



# LAMPLIGHTER

*"Prophecy is like a lamp shining in a dark place." - II Peter 1:19*

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**The Divinity  
of Jesus:  
Myth or Reality?**



**LAMB  
& LION  
MINISTRIES**

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Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 919  
McKinney, TX 75070

Shipping Address:  
2069 County Road 463  
Princeton, TX 75407

Telephone: 972/736-3567  
Fax: 972/734-1054  
Sales: 1-800/705-8316  
Email: lamblion@lamblion.com  
Web site:  
<http://www.lamblion.com>



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# Observations by the Editor

## Our Concept of Jesus

This is the most important issue of the *Lamplighter* that we have ever published. That's because of the topic.

This ministry was called into existence to proclaim the soon return of Jesus. That message is a critical one because the signs of the times point to the imminent return of the Lord. But as critical as it is, it is not as important as the message that Jesus is God in the flesh and that His sacrifice on the cross made it possible for Mankind to be reconciled to God the Father.

The identity of Jesus is so important that we decided to expand this issue from 16 to 20 pages so that we could cover the topic in depth. I hope and pray you will be blessed, enlightened and spiritually enriched. I certainly was as I did all the research that was necessary to produce the biblical summary of scriptures that you will find in the lead article.

### Picturing Jesus

One of the challenges I faced as I prepared this issue was finding an appropriate picture of Jesus for the cover. It was a very frustrating experience. I surveyed literally hundreds of drawings and painting of Jesus before I found the one that I decided to feature on our cover.

The problem is that most Christian artists tend to idealize Jesus, and the result is a blue-eyed, blonde-headed image that resembles Kevin Costner. This idealization is understandable since Christian artists love the Lord and therefore desire to present Him as a strong and handsome figure.

But I believe these images are far from the truth. First, it must be kept in mind that Jesus was a Jew. He was not, therefore, blue-eyed and blonde. Second, the Bible specifically states that He was not a handsome person.

Curiously, there is no physical description of Jesus in the New Testament. But there is a description in Hebrew prophecy. It is found in Isaiah 53:2 — "He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him."

In other words, the Messiah would be a very common looking Jew who would not attract people by His looks. In fulfillment of this prophecy, we are told by the Gospel writers that Jesus attracted people by the authority of His words, the power of His



Dr. David Reagan

miracles, and the quality of His life.

Many of the most realistic pictures of Jesus that I found were ones by unbelievers who simply portrayed Him as the common looking Jew that He was. My favorite is the picture that appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine on December 6, 1999. It is reproduced on the opposite page.

I selected the one on our cover for three reasons. First, its brilliant colors appealed to me and seemed appropriate for the Christmas season. Second, I liked the prominent halo, which is a traditional artistic symbol of deity. Third, and most important, I liked the way in which the artist portrayed Jesus as a very common looking Jew. I wish I could give credit to the artist by name, but I could not determine who he or she was. ❖

*Next Issue:* Our issue for January - February of 2001 will be devoted to a review and analysis of the "Left Behind" series of books about the Rapture and the Tribulation.



# The Divinity of Jesus Myth or Reality?

A Biblical Study by Dr. David R. Reagan

**T**he divinity of Jesus is the central truth of the Bible. It is so fundamental that Christianity stands or falls on it. If Jesus was not God in the flesh, then His sacrifice for our sins was meaningless, and we have no hope.

Satan is determined to convince Mankind that Jesus was someone other than God in the flesh. In Jesus' own time, Satan created doubt as to His true identity. A few recognized Him as "the Prophet" or the Messiah who had been prophesied by Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15-18 and John 6:14). Most were ambivalent about His identity. Some believed He was simply a "good man" (John 7:12). Most believed He was a reincarnation of John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or "one of the prophets" (Matthew 16:14). Others claimed He was an illegitimate child "born of fornication" (John 8:41). Some wrote Him off as "a Samaritan with a demon" (John 8:48).

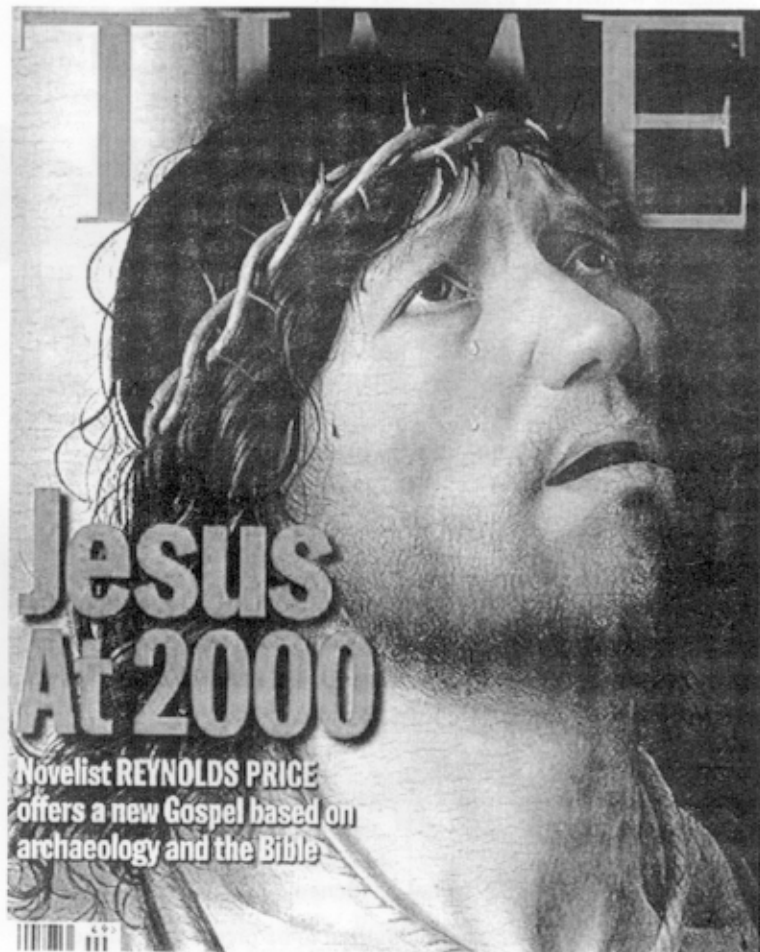
## The Continuing Attack

Nothing has changed after 2,000 years. The Satanic attack continues to this day. Theologians tend to dismiss Him as either a good man who was self-deceived or a revolutionary who meant well but failed.

