

Introduction

Jesus Christ in Culture

Of all the historical people in history, Jesus Christ stands out as being the most culturally significant.

The chronology of world history is defined by the life of Jesus Christ:

B.C. designates the epoch "before Christ."

A.D. is an abbreviation of the Medieval Latin phrase "anno Domini nostri Jesu Christi" which translates into English as "in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In an attempt to remove any reference to Christianity, B.C. / A. D. is being replaced with BCE / CE which are abbreviations for "Before Common Era / Common Era;" however, the dividing point of the chronology of world history continues to be Jesus Christ!



Christmas commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ each year and is symbolized with the Nativity of Jesus. The goodness of God giving such a precious gift is so valued that Christmas is associated with gift giving and has become a cultural celebration around the world.

Easter commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ each year and is symbolized by the unoccupied crucifixion cross. This defining moment in Christianity, enabling one to be born again, has become a cultural celebration and symbolism of Spring.

Jesus' "**Golden Rule**" (Matt 7:12; Luke 6:31), which finds its basis in the Old Testament, has been adopted by virtually all cultures around the world.

In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.
(Matt 7:12)

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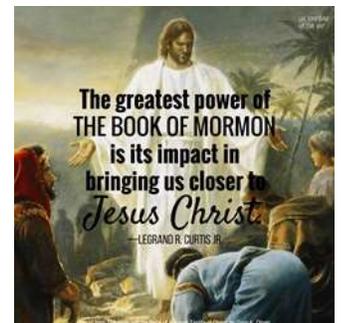
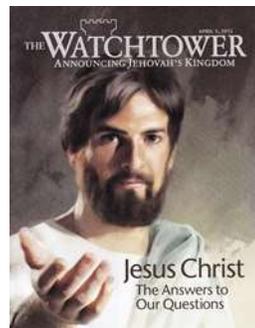
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Jesus Christ in Various Religions

Of all the historical figures in the history of religion, Jesus Christ is the one most revered by world religions and cults.

Islam's Quran calls Jesus Christ one of God's greatest prophet, of virgin birth and performed miracles.

Mormons / Latter Day Saints and Jehovah Witnesses worship Jesus Christ as the Son of God.



But, while the Jesus Christ of other religions / cults originate from the New Testament, their accounts differ significantly from the Person presented in the Bible.

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Which Religious View is Correct?

Which account of Jesus Christ is correct? Is the New Testament account of Jesus reliable?

Muslims believe that Muhammad was mankind's last prophet who received the final revelation of Allah verbally and recorded as the Quran (632 A.D.). According to the Quran, it was the last of three previous revelations: Tawrat by the prophet Moses, Zabur by the prophet David, and Injil by the prophet Jesus.

But the Quran is the product of a single author with no corroborating manuscript or historical evidence of its truthfulness.

Mormons / Latter Day Saints believe that an angel led Joseph Smith to inscribed golden plates which he translated to form the Book of Mormon (1830). They believe that the Book of Mormon is another witness of Jesus Christ and clarifies the Bible.

But the Book of Mormon, like the Quran, is the product of a single author with no corroborating manuscript or historical evidence of its truthfulness. The golden plates were purportedly taken back to heaven for safekeeping, and the Book of Mormon's story of an ancient Semite civilization that gave rise to North America's native Americans lacks archaeological, anthropological and genetic evidence.

Jehovah Witnesses believe that their version of the Bible, the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures (New Testament: 1950, Old Testament: 1961) is a more accurate translation.

But the translation team for the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society is anonymous, and one of its principal leaders, Nathan Knorr, acknowledged in court that he had no knowledge of Hebrew (1).

Furthermore, recognized scholars of ancient Hebrew or Greek linguistics and grammar vigorously dispute the translation accuracy of the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures.

In comparison to all religious books, the Bible remains the best and only source for information about Jesus Christ:

It is the oldest source and written over a span of 1,500 years.

