



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

What Say You? (Mark 8:27-30)

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For the interim session, we plan to meet most Wednesdays during the 12noon-1pm lunch hour in House Hearing Room #6. I hope you are able to make many of our studies. We will continue our study in the Gospel of Mark.

If Jesus asked today “who do people say that I am?” here are some answers (from the magazine “Life” (Dec 1994)):

- *“There was no such person in the history of the world as Jesus Christ. Ever. The Bible is a fictional, nonhistorical narrative. The myth is good for business.” (Jon Murray, Pres. of American Atheists) [p. 68]*
- *“Jesus was a subversive sage. His witticisms tended to undermine the everyday view of things.” (Robert Funk, Founder of the Jesus Seminar) [p. 72]*
- *“Muslims see him as the greatest prophet before the prophet of Islam. He is the prophet of inward spiritual life.” (Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Prof. of Islamic Studies at George Washington University) [p. 72]*
- *“He was a feminist.” (Susan Haskins, author) [p. 79]*
- *“With a staff of 12 unlikely men, he organized Christianity, which today has branches in all the world’s countries and a 32.4 percent share of the world’s population, twice as big as its nearest rival. Jesus was the most effective executive in history.” (James F. Hind, author) [p. 79]*
- *“Jesus, to succeed, had to choose martyrdom. He had been a failure in all sorts of human enterprises. (Peter A. Bien, Prof. of English at Dartmouth College) [p. 79]*

INTRODUCTION

Jesus Posed Two Questions:

#1 Who do people say that I am?

More than likely this is a set-up question. Jesus knew what others thought, even if they didn’t say it (John 2:24-25). He did not need to find out information from the disciples because He lacked knowledge.

The disciples gave several answers. Some people thought Jesus was John the Baptist—Herod thought this (Mk 6:14); probably others as well. Some

thought He was Elijah; especially since he never died but was simply taken up in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2). Mark noted in 6:15 that others did think this about Jesus (Mk 6:15). The disciples also stated that people believed Jesus to be one of the other prophets because of His teaching and miracles.

#2 Who do YOU say that I am?

This is a most interesting question, especially in light of the disciples’ own questions. Earlier, after Jesus calmed the storm on the sea with just a word, the disciples fearfully asked: “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?” (4:41b) It had been about 4 to 6 months since the storm experience, have the disciples’ figured it out yet?

It seemed that they had (although it was revealed to them, not that they figured it out through their own reason and intellect—Matthew 16:17). Peter stated, “You are the Christ.”

In this study, we will examine Peter’s answer to understand his great response (it is so loaded that more than likely he did not even fully understand what he said) so that we may have a better understanding of the one who was “delivered up for our transgressions.”

Mark 8:27-30 Jesus went out, along with His disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way He questioned His disciples, saying to them, “Who do people say that I am?” They told Him, saying, “John the Baptist; and others say Elijah; but others, one of the prophets.” And He continued by questioning them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said to Him, “You are the Christ.” And He warned them to tell no one about Him.

JESUS IS THE “ANOINTED ONE.”

The term translated “Christ” is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew term “Messiah.” This title means “anointed one.”

In the Old Testament, one was set apart for the service of God by an “anointing with oil.” The anointing was a visible sign of ...¹

...one who had been appointed to an office like prophet, priest or king.

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Missouri

What Say You? (Mark 8:27-30)

...an establishment of a sacred relationship and a sacredness of the person or position. David's refused to kill King Saul because he was the Lord's anointed (1 Samuel 24:6, 9).

...a communication of the Spirit to the anointed one. The Holy Spirit came upon David after Samuel anointed him with oil as next king of Israel (1 Samuel 16:13; cf. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22).

The title "Christ" then became the official title of the Jewish Messiah as promised in Daniel 9:24-27. This promised individual was to liberate Israel from all bonds and extend her rule over all the earth.

When Jesus arrived on earth, the Jewish people were long expecting their "Messiah". Andrew said to his brother Peter, *We have found the Messiah (which translated means Christ)* (John 1:41). The woman Jesus met at the well said to Him, *I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us* (John 4:25).

HE IS STILL MAKING INTERCESSION ON THE BEHALF OF HIS PEOPLE BEFORE GOD--CLEANSING THEM AND BEARING THEIR SIN FOR THEIR SALVATION.

So, when was Christ anointed? In one sense, He was anointed from eternity since He has forever been the Son of God. Historically, He was anointed, not by oil, but by the Holy Spirit at His baptism when the Spirit came down from heaven in the form of the dove and God announced "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased" (Mark 1: 11). This qualified Him for His great task.

In the Old Testament, men were anointed as they assumed one of three offices; those of a prophet, priest and king. It can be seen in the New Testament, that Jesus was the One who was anointed to fulfill all three of these offices.

JESUS WAS ANOINTED AS A PROPHET

As Moses addressed the nation of Israel before they enter the promised land, he proclaimed, *The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him* (Deuteronomy 18:15).

Peter, 1400 years later, quoted Moses and proclaimed that this Prophet is none other than Jesus (Acts 3:22).

In the Old Testament, the work of a prophet was to give a word of proclamation. They revealed the will of God to the people and became the conscious of the nation Israel (as seen in Jeremiah 3:22-4:2).