All the cults deny His divinity. The Mormons claim He was the brother of Lucifer, one of thousands of minor gods created by the super-god, Adam, an exalted man. The Jehovah's Witnesses identify Him as Michael the Archangel. The Spiritist groups like the Church of Christ Scientists and the Unity Church usually present Him in New Age esoteric terms, claiming He was a spirit without a body or that He was "a medium of the sixth sphere of the astro-projection." Others argue He was just a man who was able to fully manifest the Christ spirit that is in all of us.

Hollywood presents Him in the movie, "The Last Temptation of Christ," as a deluded soul who is wrestling with internal demons. And in "Jesus Christ Superstar" the Broadway stage presents a woman in love with him who sings over and over, "He's a man, He's just a man . . ."

The hottest new book about Jesus, entitled *The Jesus Mysteries*, goes to the extreme of claiming He is nothing but a myth! Despite the fact that there are few persons in ancient history for which there is more written and eyewitness evidence, these men



claim Jesus was nothing but a figment of His disciples imaginations.<sup>1</sup> Incredibly, the book has been endorsed by some Christian leaders like Episcopal Bishop John Spong of New Jersey.

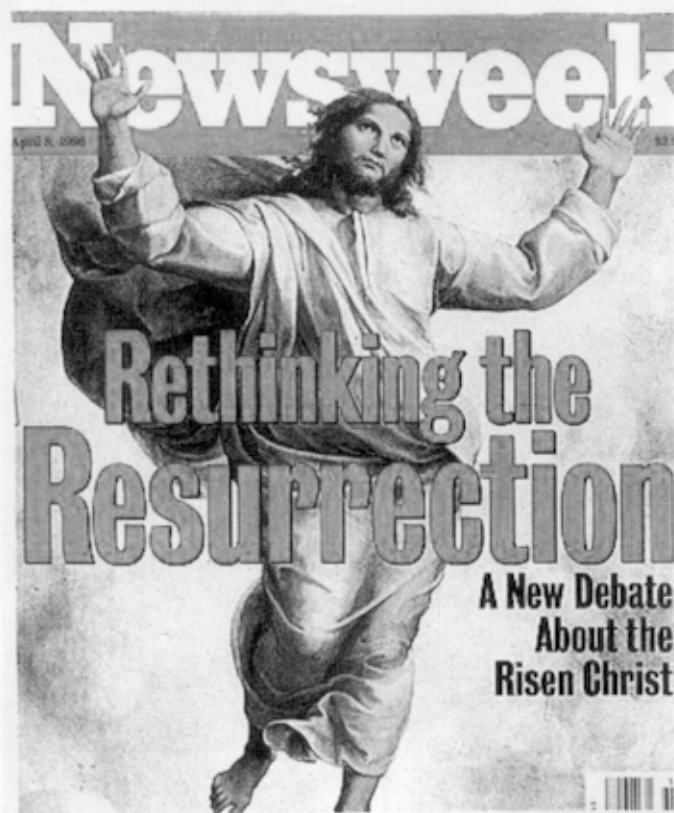
We can be assured that as we near the time of Jesus' return, the attacks on Him and His identity will intensify. Satan knows Bible prophecy. He can see the signs of the times that clearly point to the Lord's imminent return. As those signs intensified throughout the 20th Century, Satan launched an all-out campaign to convince the world that Jesus is a fraud. For example, he rallied a group of so-called "New Testament scholars" who formed a discussion group known as "The Jesus Seminar." This group proceeded to vote on the validity of all the sayings of Jesus recorded in the Gospels. Their report, called *The Five Gospels*, concluded that only 15 statements attributed to Jesus in the Gospels were actually spoken by Him. The title of their report comes from the fact that they decided to grant the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas equal standing with the four traditional Gospels.<sup>2</sup>

## The Witness of the Attacks

Actually, there is an irony in these attacks, for they are evidence that Jesus really was God in the flesh. Why else would Satan motivate such attacks? We don't see similar attacks on Mohammed or Buddha or Krishna. Nor do we hear their names being used as curse words. Why is it that worldwide the name of Jesus is used as a curse word? The only explanation I can think of is a supernatural one — namely, Satan is actively involved in motivating universal hatred of Jesus because he knows that Jesus is God.



**JESUS  
IS THE LAMB  
AND THE LION!**



### The Biblical Evidence

**I**n 1 Peter 3:15 believers are exhorted to be prepared to make a defense of their faith and hope. Accordingly, Christians need to be acquainted with the biblical evidence of Jesus' divinity. Let's consider it. (Quotes throughout are from the New American Standard Version, 1977.)

#### A. The Witness of Bible Prophecy

- 1) Genesis 3:15 — God tells Adam and Eve that salvation for Mankind will come through "the seed of woman," indicating the Messiah will have a miraculous birth.
- 2) Psalm 2:7 — David states that God has declared to His Son that He will be begotten and will one day rule over all the world. This is a clear statement that the Messiah will be of the same nature as God (begotten of the Father) and will relate to the Father as His Son. It also indicates that the Son existed before He became incarnate in flesh.
- 3) Psalm 16:10 — David states that God's "Holy One" will not "undergo decay." This is a prophecy that the Messiah will be resurrected from the dead. And the reference to the Messiah as God's "Holy One" is an indication of His divinity.
- 4) Psalm 45:6-7 — In this remarkable passage, God the Father refers to His Son as God: "Therefore God, Thy God has anointed Thee . . ." The writer of Hebrews quotes this passage to establish the deity of Jesus (Hebrews 1:9).
- 5) Psalm 110:1 — David says that God the Father speaks to "my Lord" and says, "Sit at My right hand . . ." This is a prophecy that the Messiah will be glorified by the Father by sitting on His throne at His right hand. Note that the

Messiah is referred to by David as "my Lord," a term David uses only in reference to deity.

