



The Son of God

Micah 5:2; Isaiah 9:6-7; Psalm 2

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As you read through the gospels, you cannot help but notice the number of times that Jesus made extraordinary claims. The claims He made were not something you would classify as “hyped-up advertising” or overstatement. They are downright extraordinary!

Take, for instance, the fact that Jesus repeatedly claimed that the entire Old Testament was about Him. He said in **John 5:39**, “**You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me.**”¹ He then said, “**For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?**” (vv. 46-47) After His resurrection, Jesus walked along the road to Emmaus with two disciples and, “**beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures**” (Luke 24:27).

Not only did Jesus claim to be the subject matter of the Old Testament, but He claimed authority over it. Those who heard Him teach commented, “**Never a man taught like this**” (John 7:46). He interpreted and taught the Scriptures in such a way that His listeners felt as if He had written them to begin with. He claimed His words to be equal in authority with the Old Testament and equivalent to Moses’ writings—Holy Scripture (**Matt.. 5:17-48; John 5:46**).

Jesus claimed authority over the Sabbath, saying He was “the Lord of the Sabbath” (**Mark 2:28**). He claimed a special relationship with the Father which no other man enjoyed. He said to Philip, “**if you have seen Me, you have seen the Father**” (John 14:9). He claimed to be one with the Father in nature and in purpose, to have shared the glory of God with the Father before creation. In **John 17:5**, Jesus prayed, “**Glorify me with the glory that we**

shared before the world was.”

He claimed to be the only way to the Father (**John 14:6**). He said that the eternal destiny of every man and woman would depend on Him (**John 5:24**). He demanded obedience—the type of obedience that is due only to God—and claimed that if one does not obey Him, he cannot have eternal life (**John 3:36**). He received honor and worship which are to be reserved for God and God alone.

Jesus claimed to be in control of His own death and resurrection (**John 2:19-21; 10:17**). He also said that He would speak and the graves would give up their dead and He would raise all men—some to eternal damnation and some to eternal life (**John 5:25-29**).

He said that He had the power to forgive sin (**Matthew 9:6**). He claimed to be the only One who could set us free from sin (**John 8:31-38**). He claimed to be the Good Shepherd that would keep God’s people safe and secure and bring them safely to their heavenly reward (**Psalm 23** cf. **John 10:14**).

He claimed to be the One who had authority to send the Spirit of God into the world (**John 16:5-11**), that prayer was to be offered in His name for it to be answered (**John 14:13**), and to have existed before He was born as a child, before Abraham (**John 8:58**) and even before the creation of the world (**John 17:5**).

What are we to make of someone who makes those types of claims? What do we do with that? What would you think of a man standing before you making such claims?

In previous articles we have looked at what the Old Testament said about the humanity of the Messiah: His lineage, His sufferings, and His rule.² We have seen that Jesus came from the seed of the woman, was a man, human, born as a child into human history as a descendant

¹ All Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible translation (1995 Update), unless otherwise noted.

² Previous articles in the Christmas series are archived on our website at www.kootenaichurch.org.

of David.

But the humanity of the Messiah is only half the picture. When we look at the evidence from both the Old and New Testaments, we are forced to conclude that, yes, He was a man, a descendant of Abraham through David and Solomon, but He had to be more than a mere man.

Even a casual reading of the New Testament reveals that Jesus made extraordinary claims. Did the Old Testament also reveal that the Messiah, the Christ, the Redeemer would be divine? The answer is yes. Just as it is easy to see from the Old Testament that the promised Messiah would be human, so it is also easy to see that the promised Messiah would be divine. He would be God.

We could spend much more time and space on this, and the subject is worthy of a series in itself, but we are just going to look at three things from the Old Testament that show the **deity of the Messiah**.

The Origin of the Messiah Shows His Deity

To see this, we must turn toward the back of the Old Testament to **Micah 5:2: “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.”** That particular verse likely has a familiar ring to it, as it appears regularly in Christmas cards.

