in dialogue with the Jews, they said to him, "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" (v-48). And again, they asked, "Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? And the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?" (v-53).

When Jesus went to Nazareth where he was raised as a child, He read from the scriptures and taught, as recorded at: Luke 4

22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

And another time when Jesus was at Jerusalem, we read: John 10

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? **If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.**

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

30 I and my Father are one.

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

Jesus must have experienced sadness that, after all he had said and done, they wanted to stone him because, as they said, "thou...makest thyself God". We need the Father to open the "eyes of our understanding" that we might recognize Christ for who he is. As a late brother once said of Jesus, "**his beginning was not at Bethlehem.**"

John, in his gospel, informs us at: John 1

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 **All things were made by him**; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

14 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.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Remembering that “all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made,” **let us consider Job who, in his intense suffering, raised many questions to which God answered:**

Job 38

2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

4 Where wast thou **when I laid the foundations of the earth?** declare, if thou hast understanding.

5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

6 Whereupon are **the foundations thereof fastened?** or who **laid the corner stone** thereof;

8 Or who **shut up the sea with doors**, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?

9 When **I made the cloud** the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it,

10 And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors,

11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

33 Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

34 Canst thou lift up thy voice **to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?**

35 Canst thou **send lightnings**, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?

36 **Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?** or **who hath given understanding to the heart?**

Job 39

26 Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?

27 Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?

After seeing the power and wisdom of God in the events of his creation, Job was very much humbled as evidenced by his response to God. Job 42

1 Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

2 I know that **thou canst do every thing**, and that **no thought can be withholden from thee**.

3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have **I uttered that I understood not**; things too wonderful for me, **which I knew not**.

4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

5 I have **heard** of thee by the hearing of the ear: but **now** mine eye **seeth thee**.

6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

12 **So the LORD blessed** the latter end of Job more than his beginning:....

Not only was Christ endowed by the Father with great wisdom and power, we see a further aspect of His character in his humility. Philippians 2

6 Who, **being in the form of God**, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But **made himself of no reputation**, and took upon him **the form of a servant**, and was made **in the likeness of men**:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, **he humbled himself**, and became **obedient unto death**, even the death of the cross.

9 **Wherefore** God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee **should** bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue **should** confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Thus, we see that *the One who made all things was willing to come down to the level of men and suffer at their hands to accomplish the Father's purpose to restore man to a relationship with Himself. But, we must recognize that Jesus is no longer in the fashion of man, for he has returned to his original glory (John 17:5). We must not ignore his rightful claim of lordship over us: "Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."*

To understand who Jesus is, we must move from a view of him as circumscribed by flesh and blood: Matthew 27

1 When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus **to put him to death:**

2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

When Pilate asked Jesus if he were King of the Jews at: John 18

36 Jesus answered, **My kingdom is not of this world:** if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom **not from hence.**

(It should be noted that it was Satan who offered Jesus the kingdoms of this world).

We read the account at: Matthew 4

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him **all the kingdoms of the world**, and the glory of them;

9 And saith unto him, All these things **will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.**

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, **Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.**

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

It is significant and refreshing to observe the decisiveness of Jesus when offered the kingdoms of the world. His faithfulness to the Father is observable evidence of His devotion and commitment to the Father.

Even if the chief priests and elders of Israel had received Jesus as the King of the Jews, He would have passed through death and resurrection *because His kingdom was not of this world.*

1 Corinthians 15

50 Now this I say, brethren, that **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;** neither doth corruption inherit incorruption

Peter, while explaining the events at Pentecost, showed that David knew that Christ, through death and resurrection was the promised King who would sit on his throne. Acts 2

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; **Jesus of Nazareth**, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24 **Whom God hath raised up**, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, **neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption**.

28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of **the patriarch David**, that **he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day**.

30 **Therefore being a prophet, and knowing** that God had sworn with an oath to him, **that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;**

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For **David is not ascended into the heavens**: but he saith himself, **The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,**

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 **Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.**

Further, we see that the Jews, because they would not have Jesus to rule over them, even with Pilate's objection, persuaded him to allow Jesus to be put to death rather than be released. They chose the release of one, Barabbas, a murderer and a robber, rather than Jesus. We read at:

Matthew 27

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.

13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?

14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release **unto the people a prisoner, whom they would**.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?

18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that **they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.**

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, **What shall I do then with Jesus** which is called Christ? **They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.**

23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

25 Then answered **all the people**, and said, **His blood be on us, and on our children.**

26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, **he delivered him to be crucified.**

The crucifixion of Jesus was such a momentous event that the sun ceased to shine for the space of three hours (Matt. 27:45), and when Jesus died, the earth shook (vs. 50,51).

But, what made the crucifixion and death of Jesus of such great consequence? Let us go back into a segment of Israel's history when God prepared the way for Israel's deliverance from Egypt. He instructed Moses:

Exodus 11

4 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:

5 And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

6 And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.

7 But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

Exodus 12

21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and **take you a lamb** according to your families, and **kill the passover.**

22 And **ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood** that is in the bason, and **strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood** that is in the bason; and **none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.**

23 For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and **when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts**, the LORD will **pass over** the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

24 And **ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever**.

25 And it shall come to pass, **when ye be come to the land** which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, **that ye shall keep this service**.