- 6) Isaiah 6:1 — Isaiah says he went to the Temple and had a vision in which he saw Yahweh (the Father) "sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted." In John 12:41 we are told that what Isaiah really saw was Jesus in a pre-incarnate appearance.
- 7) Isaiah 7:14 — The prophet says a young woman will bear a son whose name will be called "Immanuel." Matthew says that an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and told him this prophecy would be fulfilled in the virgin birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:18-23). The name, Immanuel, means "God is with us."
- 8) Isaiah 9:6 — In one of the most pointed assertions of the Messiah's deity, Isaiah says the Messiah will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace." He also adds that He will one day take the throne of David and rule "forevermore" (verse 7).
- 9) Daniel 7:13-14 — The prophet is given a vision of the Messiah coming before God the Father and being presented all the nations of the earth as His kingdom. His dominion is declared to be "everlasting." And the Messianic title conferred upon the Messiah is the "Son of Man." This title indicates that the Messiah will be God in the flesh.
- 10) Micah 5:2 — In this famous prophecy, Micah states that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. But what is often overlooked is the fact that he states the Messiah will be "from the days of eternity," indicating He will be divine.
- 11) Luke 1:32 — The angel Gabriel prophesied to Mary that her child would be "the Son of the Most High."

#### B. The Witness of the Trinity

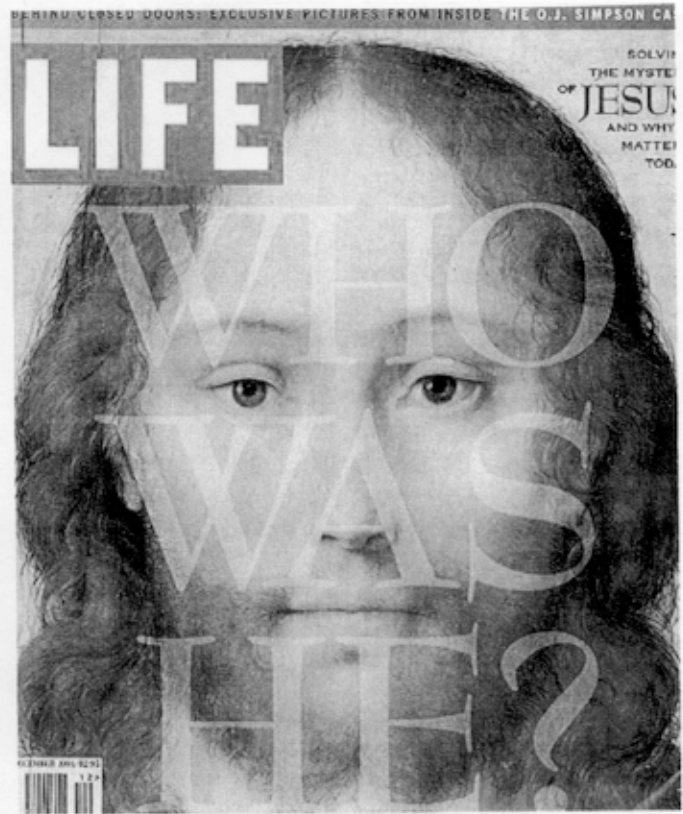
- 1) Genesis 1:1-3 — These three verses present the Creation as the work of God the Father and the Spirit of God through the spoken word of God. In the Gospel of John, Jesus is revealed as "the Word." And we are told in Hebrews 1:2 that God created the world through Jesus.
- 2) Genesis 1:26 — On the sixth day of Creation, God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness . . ." The wording here clearly indicates a plurality of persons who constitute the one God.
- 3) Genesis 11:7 — When God decided to pour out His wrath on Babel, He said, "Come, let Us go down and confuse their language . . ." Again, the wording indicates a plurality of persons constituting the one God.
- 4) Exodus 3:2-6 — The "Angel of the Lord" appears to Moses in the burning bush. This term is used throughout the Hebrew Scriptures to refer to pre-incarnate appearances of Jesus when He served as a messenger of God the Father. The point, however, is that the Angel speaks to Moses and says, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." In Genesis 48:15-16 Jacob is pictured on his death bed referring to "the Angel" as "God." And in Judges 13:18, the Angel of the Lord appears to Manoah, the father of Samson, and says that His name is "Wonderful" — the very name of deity that Isaiah

later uses in Isaiah 9:6.

- 5) Exodus 3:14 — When Moses asked what he would say when Pharaoh asked who had sent him, God replied, “Tell him I Am has sent you.” Later, in the Gospels, Jesus applies this divine name to Himself (see, for example, John 8:58).
- 6) Deuteronomy 6:4 — This passage presents what is known as “The Shema” — “Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!” The actual wording in the Hebrew is “Yahweh our Gods is Yahweh a unity.” The word for “one” in this passage is *echad* which refers to a plural or composite unity. For example, in Genesis 2:24 we are told that a husband and wife become “one [*echad*] flesh.” And in Numbers 13:23 we are informed that two of the spies who were sent into Canaan returned with “a single [*echad*] cluster of grapes.”
- 7) Isaiah 43:11 — God speaks and says, “I, even I, am the Lord; and there is no savior besides Me.” Yet, in the New Testament we are told repeatedly that Jesus is Savior (see, for example, 2 Peter 1:1). Isaiah says there is one Savior and that is God. Peter says Jesus is Savior. Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other; therefore, Jesus is God.
- 8) Isaiah 48:16 — God speaks and says, “The Lord God has sent Me and His Spirit.” In the Hebrew it says, “The Lord Yahweh (the Father) has sent Me and His Spirit.” This is a clear statement of the Trinity — Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- 9) Isaiah 63:8-10 — The prophet gives an example of “the lovingkindness of Yahweh” (the Father) by reminding the Jews that He has often sent them His Savior, “the angel of His presence” (Jesus), to save them, but that they always “rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit.” Here again we find mention of Father, Son and Spirit.
- 10) Zechariah 12:10 — Speaking of the day when the Jewish remnant will be saved, God prophesies: “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the *Spirit* of grace and of supplication, so that they will look upon *Me* whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for *Him* [the Messiah] as one mourns for an only Son . . .” Notice how God the Father identifies Himself with the Son — with the One who will be “pierced.”
- 11) Matthew 28:19 — Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize “in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”
- 12) John 15:26 — Jesus is quoted as saying, “When the *Helper* [the Holy Spirit] comes, whom I will send to you from the *Father* . . . He will bear witness of *Me*.”
- 13) 2 Corinthians 13:14 — “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

### C. The Witness of God the Father

- 1) 2 Samuel 7:13-14 — The “Lord of hosts” promises David that He will raise up one of his descendants (the Messiah) to reign “forever” and that He “will be a father to Him and He will be a Son to Me.”



