



WHAT DO YOU
THINK OF THE

MESSIAH?

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What do you think of the Messiah? (1)
Everything depends on the answer you give
to this question: your happiness in this life,
and where you will spend the life to come.

Soon Jesus will return, and when He does so He will ask you, as He asked the people then, “What is your opinion of Me?” I am a Christian. As such I am your friend. I really want you to know who Jesus is, and it is most important that no one should mislead you about this important matter. Maybe you think that He is just a prophet, a good man, one among many. But He is unique. He is incomparable. There is no one like Him in this world or the next. Judge for yourself.



WHO IS THE MESSIAH?

(by G. Nehls)

Al-Masih? - The Messiah! Yes, but this is a title, a meaningless word unless it is filled with the proper meaning.

‘Masih’ is the Arabic form of the Hebrew word ‘Mashiah’ or, as we say today, ‘Messiah’. We know that the Greek translation of this word is ‘Christos’, in short ‘Christ’, and we know that this is the title of Jesus. But we still do not know what it means! Had Jesus for arguments sake, been born among the Incas of South America, or in Japan, and if he had then told the people that He was the Messiah, how would they have reacted? Not at all. They neither would have known the word nor the concept behind it. There was only one people who knew - the Jews.

They were waiting for Him! Only in *their* Book the name and the concept of Messiah was revealed. In the Law of Moses it was demanded by God Almighty that all people consecrated for sacred purposes had to be ‘anointed’, i.e. oil, enriched with a certain fragrance, was to be poured over them. This ritual signified that the Holy Spirit of God was poured over them to enable them to fulfill God’s purpose. This was frequently done to consecrate priests, prophets and kings in Israel.

Further revelations indicated prophetically that someone special would come to introduce God’s rule, not only to the Jews but to all other people as well. He would bring the peace of God to earth. God, through the prophet Daniel (about 600 BC), foretold His title and the time of His coming.

The Jews have waited for the Messiah ever since (although they largely rejected Him when He came!). Reports at the time

of the birth of Jesus tell us that a number of devout Jews were waiting at the temple for His appearing. They had read and understood the prophecy by Daniel.

When Jesus came He was recognized by many to be the Messiah. The Qur'an adopts this title of Jesus without explaining it. To find out its meaning we have to turn to the only source available, the New Testament or *Injil*. In it Jesus asked the Pharisees, His religious enemies, this crucial question. Since it is of vital importance to all of us, we pose it again:

What do YOU think of the Messiah?

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS WONDERFUL BIRTH?

No other was ever born as He was. He is Jesus the son of Mary. You call Ishmael the son of Abraham, John the son of Zacharias, Muhammad the son of Abdullah. All other men take the name of their father. Why did Jesus take His mother's name? Because He had no earthly father. He was born of the virgin Mary. He was born by the power of God (Quadrat Allah), apart from the intervention of a man. Seven hundred years before He was born the prophet Isaiah foretold how He would be born: *"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name GOD WITH US."* (2) And it happened exactly as it was foretold, as you can read in Matthew 1:18-25, part of the New Testament or *Injil*.

God created Adam our father from clay, and all of us are children of Adam, and so were all the prophets. We are of the earth - earthy, Jesus came down from heaven. He is called **al Manzul: He who descended**. He was pure and clean, like the snow and the rain. All others are like the earth: dirty, impure and tainted with sin. We read that “Jesus came into the world to save sinners”.(3) He came to a foreign place. You were born here. Jesus was in God’s presence before He came. He chose to come to this world to save us. *“In the beginning was the Word.”* He was and is that Word. He took a human body and became man. He came from above. *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.... and the Word become flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth; and we have seen his glory...”*.(4)

Two men once fell into a deep pit. “One said to the other, “Save me from this wretched place. Please get me out of the dirt and the mud.” The other replied: “You idiot, how can I? I am in the same plight as you.” They were both in the pit and neither one could help the other. Then they heard a voice from above calling to them to grasp a rope. The man who hadn’t fallen into the pit was the only one who could save them. He brought help from above. The very best among the prophets could not save us from the pit of sin, but Jesus did not have a sinful nature. He came from above. God sent angels to announce His birth (read Matthew 1:20 and Luke 2:9). How wonderful all this is! Never man was born as this Man. He is unique in His birth. He is incomparable.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS CHARACTER?

He was perfect. He never once sinned. He never made a mistake. He never had to ask forgiveness. Every man who fears God must confess his sin and ask forgiveness. David did. Abraham did. In fact one prophet said that he asked forgiveness of God seventy times a day. You can search the Bible and the Koran in vain to find a single verse where Jesus asked forgiveness. He did not need pardon, for He was sinless. His closest companions wrote about Him and said; *“He knew no sin. He did no sin. There was no sin in Him.”* They were men who knew Him well. God forgave the prophets when they confessed their sin, but Jesus needed no forgiveness. He was without sin. He could even say to His enemies: *“Who of you can silence me by pointing out one sin that I have done?”* (5) Not one of them could point to a single sin in His life. Who of us would dare to make such a challenge to his enemies? Jesus was brought before the judge Pilate and falsely accused, but Pilate could find nothing wrong, so he washed his hands and said, *“I am innocent of the blood of this just person.”* There was never another man who was sinless. He is the only sinless prophet. He is unique and incomparable.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS WORDS?