The ancient manuscripts from which translations are based are well attested and continue to be available for study today.

Translations are made by bona fide and well known Greek and Hebrew scholars.

Archaeology attests to the historicity of the gospel accounts and the authors of the Bible.

1. Court of Scotland (November 23, 1954): Douglas Walsh vs. The Right Honourable James Latham Clyde. A Jehovah's Witness, Douglas Walsh of Dumbarton, sued to have the same right as an ordained minister in Scotland to be exempt from military conscription. The 1954 Walsh Trial Transcript is available in its entirety free from the Court of Scotland.

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Why is Jesus Christ so Important?

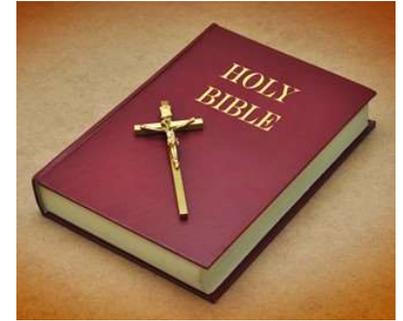
Understanding the true and historical person of Jesus Christ is vital to the understanding of God.

The Person of Jesus Christ fulfills God's promise to Abraham.

The work of Jesus Christ defines God's concept of salvation and holiness.

Without Jesus Christ, human beings would have no means of salvation, no divine concept of moral and holy behavior, and no restored relationship with God.

Christianity ceases to exist... and you would have no idea about God (John 1:18).



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Pre-Incarnate Word of God

The Word

The concept that Jesus is the Word arises from the apostle John:

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 came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. (John 1:1-3).

John presents Jesus Christ as the One spoken of in God's word, in union with His Father the invisible God, and pre-existed before He came into being on earth.

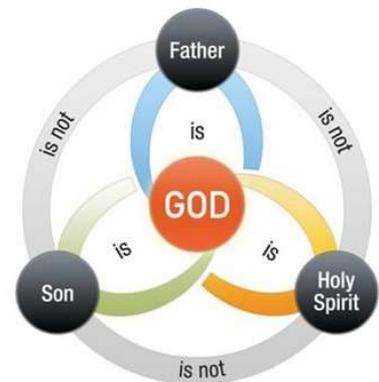
John's view of Jesus, being a part of God's triune Being, was based on the very first name God used to describe Himself as "Elōhîm" in Hebrew.

In the beginning God (elōhîm) created the heavens and the earth. (Gen 1:1)

Common to all ancient Semitic languages, "el" was a generic noun for god and sometimes the proper name for a god. It meant "strong one."

The plural form for "el" is "elōhîm;" the "-im" ending denotes the plural form. However, when used with a verb in the singular form, "elōhîm" is taken in the singular sense, which is the case here.

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Pre-eminent

The apostle Paul, who had extensive knowledge of the Old Testament, spoke of Jesus in the same manner as the apostle John.

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. (Col 1:15-17).

Pre-eminent (continues)

Paul presents Jesus as:

1. Creating all things, both in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible (Gen 1:26).
2. The beneficiary of Creation and in Him all things hold together. Creation caused His incarnation and work of atonement, which together resulted in His glorification.

Jesus is the essential agent of restoring Creation corrupted by Adam's sin (Gen 3:1-24).

Through Christ, human beings, recovering their image of God, restore their broken relationship with God.

Through Christ, both sin and death are eliminated from existence (Rev 20:7-15).

Through Christ, a new earth replaces the cursed one (Rev 21:1-27).

Jesus is the essential agent of fulfilling God's promises to Abraham.

3. Preeminent and before all things, because of His exclusive role in carrying out God's plan.

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The Angel of the Lord

Although the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ was apparent in the New Testament, He was also prominent during the Old Testament in the form of a spirit being as the Angel of the Lord.

In contrast to all other angels, the Angel of the Lord was not created and had the attributes of God. Distinct from God, the Angel of the Lord could be safely seen face to face by human beings.