It was also a ministry of proclaiming a predictive word. They spoke to reveal the future work of God to the people. This word of revelation was to warn the people, and to give them hope (Isaiah 40). It was also for recognition. The prophets foretold the characteristics and work of the future Messiah so the people would know what to look for.

One example is the following passage from Isaiah:

Isaiah 61:1-2 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD.

It was this passage that Jesus read in his hometown synagogue and then proclaimed, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21b).

John the Baptist sent his disciples to Jesus if He was the Expected One or if they should look for another. Jesus simply answered:

Matthew 11:4-5 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.

The prophets had predicted the miraculous and compassionate work of the coming Messiah (Isaiah 29:18-19; 35:5-10). So Jesus just referred to them and the great miracles that He had been performing.

The prophetic ministry of Jesus was also **predictive** as He prophesied what was to happen to Him in the future, what was to happen to Israel and what was to happen at the end of time (John 14:29; 13:19, Matthew 17:27; 21:1-3; 24:2-28, Mark 13:2).

Missouri

What Say You? (Mark 8:27-30)

His prophetic role was **authoritative**. He did not say “Thus saith the Lord”, as the prophets of old said. Instead, He said “I say unto you...” (Matthew 5:6-7). It was also **interpretive** (John 1:18; 8:26; 14:9; 17:8). One can see the Father by looking at Him.

His prophetic ministry was also **confirmed**. One purpose of Jesus’ miracles and signs was to confirm His right to this title (Acts 2:22).

JESUS WAS ANOINTED AS A PRIEST

Jesus was anointed to serve as a priest. This role was also prophesied. The songwriter wrote, *The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek"* (Psalm 110:4). The author of the book of Hebrews later quoted this passage twice as he discussed the greatness of Jesus (Hebrews 5:6; 7:17) in comparison with other priests.

The author of Hebrews noted that Jesus qualified as a priest by being a man who was appointed by God, just like the old covenant priests (Hebrews 5:1). But what set Jesus apart from the others was His holiness. The old covenant priests had to be purified and made holy because their sin had made them unclean before God. But Jesus Christ was holy in Himself; He had no sin which had to be washed away before He could perform the work of the Lord.

Hebrews 7:23-27 The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

In His role as priest, Christ is able to do so much more than the priests of the past. He is able to aid those who are tempted for He Himself suffered and was tempted and overcame (Hebrews 2:18). He is able to sympathize

with our weakness (Hebrews 4:15). He is also able to save those who come to God through Him (Hebrews 7:25).

And in addition to these great works of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, His work never ends. Even the best of priests eventually died and their service was no more. Jesus, though, is eternal and He “holds His priesthood permanently” (Hebrews 7:24). He is still making intercession on the behalf of His people before God—cleansing them and bearing their sin for their salvation (Hebrews 9:28).

JESUS WAS ANOINTED AS A KING

Not only was Jesus Christ anointed as a prophet and a priest, He has also been anointed as a King. In the familiar Christmas passage the angel told Mary: *And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end* (Luke 1:31-33).

He is a King whose coming was prophesied:

Jeremiah 23:5-6 Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land." In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'

Micah 5:2 (cf. Isaiah 9:6-7) But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity."

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (cf. Matthew 21:5; John 12:12-15)

His kingdom will be known by its characteristics. It will be a righteous kingdom.

Missouri

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Jeremiah 23:5 (cf. Hebrews. 1:8-9) "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land.

It will be an eternal kingdom.

Luke 1:33 ...and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."

It will be a universal kingdom.

Zechariah 14:9 (cf. Psalm 2:8) And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.

But one may ask: Where is the King, the Messiah? Where is His kingdom?

Well, the Scriptures teach that the Messiah did come for His people but He was rejected by them (John 1:11). They rejected the King's forerunner, John the Baptist and then they rejected the King Himself. But Christ, nonetheless, fulfilled all prophecies and fulfilled all obedience. Therefore, He is now sitting at the right hand of God.

This is Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost in a nutshell. In Acts 2, Peter says, in essence, "God showed you who Jesus was and you had Him crucified. But God raised Him from the dead and has sat Him beside His throne (and all of this according to His foreordained plan)."

One day, though, the King will leave His throne at the right hand of God; He will return and establish His throne on earth and fulfill these promises to Israel. His Kingdom on earth will be a place where righteousness reigns and holiness dwells (Revelation 19:11-20:6).

CONCLUSION

There are four Greek words—which translate into four English words—that are packed with so much meaning. Peter stated "You are the Christ!" (Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός). He is the Anointed One; anointed to fill the offices of prophet, priest and king." Offices that are essential to one's salvation:

- Prophet—like the greatest prophet Moses, but greater; proclaiming and revealing God and His work for our salvation.
- Priest—like the greatest priest Melchizedek, but greater; offering the sacrifice necessary for our salvation.
- King—like the greatest king David, but greater; reigning with power ensuring the guarantee of our salvation.

Who do you say that He is? There is only one right answer to this question. God can forgive your sins through the work of Jesus Christ, are you interested?

¹ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Company, reprint 1979), 312.