26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, **What mean ye by this service?**

27 That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

43 And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof:

44 But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.

45 A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof.

46 In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

48 And **when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised**, and **then let him come near and keep it**; and **he shall be as one that is born in the land**: for **no uncircumcised** person shall eat thereof.

49 **One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you**.

50 Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

51 And **it came to pass the selfsame day, that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt** by their armies.

Here we see that God made a difference between His people Israel and the Egyptians **on the basis of the blood of the slain lamb** that had been placed on the lintel and the side posts of the houses of the Israelites. The destroyer, **when he saw the blood** of the slain lamb, passed over that particular house. **Their safety rested on** their remaining in the house **under the protection of the blood, not that they were Israelites**.

The children of Israel were instructed to keep a feast as a memorial of this day through their generations by an ordinance forever. This annual Passover feast was to be kept with unleavened bread when the children of Israel entered the land that God had promised them. And further, equally as significant as the unleavened bread, was that all who keep the feast **must be circumcised**. **The stranger and the home born shall be under one law**. **Circumcision, not being an Israelite**, was the ground of Divine acceptance for keeping the Passover feast.

When God saw the blood of the Passover lamb applied to the lintel and the side posts, He saved alive those who were inside the house. All of this foreshadowed and had its ultimate meaning in the death of Jesus. When the

chief priests and elders and the multitude of Israelites called for His crucifixion, they were calling for the death of “The Lamb of God”. We read:

John 1

29 The next day **John seeth Jesus** coming unto him, and saith, **Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

This is why the land was covered with darkness, the earth quaked and the rocks divided. They had killed the Son of God. However, this was not the end of the matter as those Jews had assumed. *The Christ that we come to in faith is not in the fashion of a man, nor is He dead. His Father had determined before that Jesus would reign in a spiritual kingdom by means of death and resurrection.*

Matthew 27

62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, **After three days I will rise again.**

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.

66 So they went, and **made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.**

Matthew 28

1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that **ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.**

6 **He is not here:** for **he is risen**, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that **he is risen from the dead**; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

11 Now when they were going, behold, **some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.**

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, **they gave large money unto the soldiers,**

13 Saying, **Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.**

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 **So they took the money, and did as they were taught:** and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

16 **Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.**

17 And **when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.**

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

After Jesus had risen, leaving an empty sepulchre, He continued with the apostles:

Acts 1

1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2 **Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:**

3 **To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:**

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For **John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.**

John 7

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Then Jesus ascended up into heaven and was glorified, opening the way for the coming of the Holy Spirit to all who believe. So, as the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

2 Corinthians 5

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet **now henceforth** know we him no more.

17 Therefore if any man **be in Christ, he is a new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

In the epistle to the Hebrews, we see Jesus in His position before God the Father wherein He is exalted above the angels, and while in the beginning He laid the foundation of the earth and made the heavens, there is a future time when Jesus will fold them up as a vesture and they will be changed.

Hebrews 1

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us **by his Son**, whom he hath appointed **heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds**;

3 Who **being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power**, when he had by himself **purged our sins**, sat down **on the right hand of the Majesty on high**:

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, **I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?**

6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And **let all the angels of God worship him**.

7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

8 But **unto the Son** he saith, **Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness** is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning **hast laid the foundation of the earth**; and **the heavens are the works of thine hands**:

11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

12 And **as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail**.

13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

God and His Son were not indifferent to the plight of mankind; equally significant, Jesus did not ask us to follow Him out of such a hopeless and distressful circumstance without His first walking where man walks. In this regard, we gain further insight into the divine character.

And, as a demonstration of divine mercy and love, all that are willing to identify with Jesus and the meaning of His suffering, He is not ashamed to call them His brethren.

Hebrews 2

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

9 But **we see Jesus**, who was **made a little lower than the angels** for the suffering of death, **crowned with glory and honour**; that he by the grace of God should **taste death for every man**.

10 For it became him, **for whom** are all things, and **by whom** are all things, **in bringing many sons unto glory**, to make the **captain of their salvation** perfect **through sufferings**.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified **are all of one**: for which cause **he is not ashamed to call them brethren**,

12 Saying, I will declare thy name **unto my brethren**, in the midst **of the church** will I sing praise unto thee.

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16 For verily **he took not on him the nature of angels**; but **he took on him the seed of Abraham**.

We also learn that Jesus' ministry on behalf of his brethren did not end with His death.

Hebrews 2

17 Wherefore 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.

18 For in that **he himself hath suffered** being tempted, **he is able to succour** them that are tempted.

Hebrews 4

14 Seeing then that we have **a great high priest**, that is **passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God**, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For **we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin**.

16 Let us **therefore** come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

And at:

1 John 2

1 **My little children**, these things write I unto you, **that ye sin not**. And if any man sin, we have **an advocate** with the Father, **Jesus Christ the righteous**:

2 And he is **the propitiation** for **our sins**: and not for **our's only**, but also **for the sins of the whole world**.

He is the propitiation tells us that He, Jesus, has satisfied the Father with regard to the sins, not only for Israel ("our sins"), but also, for all men (Gentiles included).

This is, at least, a partial answer to: "Who art thou?" Whom makest thou thyself?"