- 2) Psalm 2:6-9 — God proclaims that He will one day install “My King” (the Messiah) upon Mt. Zion to reign over all the nations. God refers to this person as His “Son” and says He will be “begotten” (that is, He will become flesh).
- 3) Psalm 45:6-7 — God the Father refers to the Messiah as God: “Therefore God, Thy God has anointed Thee . . .”
- 4) Matthew 3:16-17 — At the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, God speaks and says, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.” (See also Mark 1:11 and Luke 3:22.)
- 5) Matthew 17:1-5 — At the Transfiguration of Jesus when His disciples were given a glimpse of His future glory, God again says, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased.” (See also Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-35, and 1 Peter 1:16-18.)

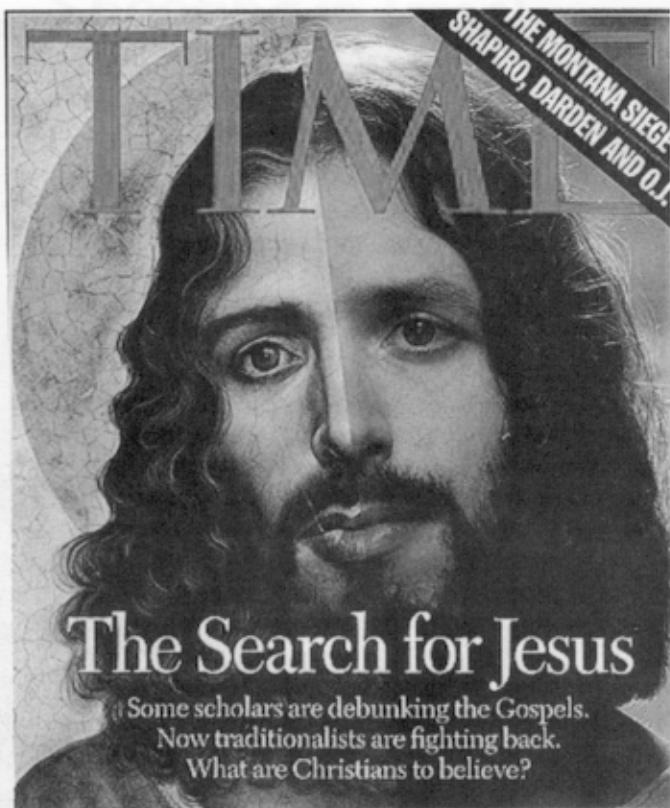
### D. The Witness of Jesus

#### 1) His Messianic Claims

##### a) Messiah

This is a very common title in the Gospels, but it is usually presented in the Greek form of Christ. It means “the Anointed One.”

- (1) Mark 14:61-62 — When Jesus was tried before the Sanhedrin Council, the High Priest asked Him, “Are you the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the Blessed One?” Jesus responded, “I am.” (See also Matthew 26:63-64.)
- (2) John 4:25-26 — A Samaritan woman says to Jesus, “I know that the Messiah is coming . . .” Jesus



responds, "I who speak to you am He."

- (3) Mark 9:41 — Jesus refers to His disciples as "followers of the Christ [Messiah]."

#### b) Son of Man

This is the title that Jesus applied to Himself more than any other. It is the Messianic title of Daniel 7:13. This title emphasizes that Jesus was God in the flesh. The title is used in 78 verses in the Gospels. Examples:

- (1) Matthew 8:20 — "And Jesus said to him, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.'"
- (2) Mark 8:31 — "He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected."
- (3) Luke 9:26 — "Whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory . . ."
- (4) John 12:23 — "Jesus answered them, saying, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.'"

#### c) Son of God

This is a divine title that the Jewish leaders recognized as a claim to deity. Many people, including the Devil and his demons, refer to Jesus in the Gospels as the Son of God. Jesus often refers to Himself as "the Son," but specifically applies the title, "Son of God" to Himself only five times.

- (1) Luke 22:70 — "And they [the Sanhedrin Council] all said, 'Are You the Son of God, then?' And He

said to them, 'Yes, I am.'"

- (2) John 3:18 — Speaking of Himself, Jesus says, "He who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."
- (3) John 5:25 — "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God . . ."
- (4) John 10:36 — Jesus asks the Jewish leaders if they are accusing Him of blaspheming "because I said, 'I am the Son of God?'"
- (5) John 11:4 — When Jesus heard of the death of Lazarus, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it."

#### d) Son of David

This Messianic title was applied to Jesus by the Gospel writers (Matthew 1:1) and by many of the people of His time (Matthew 9:27). For example, Jesus was hailed as "the Son of David" when He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem during the last week of His life (Matthew 21:9). The closest Jesus came to applying the title to Himself occurred in a dialogue He had with the Jewish leaders that is recorded in Matthew 22:41-45.

#### e) King of the Jews

This is another Messianic title that Jesus claimed before Pilate. Matthew 27:11 states that Pilate asked Jesus, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "It is as you say." (See also Mark 15:2 and Luke 23:3.)