Hagar was promised to have a multitude of descendants (Gen 16:10; 21:17-18).

Abraham was prevented from sacrificing his son, as directed by God, and was blessed (Gen 22:11-12, 15-18).

Jacob was instructed to return to the land of his birth (Gen 31:11-13).

Moses was appointed to led God's people out of Egypt (Ex 3:2-6).

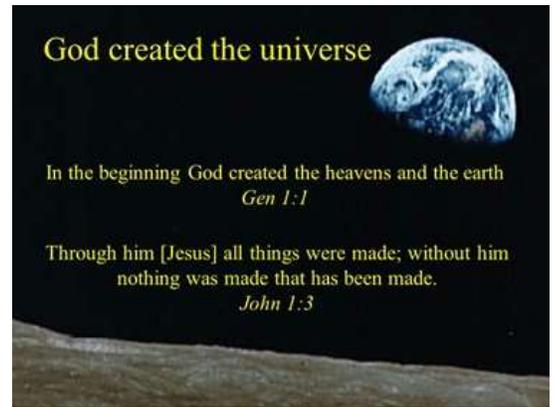
The nation of Israel was protected from Egypt's pursuit (Ex 14:19-20).

The nation of Israel was rebuked for failing to take the Promised Land (Jud 2:1-5).

Manoah, the wife of Samson, worshiped with a burnt offering (Jud 13:15-20).

Early in the history of the Patriarchs, the Angel of the Lord is recognized as the cause of redemption "from all evil" (Gen 48:16), and any reference to the Angel of the Lord disappears when Jesus Christ is born.

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Incarnate Son of God

Incarnate Son of God

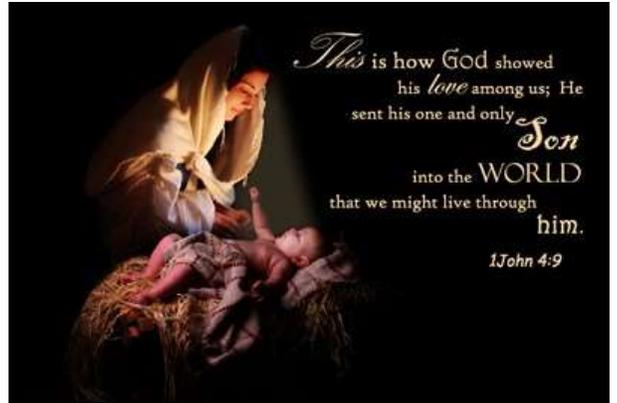
The concept of incarnation arises from John 1:14.

"And the Word became flesh..." (John 1:14)

Latin: "et Verbum caro factum est"

Incarnation describes the condition where deity and humanity exist in the person of Jesus Christ. Theologians use the phrase "hypostatic union" to describe this incomprehensible union of Jesus Christ's human and divine natures in One Being. And yet it makes sense of Jesus Christ's virgin birth.

As Jesus identifies Himself as the Son of God and the Son of Man, the concept of image of God takes on a greater meaning that is more encompassing than simply a "visual representation" of God.



Paul speaks to this, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (Col 1:15). In contrast to Adam, who was originally created in the image of God, Paul sees Jesus Christ as the very essence of His Father the invisible God; Jesus Christ reasserts the image of God as the power and authority over earth (John 14:9).

When God identifies His Son as the firstborn, He is one whose character He approves of. With that approval, the firstborn is the recipient of special privileges and responsibilities; the Son receives the birthright (Matt 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; 2 Pet 1:17).

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The King of the House of David

Before His birth, God used angels to divinely establish and authenticate who and what Jesus was.

In fulfillment of God's promise to faithful king David some 900 years ago (2 Sam 7:12-16), the angel Gabriel told Mary that her Son was the King from the line of David who would reign forever (Luke 1:26-33).

