

HIS NAME “JESUS”

Luke 1:31

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-38

Intro: As a young man, when I first became aware of theologians who were modernistic, or liberal, one thing that I noticed about their references to the Lord Jesus Christ, was that they usually referred to Him as “Jesus.” I soon learned that they referred to the Lord only as “Jesus” because they did not believe that He was the Lord, and they did not believe that He was Christ. I also that when they referred to God it was usually that God was the Father of all people regardless of their faith. And the term which they loved to use was “the Fatherhood of God.”

Well, at that time I didn’t know very much about the Word myself, but I felt that if preachers and theologians, as well as some professing Christians, who really didn’t believe the Bible as it was written, used those terms, I wouldn’t use them. And so I never referred to the Lord simply as “Jesus,” and I felt that there was something very wrong about referring to “the Fatherhood of God.”

But as time went on, in my Bible reading I noticed that God was spoken of as our Father, and that there were times when the Lord was referred to simply as Jesus. And I notice that this was not only in the Gospels that the Lord was called just “Jesus,” but sometimes even in the book of Acts and in the epistles. When the Lord Jesus was asked by His disciples to teach them to pray, He began by saying, “When ye pray, say, Our Father.” See Luke 11:2. Also verses like John 1:12 and 13 helped me to understand that God was my Father, not because I was a human being, but because I had received Christ as my Savior. Later I also learned that the Apostle Paul, speaking of us as God’s creatures, quoted one of the Greek poets who said, “We are the offspring of God.” But that was not what the Lord had in mind when He told Mary Magdalene soon after His resurrection,

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not (or, Don’t hold me back); for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God (John 20:17).

So to make a long story shorter, what I realized was that liberal theologians and preachers had almost robbed me of two of the most wonderful

truths in the Bible just because they did not believe in the Deity of our Lord, and did not believe that only those who have received Christ are the true members of God's family, which meant that God indeed was their heavenly Father.

Tonight I want us to think particularly about our Lord's name, Jesus.

I. THE ANGEL'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF A LONG-AWAITED BIRTH, AND THE NAME OF THE BABY BOY.

As far as chronological order, that Name was first given to the virgin Mary. In the Scripture which I have read to you tonight, in verse 31, we have these words spoken to Mary by the angel Gabriel:

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS (Luke 1:31).

Some time later Joseph, to whom Mary was engaged to be married, discovered that Mary was pregnant, and he could only come to one conclusion – that she had been unfaithful to him. He was a righteous man, and so as much as it hurt him to do so, he planned to break off the engagement, but not to put her to shame publicly.

But Matthew tells us that while all of these thoughts were running through his mind, an angel of the Lord also appeared to him, probably also Gabriel, and said this:

20b Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:20b-21).

Then Matthew went on to explain:

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 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.

24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS (Matt. 1:22-25).

This undoubtedly means that Joseph was well acquainted with that Scripture in Isaiah's prophecy, and he believed that God was fulfilling His Word through his dear Mary. So he did not break off the engagement, but waited until Mary's baby was born and "he," Joseph, "called His Name JESUS.

Luke is even more specific as to when officially our Lord was named Jesus. This is what we read in Luke 2:21:

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

When Mary asked the angel how she could have a child when she was not married, this was the angel's answer:

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).

Now let us think about:

II. THE MEANING OF THE NAME, JESUS.

It was actually explained by the angel when he appeared to Joseph. He said, "Thou shalt call His Name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins."

The name, while always focusing upon the humanity of our Lord, also refers to His Deity. It means, *Jehovah is salvation*, or *Jehovah is Savior*. And Mary had been told that since the Holy Spirit would come upon her, her child (the son of Mary) would also be called "the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

This meant that the Son of God was to become a Man, and that the purpose of His birth was "to save His people from their sins."

When I first learned all of this I realized that those liberal theologians were actually saying what they did not want to say. "Jesus" means that the Lord was God as well as Man, and that the purpose of His birth was salvation, the salvation of the people of God from their sins. So what the liberals were trying to deny, the Deity of Christ, and the need that man has

for salvation because he is a sinner, was declared every time they spoke this Name, or every time they printed it in an article.

This name was a very common name among the Jews, but the One Who gave it its full meaning was our Lord. In a very specific way we can say that our Lord was “born to die,” not because He was a sinner, but because He came to save sinners. And He did not come to save all sinners. If that had been His purpose, He could have done it. But He came “to save His people from their sins.” Before the foundation of the world God chose an elect people for salvation. He gave them to His Son. His Son died to guarantee their salvation, and throughout history God has been drawing His people to Himself, and without exception they all come believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation.

Now one reason that I am directing attention at this time to the Name JESUS, is because in the book of Hebrews we have several passages where our Lord is referred to simply as JESUS. And this feature is not limited to the book of Hebrews. But its use in Hebrews helps us to see how important this Name is. It comes from the Greek, but is the equivalent of the name Joshua in the OT.

And so for the remainder of our time together tonight let us look at what we might call:

III. THE VERSES IN HEBREWS WHERE OUR LORD IS REFERRED TO SIMPLY AS “JESUS.”

Our Lord’s full Name is “the Lord Jesus Christ.” And I always love to use his full Name, and I love to hear others speak of our Savior as the Lord Jesus Christ. “Lord” emphasizes His Deity. “Jesus” calls our attention to His humanity, but, as we have seen, speaks also of His Deity. And “Christ” is the office He holds – “Christ” is from the Greek, and it means the same as “Messiah” in Hebrew.

But here are the references in Hebrews where our Lord is spoken of as “JESUS.”

A. Hebrews 2:9.

B. Hebrews 3:1 (according to the better MSS, with “Christ” first appearing in verse 6).

C. Hebrews 4:14.

D. Hebrews 6:20.

E. Hebrews 7:22.

F. Hebrews 10:19.

G. Hebrews 12:2.

H. Hebrews 12:24.

I. Hebrews 13:12. Related this to the exhortation in verse 15 where “by Him” must refer to “Jesus” in verse 12.

J. Hebrews 13:20. Here the Greek has “the Lord, our Jesus.”

Concl: This makes a total of ten times in Hebrews that our Lord is referred to as simply “Jesus.” Here in Hebrews we have our Lord Jesus Christ present-ed as both our great High Priest as well as the Sacrifice. There is much comfort for us in these passages where our Lord is referred to simply as “JESUS.” I trust this study will make us aware of the ways in which our Lord is referred to in the NT – sometimes just as the Lord, sometimes just as Jesus, sometimes just as Christ, sometimes as the Lord Jesus, sometimes as Christ Jesus, sometimes as Jesus Christ as well as with other combinations of His Name, but always the same glorious Person without whom you and I would still be in our sins, ignorant of God’s love and God’s grace, and without the knowledge of God Himself. The Name “JESUS” is found alone or in combination with His other names *almost 1,000 times in the NT.*

So when we think of “Jesus” (which ought to be many times every day), let us thank God for the gift of His Son and His work for our salvation, and that He “ever lives to make intercession for [us].”