#### f) The Prophet

Speaking of the Messiah to come, Moses referred to him as "a prophet" (Deuteronomy 18:15-18). By the time of Jesus, "The Prophet" had come to be a recognized Messianic title. Thus, when John the Baptist appeared, the people asked him if he was "the Prophet." He responded that he was not (John 1:21). Jesus applied Moses' title to Himself in John 5:46 when He said, "If you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me."

#### 2) Jesus' Application of Messianic Prophecy to Himself

Jesus often asserted His divinity by applying Messianic prophecies to Himself. Examples:

- a) Luke 4:16-21 — Jesus stands up in the synagogue in Nazareth and reads a prophecy from Isaiah 61 about the Messiah being full of the Spirit and coming "to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord." Jesus then states, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."
- b) Luke 18:31-33 — Speaking of His approaching crucifixion, Jesus told His disciples, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to

the Gentiles . . . and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and on the third day He will rise again."

- c) Luke 22:37 — Referring to His crucifixion, Jesus applies Isaiah 53:12 to Himself: "For I tell you, that which is written must be fulfilled in Me, 'And He was numbered with transgressors;' for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment."
- d) Luke 24:27 — Luke says that after His resurrection, Jesus spent much time with His disciples showing them how He had fulfilled the prophecies of the Hebrew Scriptures. (See also Luke 24:46-47.)

### 3) Jesus' Identification with God the Father

#### a) I AM

When God told Moses to confront Pharaoh, Moses asked, "Whom shall I say sent me?" The Lord replied, "Tell them I AM has sent you" (Exodus 3:13-14). Jesus applied this divine name to Himself. Examples:

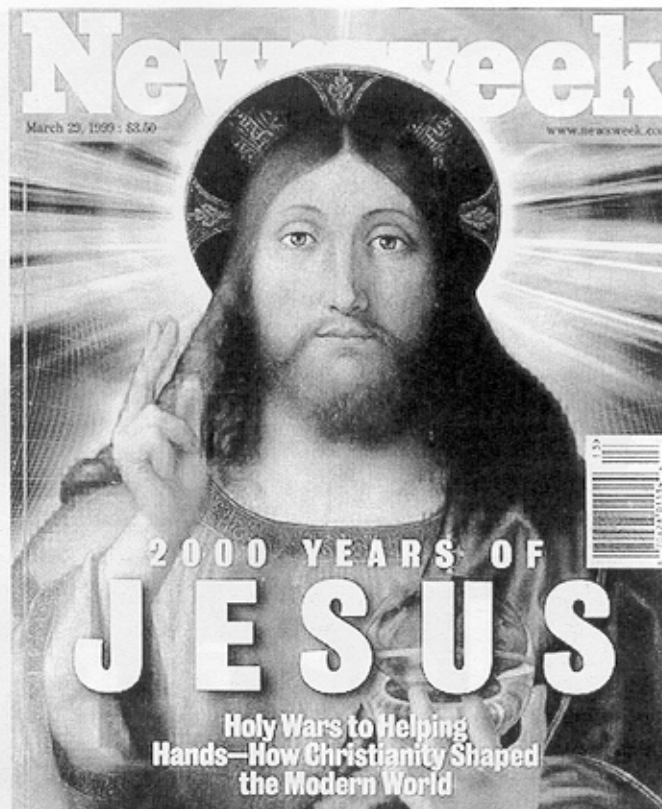
- (1) John 8:24 — Jesus says, "Unless you believe that I am, you shall die in your sins."
- (2) John 8:58 — Jesus told the Jewish leaders, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." The Jews immediately recognized this as a claim of divinity, and they tried to stone Him (John 8:59).

#### b) Alpha and Omega / The First and the Last

- (1) In Revelation 1:8 God the Father states that He is "the Alpha and the Omega." This statement is repeated in Revelation 21:6. In Revelation 22:13, Jesus says of Himself that He is "the Alpha and Omega." Once again, things equal to the same thing, are equal to each other.
- (2) A variation of the title is "The First and the Last." It is applied to God the Father in Isaiah 41:4 and 44:6. Jesus applies it to Himself in Revelation 1:17, 2:8, and 22:13.

#### c) Common Attributes

- (1) Revelation 1:14-16 — John sees Jesus resurrected and glorified. He presents a detailed description of Jesus, and every aspect of the description is one attributed elsewhere in Scripture to deity.
  - White hair — Daniel 7:9
  - Eyes like fire — Daniel 10:6
  - Feet like bronze — Daniel 10:6
  - Voice like waters — Ezekiel 1:24 & Daniel 10:6
  - Face like the sun — 2 Corinthians 4:6 & Daniel 10:6
- (2) Revelation 2-3 — In His letters to the seven churches, Jesus attributes descriptions of deity to Himself in each letter. In one He refers to Himself as "the beginning [origin or source] of the creation of God" (Revelation 3:14).
- (3) Revelation 10:1 — Jesus is portrayed in His Second Coming as a "mighty angel," and the description of



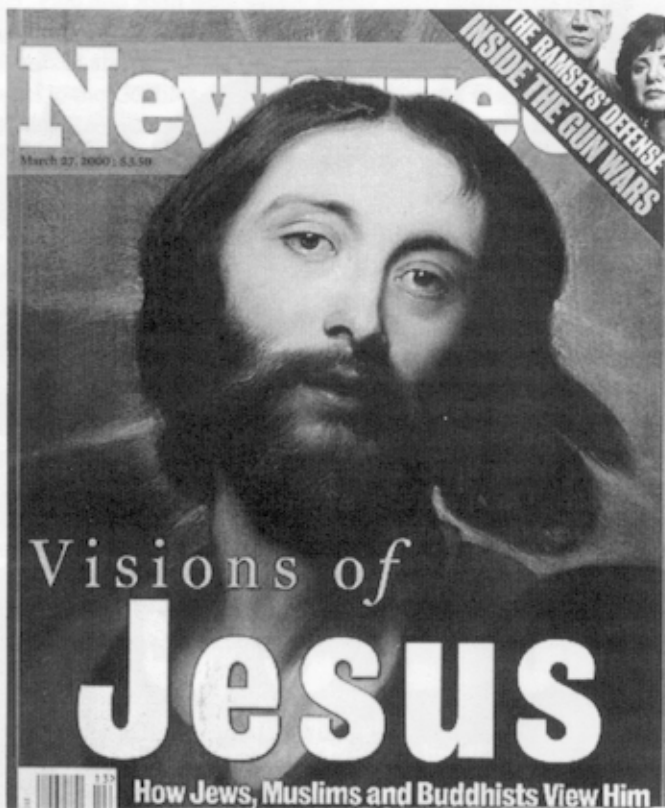
Him once again portrays attributes of God the Father. He is "clothed with a cloud" (the Shekinah glory), He has a rainbow on His head (God's symbol of faithfulness), His face is like the sun, and His feet like pillars of fire.