This promise was intended to be an encouragement to the nation of Israel. Micah prophesied of a coming judgment on the nation for their wickedness. He announced a coming siege against the nation of Judah, particularly against Jerusalem. Due to their sin, God promised to punish His people by allowing their enemies to lay siege to the city.³

Micah predicted dark days—days of humiliation for the nation, judgment for their sin. Even their king, in whom they placed their trust, would fail. He would fail to deliver the nation from its coming invaders; **but** there is a promise of hope. In contrast to the king of Micah’s day who would fail to secure peace and security, there was coming one in the

3 That is the meaning of verse 1, **“Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; They have laid siege against us; With a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek.”** The phrase “judge of Israel” is a title for the king in Jerusalem. It speaks of his function of establishing and promoting justice and judgment. The act of being smitten on the cheek was something that denoted a humiliation. In ancient times, an ultimate humiliation was for one to be slapped across the face. To predict that the king would be smitten on the cheek is to say that the highest official of the nation would be utterly conquered and humiliated.

future who would secure lasting peace and security for the nation. There is coming a ruler who would establish justice and whose influence would extend to the ends of the earth. This is a promise of the Messiah.

A Look at the Details

This king would come out of Bethlehem Ephrathah. Ephrathah was the ancient name for a certain “Bethlehem.” There were other towns named Bethlehem in Israel.⁴ The name “Ephrathah,” identified which “Bethlehem.” In fact, the Bethlehem spoken of here is the town in which David was born.

Micah is writing long after David, so it was obvious to all reading that the ruler spoken of was not David. We know from elsewhere that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, a “Son of David,” born in the same town as David.

Notice how specific the prophecy was: not just any Bethlehem, but specifically Bethlehem Ephrathah. It was a small town, not even named among the different listings of towns in the land of Judah. It was so small, so insignificant, so overlooked, that it wasn’t even really counted as a city.

Now if *you* planned to send the Savior into the world, and you wanted attention, you wanted it to be noticed, and wanted to make a splash on the world scene, you would not pick Bethlehem Ephrathah as your entrance point. Yet this was God’s method. Jesus didn’t come into the world through a political center like Rome or Babylon. He didn’t come into a commercial center like Ephesus or Antioch. He didn’t come into the educational centers like Alexandria or Tarsus. He didn’t even choose the religious centers of the world like Jerusalem or Athens. Rather, God entered human history by being born in a little backwater hick town, a sheep village that wasn’t even on the map!

It was a city that has no real significance in any sense, but that the Lord of Glory was born in it. Christ would not be honored because of the place in which He was born, but rather the place in which He was born would forever be remembered because He was born there. God often chooses to exalt the things which are of low esteem. So it was with Bethlehem—nothing, really, until Christ was born there. Now it forever holds a special place in world history as a place of significance.

The name Bethlehem means “house of bread,” a fitting place for One to be born Who claimed to be the “Bread of Life.” The Bread of Life came into the world in a city whose name means “house of bread.”

4 There was a Bethlehem in the region of Zebulun.

The stunning part of **Micah 5:2** is the phrase, “His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”

The word translated “goings forth”⁵ means “to conduct one’s activities.” It does not mean “origins” in the sense of “a beginning to something,” as if to say that this ruler actually came into existence at one point. Rather, His activities, “the conducting of His activities,” have been from “long ago” or “ancient times.”

The word is used to denote great antiquity as well as eternity. In fact, the same word translated “eternity” or “long ago” is used as an adjective for God in **Deuteronomy 33:27**, “**The eternal God is a dwelling place, And underneath are the everlasting arms**” and **Habakkuk 1:12**, “**Are You not from everlasting, O LORD, my God, my Holy One?**”

Micah is looking to the future, promising a ruler who would come, but also who had existed prior to Micah from eternity past. He was to be a supernatural leader who exists long before He comes into the world. That is not a phrase that we would use to describe a mere man. He is an eternal figure.