On one occasion His enemies sent the police to capture Him. They listened to His teachings and then came back without

having arrested Him. Saying in amazement: *“Never did a man speak the way this man speaks.”*(6)

Think of what He said: *“I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”*(7) An old Muslim friend once explained to me: “You know, friend, the prophets are like the moon. The moon shines in the night. And the prophets brought God’s light to this poor dark world. The moon is just like a prophet. It shines more and more until it is full moon, and then wanes and dies. But never fear, another moon will come in its place. So the prophets came one after the other. One gave his message, died, passed on, and left his place to another. Every nation has had some light from God.” Men’s religions are like the light of a candle or the moon. But who uses these lesser lights when the sun has risen? Jesus said: *“I am the light of the world.”* He is the sun of righteousness. Have you ever seen the sun wane or grow less? No! It never dies. It is for everyone in every land. Jesus is like the sun. He never grows less. Though clouds of sin or unbelief may hide the sun - it is there in all its brightness nevertheless! He is for every land; for every man.

He also said: “I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father except through me.” The prophets all come to point the way back to God. They said: “This is God’s way. Do this. Follow this teaching. This is the way. Keep the commandments.” But Jesus said: “I am the way. Follow me.”

A small boy lost his way in a big city. He was from another land and he was unable to express himself clearly. He asked a policeman to tell him the way home. The policeman said to him: “Go up this street, take the second turning on the left, then the third on the right, cross the bridge, go around the

traffic-isle and up the middle road...”The boy burst into tears. The policeman had told him the right way, but the boy was too weak and fearful to follow the instructions. Just then a man from the boy’s village came along. He took him by the hand. When the boy was so tired that he could no longer walk, the man picked him up and carried him to his home. The policeman showed the way, but the other man was the way. Jesus said: “I am the way - the way to the Father’s house.”

What do you think of His wonderful stories? (Read Luke 15). What do you think of His wonderful invitations? He said: “Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”(8) What do you think of His words? Never man spoke like this man. He is unique. He is incomparable. There is no other like Him in heaven or earth.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS NAMES AND TITLES?

Every prophet has his own peculiar title. Abraham is called the friend of God (*Khalil Allah*). Moses is called the spokesman with God (*Kalim Allah*). Others are called *Ruh Allah* or *Kalimat ullah* (Jesus) and *Habib Allah* (*Muhammad*). Now whom does a man love most, his friend (*habib*) or his spirit, or his mind, thought or word, that is himself? Be quite frank now. Let your own heart reply. Yes, Jesus is called *Ruh Allah* and *Kalimat Ullah*. In the Gospel we read that God said about Jesus: “*This is my beloved Son: hear Him.*”(9) Again I would ask you, “Whom does a man love most, his friend or his son.?” Right. His son. To distinguish Him from all others, God

called Jesus His Son. What did God mean? We say the son is the very image (*mathal*) of his father. When we see Jesus, we know about God.⁽¹⁰⁾ A son can stand in his father's place and represent him. He can speak for his father. This is what Jesus did when He was here. That is why He was called the Word of God. God spoke through Him.⁽¹¹⁾ His titles are unique. He is incomparable.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS POWER?

He can do everything. All power and authority are given to Him. In fact, there is no work of God that Jesus did not do when He was here on Earth. Who can raise the dead but God? Jesus raised the dead. Who can really heal the leper but God? Jesus cured and cleansed the lepers. Who can open the eyes of the blind but God? Jesus did all this. He healed every kind of illness. No man was ever sent away by Him as incurable. He cursed out evil spirits by a word. He changed men's lives, even saved them from sin.

Many of the prophets worked miracles and healed people in the name of God. But Jesus never healed in the name of God. He always healed men and women by His own power and in His own name. He said, *"I say to you, 'Get up and walk'"* to a man who had not walked for thirty-eight years. The man got up and walked. He never used medicines. He healed men in His own name and by His own power.

A man named Lazarus died. They buried him and called Jesus. When Jesus came, Lazarus had been dead and buried

for four days. Jesus went to the grave and said: "*Lazarus, come out.*"(12) The dead man came out of his grave. Jesus left us in no doubt about His power to raise the dead. He said, "*I am the resurrection, and the life.*"(13) The day is coming when those who are in the grave will hear His voice and come out. You will come out from the tomb if you are dead. So will Moses and Abraham and every prophet. But even now Jesus is able to give you new life, God's life, eternal life. He is changing people's lives everywhere in the world today. He can transform your life. What do you think of His mighty power? He is unique, all-powerful, and incomparable.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS SUFFERINGS?

What do you think of His death? Do you know where you will die? Here, or in another land? On the sea, on the road, or in your bed? **Where?** Then **how** will you die? Will it be through illness, by an accident, or a natural death? Perhaps you can tell me, when will you die? How old will you be? On what day of what month will it be? Just what will happen to you after your death? You and I must admit that we do not know these things. God decides it all.