- (4) Luke 6:5 — Jesus says, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." Exodus 20:9-11 makes it clear that God the Father ordained the Sabbath and is Lord of it.

### 4) Jesus' Relationship with God the Father

Jesus spoke frequently of His relationship with the Father. Examples:

- a) Matthew 10:40 — "He who receives Me receives Him who sent Me." (See also Mark 9:37.)
- b) Luke 2:49 — Jesus as a twelve year old boy refers to God as His "Father."
- c) John 5:18 — The Jews sought to kill Jesus because by "calling God His own Father, He made Himself equal with God."
- d) John 8:19 — "If you knew Me, you would know My Father also."
- e) John 10:30 — "I and the Father are one [a unity]." The Jews responded to this statement by accusing Jesus of blasphemy, and then they added, "You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God" (10:33).
- f) John 12:45 — "He who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me." (See also John 14:9.)
- g) John 14:10 — "I am in the Father, and the Father is in



Me.” (See also John 14:11, 20.)

- h) John 17:10 — Jesus speaking to the Father: “All things that are Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine.”
- i) John 17:11, 21 — Speaking of His disciples, Jesus says to the Father: “May they be one, even as We are.”

#### 5) His Eternal Nature

- a) John 8:42 — “I proceeded forth and have come from God.”
- b) John 8:58 — “Before Abraham was, I am.”
- c) John 12:45 — “He who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me.”
- d) John 17:5 — Jesus says He shared God’s glory before the world was created.
- e) John 17:8 — Speaking to God: “I came forth from Thee.”
- f) John 17:24 — “Thou [the Father] didst love Me before the foundation of the world.”
- g) Luke 10:18 — “I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.” (This fall occurred either shortly before or at the time of the creation. See Isaiah 14:12, Ezekiel 28:12-17 and Revelation 12:3-4.)

#### 6) His Forgiveness of Sins and Granting of Salvation

- a) John 3:16 — “For God so loved the World that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”
- b) Matthew 9:2 — Speaking to a paralytic, Jesus says, “Take courage, My son, your sins are forgiven.” In

Mark’s account of this incident (Mark 2:7), he adds that the onlookers said, “He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?” (See also Luke 5:20 and 7:47.)

- c) John 6:47-48 — “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life.”
- d) John 7:38 — “He who believes in Me . . . from his inner most being shall flow rivers of living water.” The next verse (39) says Jesus was speaking of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in believers.
- e) John 11:25 — “Jesus said to her [Martha], ‘I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies.’”
- f) John 17:3 — “And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”
- g) Matthew 10:32 — “Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.”
- h) Luke 23:43 — To a repentant thief being crucified with Him, Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.”

#### 7) His Miracles

We are told in Acts 2:22 that the divine nature of Jesus was “attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs.” The Gospel of John records seven great miracles of Jesus:

- a) Changing water into wine (John 2:1-11).
- b) Healing of the royal official’s son at Capernaum (John 4:46-54).
- c) Healing of the man ill for 38 years (John 5:1-8).
- d) Multiplying the loaves and fishes (John 6:1-14).
- e) Walking on the water (John 6:16-21).
- f) Healing of the man blind from birth (John 9:1-7).
- g) Raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44).

#### E. The Witness of Angels

- 1) Matthew 1:20-21 — An angel to Joseph: “That which has been conceived in her [Mary] is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus.” In Hebrew, the name is Yeshua, meaning “Yahweh is salvation.”
- 2) Luke 1:11-17 — The angel Gabriel appears to the priest Zacharias and tells him that his wife will bear a son [John the Baptist] who will serve as the forerunner of the Messiah.
- 3) Luke 1:26-33 — Gabriel appears to Mary and tells her she will conceive the Messiah who will be named Jesus [Yeshua] and who will be called “the Son of the Most High.”
- 4) Luke 2:8-11 — An angel announces to the Bethlehem shepherds: “Today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ [Messiah] the Lord.”
- 5) Luke 24:6 — Two angels tell women at the tomb of Jesus:

"He is not here, but He has risen."

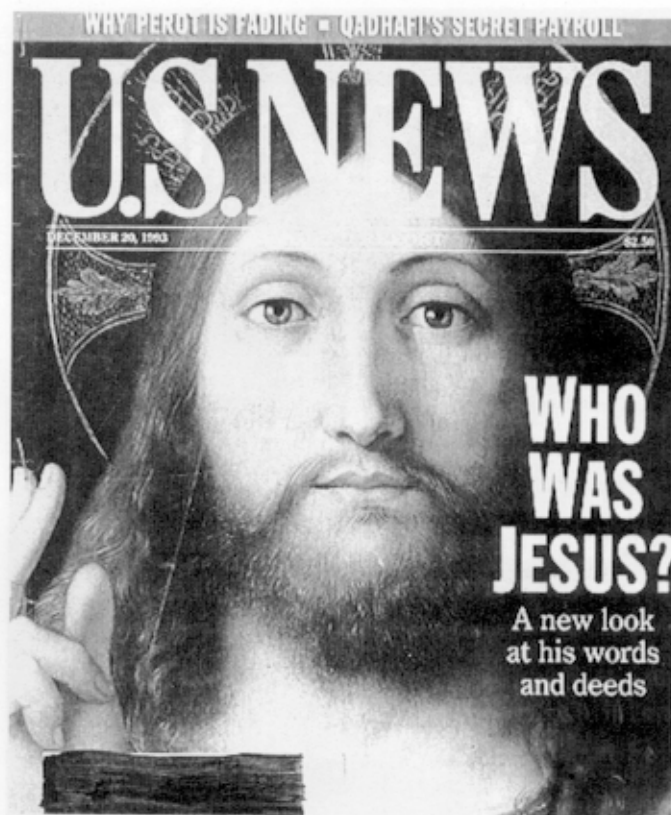
- 6) Acts 1:11 — At the Ascension, "two men in white clothing" told the disciples: "This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way . . ."
- 7) Revelation 5:9-10 — Heavenly beings are portrayed as singing, "Worthy art Thou [Jesus the Lamb] . . . for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue . . ."
- 8) Revelation 5:12 — Heavenly beings sing: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."
- 9) Revelation 5:13 — Heavenly beings sing: "To Him who sits on the throne, and the Lamb [Jesus] be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."
- 10) Revelation 11:15 — Heavenly beings declare: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Messiah; and He will reign forever and ever."
- 11) Revelation 15:3-4 — Heavenly beings sing "the song of the Lamb" which declares that He is "the Lord God the Almighty . . . the King of the nations."