Matthew, in his gospel, quotes this passage from Micah and applies it to Christ (**Matthew 2:6**). The rest of the New Testament bears witness that Jesus Christ existed before His birth in Bethlehem.⁶

What is the origin of the Messiah? He had no beginning, but comes from eternity past. That is where He existed from, without beginning, as God.

The Names of the Messiah Show His Deity

Isaiah 9:6-7, “**For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.**”⁷

In verse 6, we can see that a child will be born, showing His humanity. He would come from the seed of the woman

and be “born unto us.” Further, the “government will rest on His shoulders.” That was an idiom that spoke of one who administered and ruled a government. As David’s Son and as rightful heir to David’s throne, He would set up and establish a Kingdom and function as a King with a government that He will administer. That is what Micah promised. One will go forth from Bethlehem who will be a **Ruler**.

The **type** and **term** of that government is given in verse 7, “*There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace. On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.*”

Notice in verse 6 the names that are given to this human ruler: He is called “**Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.**”

The name “**Wonderful**” pertains to His person. He is Wonderful. He is full of wonder, he does wonders. That is the quality of His being, His person.

He is called “**Counselor**.” Any other king or ruler would need a multitude of counselors to consult—a cabinet of advisors. The Ruler described in verse 7, who will sit on the throne of His father, David, and rule for ever and ever and ever, will have no need for counselors. He is the embodiment of all wisdom, intelligence, and knowledge. No man has been His counselor, nor could any man or group of men ever be His counselors.⁸

The next two names say it all: “**Mighty God, Eternal Father**.” The One “born to us,” the “Son given,” “the seed of the woman” who will sit on the throne of David will be called “**Mighty God**.” *El Gibbor* is the title. *El* is the name for God, as in *Immanuel*, (“*God with us*”) and as in *El Shaddai*. *El Gibbor* (*Mighty God*) is a title of God used elsewhere in the Old Testament.⁹

The title “*El*” is not a title that Isaiah gives to any mere man. It is a title he uses only for God. Here, Isaiah says that this child to be born will be called “**Mighty God**.” That is as direct an affirmation of the absolute Deity of the Messiah as you could ever get. The Messiah will be God. Isaiah could not have stated it any more clearly.

Isaiah also said that He will be called “**Everlasting**

5 That is the NASB rendering. The NIV translates it “origins.”

6 John 1:1, 14; 8:58; 17:5, 24.

7 We looked at this passage in connection with the humanity of Jesus in the article titled “The Son of David.” These verses show that the One that was to be born as a Son of David had to be a man in order to have a valid claim to David’s throne.

8 **Isaiah 40:13-14**, “**Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him? With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge And informed Him of the way of understanding?**”

9 **Deuteronomy 10:17**

Father. That title may make you wonder, “I thought that the Messiah was God the Son, not God the Father.” We make distinctions between the Father and the Son and the Spirit within the Godhead. Here it seems that the person that we think of as the Son—the second member of the Holy Trinity—is called the **Eternal Father**. What is going on here? Is there some confusion in Isaiah about Who this Child would be?

No. This name which is rendered “**Eternal Father**” emphasizes the fact that He is eternal. The phrase could also be rendered “Father of eternity.” That is a far less confusing way of translating it. Isaiah is emphasizing His eternality—the fact that He has existed from eternity. After all, He is the Mighty God.

So the title “Father” does not designate His relationship to the members of the Trinity, or His position therein, but rather it denotes His relationship to *time*. It is not God the Father who is born as a child and a son; rather, this One who is born as a child is eternal. Pertaining to time, He is the Father of Time (Eternity). He is the **Father of Eternity** because He has existed for all eternity. He existed before time, before space, and before matter. What is His relationship to eternity? He is the Father of it! It sounds like Isaiah is agreeing with Micah's statement that “His dealings are from eternity, from long ago.”

He is also the “**Prince of Peace**.” The reign of Jesus, the King, will be characterized by peace. Peace will characterize His rule.

At Christmastime we hear a lot about wanting “peace on earth and goodwill toward men,” as if people think we should, out of the goodness of all men's hearts, lay down our weapons and have peace and all get along.

