

Prophecies of Birth of Jesus: 3

The Names, Titles and Designations Given Him in Prophecy and at Birth: [part 1]

Names are important, perhaps not so much today as they used to be. Parents choose names for their children based on a number of factors

- after a family member e.g. a grandfather
- after some influential person in their life
- some may just choose a name from a book
- or name them after a celebrity
- or maybe after a place that is special to them

Whatever our reasons for choosing a name for a child, the majority of people do not really give any thought to the meaning of name. All names have a meaning, and it is particularly important when looking at the people in the Bible to know the meaning of their name.

Great importance was placed on giving a child their name as in most cases the name of the person defines their character (e.g. look at the life of Jacob, whose name means supplanter or deceiver). We see the struggle and pressure that some had in naming their child as in the case of Zacharias and Elisabeth (Luke 1.59-64). In some cases like Jacob, Abram and Simon, God had to change their names.

Certain names and designations were attributed to Jesus in the prophecies and these are important for our study as we learn who He is and what His birth means for us and the world to whom He was given.

A. JESUS

“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins” Matthew 1.21

This prophetic word spoken to Joseph gives Him the name **JESUS**. Jesus is the personal name of Him who was born of a virgin and is the most often used name for Him in the New Testament. His name is found in the first and last verses of the New Testament (Matthew 1.1; Revelation 22.21).

Jesus is the Greek form of the name Joshua and means 'Saviour, salvation of God'. This name is important as it reveals to us one of the prime reasons for Jesus' birth – to save His people from their sins (and satan, death, hell, law, wrath to come etc)

Salvation is not *something*, it is Someone – Jesus was born a Saviour (Luke 2.11) – this is the fulfilment of the prophecy.

It may surprise you to find out that Jesus is all over the Old Testament. Arthur E Glass in his book “*Jesus in the Old Testament*” says that almost every time the Old Testament uses the word salvation, particularly when used with the Hebrew suffix meaning 'my',

'thy', 'your' or 'his' it is identically the same word as *yeshuah* or Joshua (the Hebrew variation of the name Jesus).

Let us take a look at some of these verses:

“I have waited for your salvation [*yeshuah*], O LORD!” Genesis 49.18

“Oh, that the salvation [*yeshuah*] of Israel would come out of Zion! When God brings back the captivity of His people, Let Jacob rejoice *and* Israel be glad.” Psalm 53.6

“Remember me, O LORD, with the favour *You have toward* Your people. Oh, visit me with Your salvation [*yeshuah*],” Psalm 106.4

“Thus says the LORD: “Keep justice, and do righteousness, For My salvation [*yeshuah*] *is* about to come, And My righteousness to be revealed” Isaiah 56.1

“Behold, God *is my salvation* [*yeshuah*], I will trust and not be afraid; 'For YAH, the LORD, *is* my strength and song; He also has become my salvation [*yeshuah*]. Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation [*yeshuah*]” Isaiah 12.2-3

B. CHRIST

“**For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord” Luke 2.11**

The angel of the Lord gave this message to the shepherds in the fields that the One called the Christ was born. **CHRIST** is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew title Messiah, these titles mean 'anointed, anointing' and when used in reference to Jesus they are translated as 'Anointed One'

“The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed..” Psalm 2.2

It was Messiah/Christ that was eagerly anticipated by all godly Jews. He was the one that was expected to 'redeem Israel' from the yoke and bondage of Roman oppression that the two disciples on the road to Emmaus were discussing (Luke 24.21). Messiah/Christ was the One who would 'tell us all things' (John 4.25), the Jews expected the Messiah to be a prophet like Moses who would teach them the ways of God (Deuteronomy 18.15, Isaiah 2.3).

“Your throne, O God, *is* forever and ever; A sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions” Psalm 45.6-7

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.” Isaiah 61.1-3

Jesus Himself quoted this prophecy in His message in Nazareth when he exclaimed that the prophecy was being fulfilled that very day in their hearing (Luke 4.18-19)

“Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest *who* shall do according to what *is* in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever.” 1 Samuel 2.35

“O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your Anointed; Remember the mercies of Your servant David” 2 Chronicles 6.42

“There I will make the horn of David grow; I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed.” Psalm 132.17

The lamp that was prophesied of in this verse is a reference to John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of Christ / Messiah. He was sent by God to be the witness to Jesus the Christ - the Light - John 1.6-9.

“You went forth for the salvation of Your people, For salvation with Your Anointed. You struck the head from the house of the wicked, By laying bare from foundation to neck” Habakkuk 3.13

C. LORD

“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord” Luke 2.11

The angel also announced that the **Lord** was born. He has the triad designation Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 22.21). Apart from the personal name Jesus, this is the most frequently used designation given to Him. This title denotes authority, dominion and deity, and is equivalent to Jehovah in the Old Testament.

“I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You” Psalm 2.7

“The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”” Psalm 110.1

Peter quotes this verse in his Pentecost sermon and then goes on to say:

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Acts 2.36

By calling Him Lord, we are as an act of worship surrendering our whole to Him. We receive Him as Saviour, but we make Him our Lord.

The great missionary to China and founder of China Inland Mission, Hudson Taylor, once said: “***If He is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all***”.

We are truly blessed when we acknowledge Him as Peter did – Lord Jesus Christ. Giving Him all that we are and all that we have – our hearts, lives and possessions.