In fulfillment of God's promise to faithless king Ahaz some 600 years ago (Isa 7:14), the angel told Joseph that his Son was the Immanuel (Hebrew: God with us) of virgin birth, which was the miraculous sign for those who doubted God's reality and salvation (Matt 1:19-25). As instructed, Joseph and Mary named their Son Jesus which, in Hebrew, meant "Yahweh is salvation."

She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus (Yahweh is salvation), for He will save His people from their sins. (Matt 1:21)

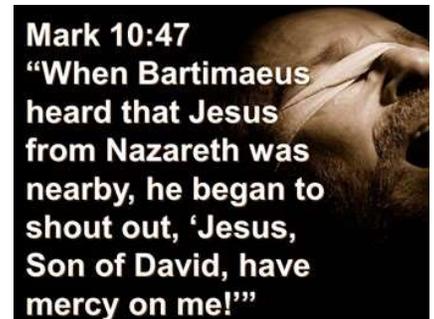
In speaking of His preeminence and purpose, the apostle John placed an emphasis on the name of Jesus:

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, **even to those who believe in His name**, (John 1:12)

Jesus' divinely bestowed name emphasized His purpose, Yahweh is salvation, and was exalted above all other names:

Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, **God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name**, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:8-11)

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Messiah the Light of Salvation

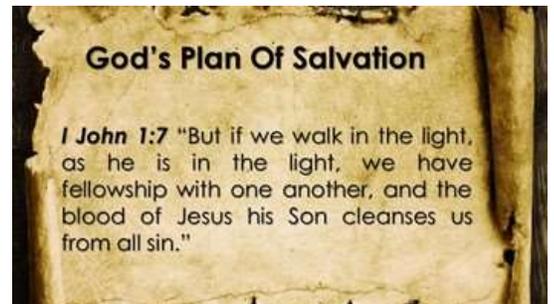
Shortly after the birth of Jesus, the Holy Spirit inspires Simeon to reveal how Jesus fulfills several messianic passages of the prophet Isaiah.

"According to Your word;
For my eyes have seen **Your salvation**,
Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
A Light of revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of Your people Israel." (Luke 2:26-32)

Jesus is the Light that will "open blind eyes" and bring salvation to the world (Isa 42:6-7; 49:6; 52:10). The birth of Jesus reflects God's faithful commitment to His promised New Covenant. And the means by which God vindicates His holy name (Ezek 36:22-25).

Visiting a synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:14-16) where He was known as the son of Joseph of Nazareth, Jesus began His ministry in Galilee by asserting that He was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because **He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor**.
He has sent Me **to proclaim release to the captives**,
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set free those who are oppressed,
To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord." (Luke 4:18-19)



Jesus proclaims that He is the Messiah, the One who redeems, and who reveals the truth. This imagery of the Light is used in both the figurative and literal sense:

Figurative

Physical salvation: Jesus heals the blind, lame and sick to demonstrate that He is the Savior.

Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." (Matt 11:4-5)

Spiritual salvation: Teaching about the kingdom of God, Jesus reveals that He is the truth that frees one from the consequences of one's sins.

Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life." (John 8:12)

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. (John 3:16-17)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6)

Literal

Glorification salvation: At the end of human history when there is a New Earth, Jesus literally becomes the Light!

And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. (Rev 21:23-24)

Crucifixion of the Unblemished Lamb

Seen as the fulfillment of the prophesized "Elijah who was to come" and "forerunner" to the Messiah (Mal 3:1-3; 4:5-6; Luke 1:13-17), John the Baptist publicly identified Jesus as the Messiah when Jesus initiated His ministry (Hebrew: the anointed one, which translated in Greek: Christ).

Because messianic prophecies of the Old Testament validated the ministry of John the Baptist, no other human being had the authority to authenticate that Jesus was the Messiah. And Jesus Himself did things that only God could do (i.e. He healed people supernaturally [Mark 10:46-52]).