#### F. The Witness of Satan and His Demons

- 1) Matthew 4:1-11 — Satan recognizes the deity of Jesus in a backhanded way by tempting Him to prove His divinity: "If You are the Son of God [which he knew He was], command that these stones become bread" (verse 6).
- 2) Matthew 8:28-34 — Jesus casts demons out of two men in the area of the Gadarenes. The demons cry out, "What do we have to do with You, Son of God?"
- 3) Mark 1:23-24 — Jesus casts a demon out of a man in Capernaum and the demon cries out, "I know who You are — the Holy One of God!" (See also Mark 1:34, 3:11, 5:7 and Luke 4:34, 41.)

#### G. The Witness of the Apostle Peter

- 1) Matthew 16:16 — "And Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'" (See also Mark 8:29 and Luke 9:20.)
- 2) John 6:69 — Peter says to Jesus, "We have believed and come to know that You are the Holy One of God."
- 3) Acts 2:11-32 — Peter says that Jesus' resurrection was in fulfillment of Messianic prophecy.
- 4) Acts 2:34-36 — Peter asserts that Jesus ascended to the right hand of God in fulfillment of Messianic prophecy.
- 5) Acts 2:38 — Peter proclaims that salvation is in the name of Jesus. (See also Acts 3:16.)
- 6) Acts 3:14-15 — Peter refers to Jesus as "the Holy and Righteous One" and as "the Prince of Life." (See also Acts 5:31.)
- 7) Acts 3:15 — Peter asserts the resurrection as proof that Jesus was the Messiah. (See also Acts 2:24, 32; 4:2, 10, 33; 5:30 and 1 Peter 1.3.)
- 8) Acts 4:12 — "There is salvation in no one else; for there is



no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

- 9) Acts 5:42 — Peter preached "Jesus as the Christ [Messiah]."
- 10) Acts 10:36 — "Jesus Christ is Lord of all."
- 11) 1 Peter 1:10-11 — The Hebrew prophets were guided in their prophecies by the "Spirit of Christ."
- 12) 1 Peter 1:18-19 — We are redeemed by "the blood of Christ."
- 13) 1 Peter 2:24 — Jesus was the fulfillment of Isaiah 53 in that He died for us and "by His wounds we are healed."
- 14) 1 Peter 3:22 — Jesus is now at the "right hand of God."
- 15) 1 Peter 4:11 — God is "glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever."
- 16) 2 Peter 1:1 — Jesus is "our God and Savior."
- 17) 2 Peter 1:3 — Jesus' "divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness . . ."
- 18) 2 Peter 1:16-19 — Peter says he was an "eyewitness of His majesty [the Transfiguration] and that he heard God declare, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased." He also states that Jesus was validated by His fulfillment of prophecy — "the prophetic word made sure."

#### H. The Witness of the Apostle John

- 1) John 1:1-2 — Jesus is "the Word" and "the Word was God."
- 2) John 1:18 — Jesus is "the only begotten God . . ."

# Why Jesus Was Killed

Scholars find new clues about the Crucifixion



- 3) John 5:18 — Jesus called God His Father, “making Himself equal with God.”
- 4) John 13:3 — Jesus “came forth from God, and is going back to God.”
- 5) John 20:31 — John asserts that he wrote his Gospel so that the reader “may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.”
- 6) 1 John 1:1-2 — Jesus is the “Word of life” through whom we can have eternal life.
- 7) 1 John 1:7 — “The blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.”
- 8) 1 John 2:1 — Jesus is the “Advocate” of the redeemed before the Father.
- 9) 1 John 2:22 — Anyone who denies that Jesus is the Messiah has the spirit of the Antichrist. (See also 1 John 4:3 and 2 John 7.)
- 10) 1 John 2:23 — “The one who confesses the Son has the Father also.”
- 11) 1 John 4:9-10 — Jesus was the only begotten Son of God whom God sent to be the propitiation for our sins.
- 12) 1 John 4:14 — The Father sent His Son “to be the Savior of the world.”
- 13) 1 John 5:1 — “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ [Messiah] is born of God.” (See also 1 John 4:15, 5:11, and 5:13.)
- 14) 1 John 5:20 — John proclaims that the Son of God is Jesus Christ and then adds: “This is the true God and eternal life.” (See also 2 John 3 and 9.)