I want peace on earth. I want to live in perfect security, prosperity, freedom, and justice. I want peace. But when does the Bible say we will have “peace on earth?” Only when Christ comes back and fulfills verse 7, “**There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness, From then on and forevermore.**”

When Christ rules, there will be peace on earth and Israel will be secure. When His enemies are made His footstool for His feet, He rules with a rod of iron, and the government of the world rests on His shoulders, then we will have justice, righteousness, and peace.

The Reign of the Messiah as King Shows His Deity

Psalm 2:1-12: “Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, “Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!” He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, saying, “But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.” “I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession. ‘You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ ” Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. Worship the Lord with reverence And rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!”

Psalm 2 was written by David and describes the reign of the Anointed One—the Christ.

In **verses 1-3** we see a rebellion on earth against this King and God. They are plotting together, endeavoring to overthrow His rule and authority.

In **verse 4**, God laughs. He scoffs at them, mocks them, and in anger speaks to the ungodly, saying, “**As for me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.**”

In **verse 5-6**, it is God speaking, saying, “**I have installed My King, the Anointed One.**” In the book of Acts, Peter quoted this Psalm and applied it to Christ.¹⁰ The King spoken of is not David, for David is writing about a coming King.

In **verses 7-9**, the coming King speaks, saying, “**I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He [the Lord] said to Me [the Anointed One] You are My Son. Today I have begotten You.**”

In **Psalm 2** we see God the Father speaking to God the Son saying, “**I have installed you upon Zion as My King. You are My Son, Today I have begotten you.**” So the reign of the Messiah as King shows His Deity. He is the Son of God, begotten of the Father, proceeding from the Father and in relation to the Father as no other man.

¹⁰ Acts 4:25-26.

What will this reign look like? Will the Messiah just reign over Israel, or in Heaven, in some spiritual sense? No. **Verse 8** says, “**Ask Me and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.**” This will be a universal rule here on earth, over all nations!

What about the kings of the earth who take their stand, and the rulers who plot against the Lord and against the Anointed One? They plot a vain thing because “**You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware**”¹¹ (verse 9).

Those who plot and scheme to thwart the plan and purpose of God to establish His Kingdom will be crushed. He will rule the nations and put down all opposition. He will establish David’s Kingdom in perfect righteousness, justice, and peace. Anyone who plots against that plots a vain thing, **for the zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish it** (Isaiah 9:6-7).

Verse 10 says, “**Therefore, O kings, show discernment, take warning, O judges of the earth, worship the Lord with reverence, and rejoice with trembling.**” In other words, you’d better worship God if He is installing a King who is going to crush you with a rod of iron. You’d better bow the knee!

Look how the Psalm closes: “**How blessed are all who take refuge in Him.**” Scripture tells us to take refuge in God alone, not to trust in princes or in kings or in mere men, yet here we are told, “**How blessed is the man who takes refuge in this one who is the Messiah.**” God alone is a refuge for His people. Therefore the Messiah is God.

All the attributes of His reign, the results of His reign, the nature of His reign, the type of King He is—all serve to show that this One who rules on David’s throne as King is the Mighty God, El Gibbor, the refuge for the people of God.

Conclusion

Who is the Christ Child? He is God. Anything that can be affirmed or said of God can be said of Christ. He is omniscient, eternal, infinite, perfect in knowledge and wisdom, perfect in love and holiness, omnipotent, and ever-present.

Jesus Christ is perfect man and perfect God in one person without contradiction or confusion. He is 100% God

and 100% man. He is the man Christ Jesus Who is called our great God and Savior. God was manifested in the flesh. The eternal Word became flesh, and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth. He is the image of the invisible God.

Colossians 2:9: “**For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.**” In Christ dwells all the fullness of God in bodily form. If that does not inspire worship, adoration, and obedience, then nothing can!

Without Wax-



¹¹ **Daniel 2:44-45** describes the Messiah’s Kingdom as crushing the nations of the world and putting “**an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.**”