Demonstrating a continuity between the Old and New Testament, messianic prophecies provide the basis of understanding Jesus' role in life and function in His Father's plan.

The two most quoted Psalms (22 and 69) in the New Testament portray Jesus as a righteous Sufferer.

In quoting passages from Isaiah (52 and 53), the New Testament develops the righteous Sufferer as the Suffering Servant. And in associating Jesus Christ figuratively as the Lamb for the sacrifice for mankind's transgressions, Jesus' sacrifice is understood within the context of the Law of Moses.



God mandated that the atonement of sin required a blood sacrifice (Lev 17:11).

God established the annual Day of Atonement (Lev 16:15-34) to atone for the sins of nation of Israel and cleanse the Tabernacle, which required an unblemished male lamb.

It is not until the last week of His life that Jesus explicitly cites messianic prophecies to self-identify that He is the Messiah King (Matt 21:1-5; John 12:12-15). This self-identification not only fulfills prophecy but also provokes and facilitates the process and timing of the Crucifixion in accordance to God's plan of salvation and His promise to Abraham.

Jesus Christ is crucified when the Passover lamb is being slaughtered.

Despite the rejection of His own people and abandonment of His disciples, Jesus' references to messianic prophecies demonstrated that He was not a victim of circumstances; He was fully aware of God's holy standard against sin that required a certain type of sacrifice, which He willingly fulfilled.

There are significant reasons for Messianic prophecies identifying Jesus as the righteous, suffering Servant.

1. They emphasize God's holy necessity of the Servant's voluntary sacrificial death juxtaposed with Jesus Christ's vindication and glorification. The resulting atonement opens the way for repentance and forgiveness – the healing of one's relationship with God.
2. They demonstrate that the way of salvation is the way of discipleship; one must put aside self-glorification and obediently adopt the role of servanthood. God who is faithful vindicates one who is faithful.
3. They provide examples for how one serves and carries out His message of salvation to the world.

The Prophet Priest

Although He suffered as the righteous Servant, Jesus Christ did not assert His authority as Judge. Jesus Christ came to earth to portray the nature of sin and carry out God's justice; you either embrace Jesus Christ now as Savior or face Him in the distant future as Judge.

God is Omnipotent

For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. (John 5:21-23)

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?" And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness. (Matt 7:21-23)

Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead. (Acts 17:30-31)

All the while on earth, Jesus Christ spoke as the Prophet to show you how you can enter the Kingdom of God and warn about the eschatological future.

"... so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:15-16)

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." (John 5:24)

So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear. (Matt 13:40-43)

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds. (Matt 16:26-27)

And while Jesus Christ was on earth, everyone was unaware that this Prophet served a high priestly function.

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. (Heb 3:1-4)



Son of Man, King and Judge

Glorifying the Son

When God sent His Son Jesus Christ, it was to fulfill His loving commitment to His people via the Abrahamic Covenant. God's work is to convince the world that Jesus is His Son and Messiah.

Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." (John 6:29)

In several instances, Jesus Christ speaks of being sent to accomplish the works that God wanted Him to do, and He clearly states that He is only saying and doing what His Father desires.

For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." (John 6:38-40)

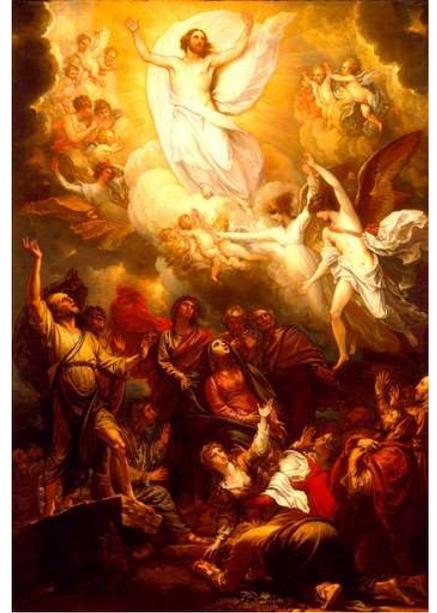
And Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me. He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me. I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness. If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. **For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.** I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me." (John 12:44-50)

