

“What Think Ye Of Christ?”

By Elder David Pyles

In Matthew 22, certain unbelieving Jews challenged Jesus with three questions in a failed attempt to trap Him in His own words. He then countered by asking them the famous question: “*What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?*” (vs 42). The word “Christ” is simply a Greek variation of the Jewish term “Messiah.” Thus, Jesus here questioned the Jews about their opinion as to lineage and identity of the Messiah as specified in numerous Old Testament prophecies.

The Jews replied that He was to be the son of David, or what we would call a grandson today. This is what they understood the Old Testament prophecies to teach. But Jesus pressed them further by asking: “*How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?*” (vss 43-45). This was a quote from the 110th Psalm, written by David himself. Every verse of this psalm pertained to the Messiah, and every verse also happened to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

These unbelieving Jews acknowledged that the psalm was about the Messiah, but they were unable to answer Jesus’ question about why David would refer to his own grandson as “Lord.” These Jews correctly anticipated a Messiah, and correctly understood the psalm to be about Him, but they failed to understand that Old Testament prophecy called for a Messiah who would actually be none other than incarnate God. This explains why David referred to Him as “Lord.”

Any doubts about this interpretation are quickly dispelled by considering what other Old Testament prophecies said. For example, Isaiah wrote:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. – Isa 9:6

These words were written over 700 years before Jesus was born. They clearly implied that the promised child would actually be the incarnation of deity. Isaiah also wrote earlier:

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. – Isa 7:14

This was an ancient prophecy of the virgin birth of Jesus, who was here called “Immanuel.” Now this word literally means “God with us” (Mt 1:23).

Isaiah was not alone in such prophecies. Consider what Micah said about the Messiah’s birth:

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. – Mic 5:2

These words were also written over 700 years before Jesus. They called for the Messiah to be born in a town called “Bethlehem,” and they asserted that such child would be an eternal being.

Add to all this yet another psalm from 1000 years before Jesus:

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. – Ps 45:6-7

This psalm actually had God anointing God. “Messiah” literally means one who is anointed. The psalm prophesied that the great Anointed One would be God Himself.

The ancient Jews of course rejected Jesus as Messiah, and many of them also rejected the idea that Messiah would be divine; however, I will finish with yet another prophecy that predicted they will accept these claims at a date yet in our future. This prophecy was from Zechariah about 500 years before Jesus:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants

of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. – Zech 12:9-10

God here claimed that the Jews would pierce Him one day, but would come to regret this at a later time when the Spirit would be poured out upon them. None can credibly deny that this was a prophecy of Jesus Christ, and one that powerfully corroborated all of the verses already presented about the divinity of the Messiah.

It is a sad thing that many today express doubts about the divinity of Jesus. This includes even some who claim to be Christian. Such are woefully ignorant of the Bible. The most important question one will ever face is: “*What think ye of Christ?*” Be sure that scripture is both unequivocal and convincing in what it has to say in answer to this question.