But Jesus knew and foretold where He would die: at Jerusalem. He foretold how and gave all the details.(14) He told His disciples when He would die; on the feast day when everyone would be killing a lamb to celebrate the Passover He would die as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."(15) He told them that on the third day He would

rise again. All this happened exactly as He had said it would. He knew. He was not like other men. We do not know. The prophets did not know. You and I will die when, how and where God decides.

But Jesus said, “No one takes it (my life) away from Me, but I lay it down on my own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again.”(16) He had never sinned, and therefore was not compelled to die. He could have gone up to heaven without dying. But He chose to die for the sake of others. He gave His life for us. He died that we might be forgiven. He died for you. He, the Good Shepherd, gave His life for the sheep. David, Isaiah, and other prophets, also had foretold the death of Jesus: “... *My strength is dried up as a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; you lay me in dust of death. Dogs are round about me; a company of evil doers surround me; they have pierced my hands and feet. I can count all my bones, they stare and gloat over me; they divided my garments among them and for my robe they cast lots.*”(17) And “*He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief....surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its Shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth....he was cut out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people ... although he had done no violence,*

and there was no deceit in his mouth...he poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”(18) Never did any other man die as He did. He is incomparable, unique among them.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS VICTORY OVER DEATH?

He died and men buried Him. His enemies did their best to keep Him in the tomb. They rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the grave. They sealed the stone and then surrounded the grave with the armed guards. There was no doubt that He was dead, and men did their very best to keep Him in the grave. He rose again from the dead and showed Himself alive to His disciples, to Peter, to Mary, and then to over 500 people. He rose again, as He said He would. God wanted to show everyone in the world that He had accepted the work of Jesus. All those people saw Him. They touched Him, they ate and drank with Him after His resurrection. He showed them the wounds in His hands and feet and side.

Death is a great enemy. You must die and so must I. The prophets died and remained dead. Praise God, Jesus Christ has conquered death. He is alive today. He is able to save all those who come to God through Him, because He lives to intercede for them. Is any other prophet living today after having died? Jesus alone rose from the dead. He is unique and incomparable. There is no one like Him, either on earth or in heaven.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS ASCENSION?

In Acts 1:9-11 we read : “...*he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, two men stood by them in white robes, and said ‘men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus who was taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’*” And in Philipians 2:6-11: “*Being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.*” Now, if I were to ask a company of the Jews whom they would like to occupy the very highest place in heaven, they would all say Moses. If I were to ask Muslims, they would say Muhammad. If I were to ask Christians, they would say Jesus. However, God did not consult either Jews, Muslims, or Christians. God has highly exalted Jesus and given Him the name which is above every name. This is God’s doing. Every proud knee must bow to Him.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS RETURN TO THIS EARTH?

He is coming back again. He said so.⁽¹⁹⁾ The angels also said so.⁽²⁰⁾ All true Christians are waiting for Him. Muslims know that He is coming back to reign. He is coming to take His own people to be with Him in heaven. He is coming to reign over the whole earth; He is earth's King. He must reign till all enemies have been put under His feet. Some people say He will reign for forty years. God says 1000 years. I believe God. Yes, He is coming again. Everyone will then admit that He is King of kings and Lord of lords. He is coming. You will stand before Him. He will be your judge.

When you see Him face to face, He will ask you: "What do you think of me?" What will be your reply? If you say, "You are one of the many prophets" He will ask you why you have not followed His commandments, and you will be condemned because you have believed that He is just one of many prophets, when really He is incomparable, the only Saviour. Who is coming back to reign? Moses, or Abraham or David or some other prophets? No! The Lord Jesus is coming and will be the judge. God has given all men the assurance of this in that He raised Him from the dead. He is coming. Every eye shall see Him! He is unique.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS DEMANDS ON YOU?

He says, *“Come to me...and I will give you rest.”*(21) He calls you today. When He called His first disciples, they left their homes, their parents, their work, their all to follow Him. He asks you to follow Him. He asks you to trust Him, to believe on Him as your Saviour, to surrender your life to Him as Lord. He asks for all. If He is who He says He is, His claims are absolutely logical. He is unique and incomparable in His birth, His spotless life and character, His unique titles, His wonderful words, His supreme power, and His suffering and death. He lives today; He is with those who trust Him. He intercedes in heaven for those who believe in Him. He is coming soon. There is no one like Him in heave or on Earth. That is why He asks to be King and Lord of your life.



Scripture References

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|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| (1) Matthew 22:42 | (8) Matthew 11:28 | (15) John 1:29 |
| (2) Isaiah 7:14 | (9) Luke 9:35 | (16) John 10:18 |
| (3) 1 Timothy 1:15 | (10) John 14:9 | (17) Psalm 22:14-18 |
| (4) John 1:1-3,14 | (11) Hebrews 1:3 | (18) Isaiah 53 |
| (5) John 8:46 | (12) John 11:43 | (19) John 14:1-3 |
| (6) John 7:46 | (13) John 11:25 | (20) Acts 1:11 |
| (7) John 8:12 | (14) Luke 18:31-33 | (21) Matthew 11:28 |

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