But He said to them, "**I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.**" (Luke 4:43)

Thus, when Jesus says, "it is finished" on the cross (John 19:30), He is completing His purpose of coming to earth and His earthly role in God's plan of fulfilling the Abrahamic Covenant. For His extraordinary sacrifice in atoning for mankind's sins, Jesus is glorified; for His lovingkindness to the Abrahamic Covenant, God is glorified.

Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God'; and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word. (John 8:54-55)

Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. (John 17:1-5)



The Second Coming of the Son of Man

While on earth, Jesus Christ exclusively identified Himself as the Son of Man, instead as the Son of God, as a way to avoid speaking in the first person and in modest reference to Himself (Matt 12:8; Heb 2:5-9).

Introduced by the prophet Daniel, the phrase "Son of Man" is portrayed as the future King who returns in a spectacular manner.

"I kept looking in the night visions,
And behold, with the clouds of heaven
One like a Son of Man was coming,
And He came up to the Ancient of Days
And was presented before Him.
And to Him was given dominion,
Glory and a kingdom,
That all the peoples, nations and men of every language
Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion
Which will not pass away;
And His kingdom is one
Which will not be destroyed." (Dan 7:13-14)

Jesus Christ makes the connection between the Son of Man and the Messiah who atones for iniquity.

Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until **Messiah the Prince** there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. (Dan 9:24-25)

just as the **Son of Man** did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. (Matt 20:28)

Jesus Christ also makes the connection between the Son of Man and the Eschatological Judge.

"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the **Son of Man** coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven." (Mark 13:24-27)

But He kept silent and did not answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see the **Son of Man** sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:61-62)

For the **Son of Man** is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds. (Matt 16:27)

After His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ is portrayed in glory; the Son of Man and the eschatological return of the glorified King and Judge are One.

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was **one like a son of man**, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped. (Rev 14:14-16)



The Eschatological Prophet

Revelation is so named, because it is the apostle John's recording of Jesus Christ's prophetic description of the future which will happen suddenly and soon.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near. (Rev 1:1-3)

Jesus Christ's description of a future of judgment begins with the letters to the seven churches. The letters to the churches are not events associated with the coming judgment, but instead an evaluation of the churches' spiritual state in preparation for Jesus Christ's return and Day of the Lord.

Addressed to a specific church, the message of each letter is also intended for the benefit of the six other churches (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). Each church is evaluated for their faithfulness, noted for their failures, given a command for correction, and promised rewards in heaven for Believers (Rev 2:1-3:22).

These prophetic letters serve to help churches today prepare for the future as well.



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The Eschatological Judge

Well after His resurrection, the meaning behind Jesus' words, "all judgment has been given to the Son" (John 5:22), becomes clearer in the last book of the Bible in Revelation, in which He has five exclusive roles.

With the authority bestowed by His death and resurrection, Jesus' first exclusive role was the banishment of Satan and his angelic followers from the heavenly realm of God (Rev 12:7-11). This signals to Satan that "he has only a short time" (Rev 12:12).

In His second exclusive role in judgment (Rev 5:1-3), only Jesus Christ can take the scroll out of His Father's hand and break its seals (Rev 6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12; 8:1). This unleashes His Father's wrathful judgment at the appointed time (Rev 9:13-16). God's unfolding plan of judgment is orderly, over a period of time, and with a progression of magnitude in devastation and lethality.

After the last bowl of God's wrath, Jesus Christ's third exclusive role in judgment occurs at His Second Coming (Rev 19:11-16) when the beast, false prophet and the kings of the earth are arrayed to make war at Armageddon in an attempt to deny Him of His kingdom (Rev 15:13-16; 19:17-19). The beast and the false prophet are seized and "thrown alive into the lake of fire" (Rev 19:20).

Jesus Christ's fourth exclusive role in judgment is implied but not entirely certain. At the end of Jesus Christ's one thousand year reign, Satan is released, and he deceives and gathers the nations for a final battle with Israel (Rev 20:7-10). In the end, Satan is tossed into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).



The Eschatological Judge (continues)

Jesus Christ's fifth role in judgment is when He sits upon the great white throne (Rev 20:11-15; 2 Cor 5:10). Here the dead, who were not in the first resurrection (Rev 20:4-5), are resurrected and come before Jesus Christ and are judged for their deeds. If one's name was not in the Book of Life, the consequence was the lake of fire along with death and Hades (Rev 20:14-15).

Jesus Christ's sixth and final role in judgment is to cast death and Hades into the lake of fire (Rev 20:14). The last enemy of God, death, is finally abolished.

Understanding Jesus Christ's role in judgment is fundamental in understanding His role as King. The purpose of Jesus Christ's reign is to abolish all rule, authority, and power; He must put all enemies under His feet and abolish death itself (Rev 20:14-15). When all things are subjugated, then Jesus Christ Himself subjects Himself under the authority of His Father by handing back the kingdom (1 Cor 15:22-28).

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The Eschatological King

When the apostle John opens the Book of Revelation, he introduces Jesus Christ as "the ruler of the kings of the earth."

John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and **the ruler of the kings of the earth**. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood - and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father - to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen. (Rev 1:4-7)

When the heavenly beings (angels, living creatures, and the elders) speak of Jesus Christ, He is recognized as the ruler over all creation.

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."

And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."

And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped. (Rev 5:11-14)

After the 7th and last trumpet, Jesus Christ begins to actively assert His rule over earth. The Temple of God in heaven opens (Rev 11:19) and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ begins; He initiates the process of resurrection with the rapture of Believers (1 Cor 15:42-54; Rev 14:14-16).

Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "**The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ**; and He will reign forever and ever."

And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. (Rev 11:15-17)



The Eschatological King (continues)

After the 7th and last bowl, the apostle John observes the opening of heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ's kingly titles of honor.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called **Faithful and True**, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and **He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself**. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and **His name is called The Word of God**. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "**KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**." (Rev 19:11-16)

An angel of one of the seven bowls explains the coming conflict and victory at Armageddon.

These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful." (Rev 17:14)

With His victory over evil on earth, the King Jesus Christ sits on the Great White Throne.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. (Rev 20:11)

With the creation of a new heaven and new earth, the New Jerusalem is where God, the ruler of everything (Rev 19:1-6) is seen together in unity with His Son, the agent of His salvation and judgment. God and His Son are effectively the temple (Rev 21:22). The glory of God powers the lamp of His Son and illuminates the city (Rev 21:23; 22:5).



I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev 21:22-27)

Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street... (Rev 22:1-2)

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Conclusion

As the Son of God, Jesus Christ had a choice, and He chose to be obedient to His Father.

Jesus embraced the purpose His Father had for Him.

Jesus Christ is proof that the invisible God is a real living Being.

He bears God's image!

He is the manifestation of God's word and agapē love; He says what His Father says and does what His Father wants!

Jesus accepted the role He would play in His Father's plan.

Jesus Christ is the Agent of God's Salvation!

He is the Mediator of the New Covenant!

Jesus Christ is the Agent of God's Judgment.

He is the only One who could break the scroll's seals!

He alone recognizes who is in the Book of Life and determines who would be tossed into the lake of fire!

He sees to the permanent end of evil and death!

Jesus Christ is the means for God to fulfill His promises to Abraham.

His atonement is the means through whom all the families would be blessed!

His Second Coming establishes His authority as the everlasting King of the Kingdom of God!

His final judgment at the White Throne causes the passing of the earth and allows the creation of a new earth and New Jerusalem which is the promised Land!