## I. The Witness of the Apostle Paul

- 1) Acts 9:20 — Paul preached Jesus as “the Son of God.”
- 2) Acts 13:23 — Paul preached Jesus as “Savior.” (See also Acts 16:31, 17:18, 20:21, 26:18; Romans 3:22, 8:3, 10:9; Galatians 2:16, 3:13, 3:29; 1 Timothy 1:15-16; 2 Timothy 2:10; and Titus 3:4-6.)
- 3) Acts 13:30 — Paul stressed the resurrection of Jesus as validation of His divinity. (See also Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 4:14, 13:4; and 2 Timothy 2:8.)
- 4) Acts 17:3 — Paul preached Jesus as “the Christ [Messiah].” (See also Acts 18:5, 28 and 1 Corinthians 1:23.)
- 5) Acts 28:20 — Paul preached Jesus as “the hope of Israel.”
- 6) Romans 2:16 — God has given all judgment to Jesus. (See also 1 Corinthians 4:5 and 2 Corinthians 5:10.)
- 7) Romans 5:1 — “We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (See also Romans 5:10-11, 17-19 and Ephesians 3:19.)
- 8) Romans 6:23 — “The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (See also 2 Timothy 1:9-10.)
- 9) Romans 8:34 — Jesus is the Messiah who died for us, was resurrected, and who sits at the right hand of God interceding for us. (See also Ephesians 1:20.)
- 10) Romans 14:9 — Jesus is the “Lord both of the dead and of the living.”
- 11) 2 Corinthians 4:4 — Jesus is “the image of God.” (See also 2 Corinthians 4:6.)
- 12) 2 Corinthians 5:19 — “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.”
- 13) 2 Corinthians 13:14 — “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”
- 14) Ephesians 1:10 — All things are “summed up in Christ.”
- 15) Ephesians 2:13 — We have been “brought near” to God by the blood of Christ.
- 16) Ephesians 3:19 — To know the love of Christ is to be filled with “the fullness of God.”
- 17) Philippians 2:6-7, 9-11 — “Although He [Jesus] existed in the form of God, [He] did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant . . . Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord . . .”
- 18) Colossians 1:15-16, 17, 19 — Jesus is “the very image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation. For by Him all things were created . . . And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together . . . For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fulness of deity to dwell in Him.”
- 19) Colossians 2:2 — “The true knowledge of God’s mystery” is to be found in “Christ Himself.”

20) Colossians 2:9 — “For in Him [Jesus] all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.”

21) 1 Timothy 1:1 — Paul refers to Jesus as “our hope.”

22) 1 Timothy 2:5-6 — “There is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

23) 1 Timothy 3:16 — Paul cites what he calls a “common confession” — namely, that God “was revealed in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, beheld by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, and taken up in glory.”

24) Titus 2:13-14 — Jesus is “our great God and Savior . . . who gave Himself for us.”

#### J. The Witness of the Book of Hebrews

1) Hebrews 1:2 — God “made the world” through Jesus and has appointed Him “heir of all things.”

2) Hebrews 1:3 — Jesus is “the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His nature.”

3) Hebrews 1:3 — Jesus “upholds all things by the word of His power.”

4) Hebrews 1:3 — Jesus “made purification of sins” and then “sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” (See also 8:1; 10:10, 12; and 12:1-2.)

5) Hebrews 1:4-6, 13 — Jesus is greater than the angels. In fact, the angels worship Him.

6) Hebrews 1:8-9 — The Father refers to Jesus as “God.” (A quote of Psalm 45:6-7.)

7) Hebrews 1:10 — The Father declares the Son to be the Creator. (A quote of Psalm 102:25.)

8) Hebrews 1:11-12 — The Father declares the Son to be eternal. (A quote of Psalm 102:26.)

9) Hebrews 2:9 — Jesus “tasted death for everyone.”

10) Hebrews 3:1 — Jesus is the “High Priest of our confession” before the throne of God, interceding for us. (See also Hebrews 4:14, 5:10, 8:1, 9:11 and 10:21.)

11) Hebrews 3:2-6 — Jesus was greater than Moses because He was God’s Son.

12) Hebrews 7:24 — The priesthood of Jesus is permanent because “He abides forever.”

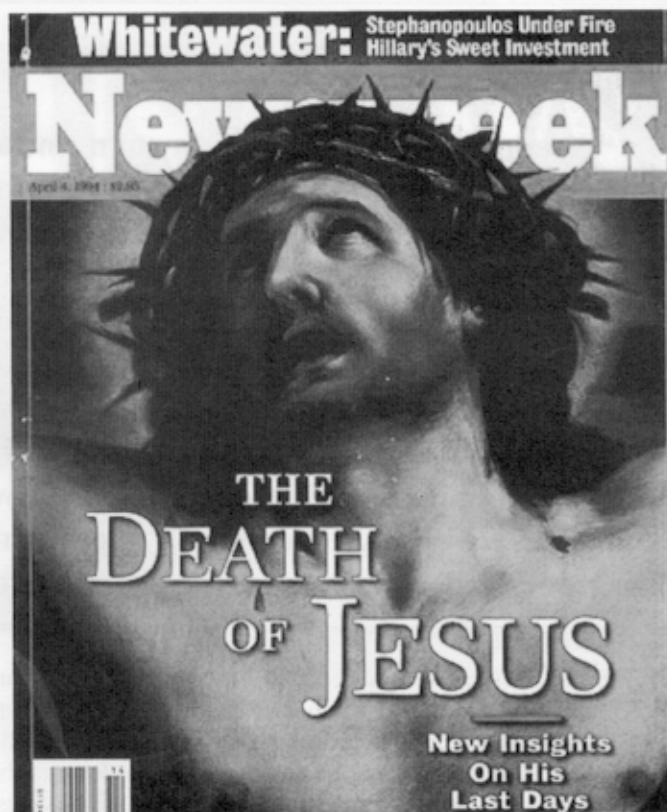
13) Hebrews 9:14 — Our salvation is through “the blood of Christ.” (See also Hebrews 13:20.)

14) Hebrews 13:8 — “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever.”

#### K. Other Witnesses of Jesus’ Divinity

1) Zacharias — Proclaims that his son, John the Baptist, “will be called the prophet of the Most High” and will prepare the way for the Messiah who will give His people “the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins” (Luke 1:67-79).

2) Simeon — Declares the baby Jesus to be “God’s salvation”



(Luke 2:25-35).

3) The Prophetess Anna — Affirmed Simeon’s declaration (Luke 2:36-38).

4) The Magi from Persia — They came to Jerusalem to worship the “King of the Jews” (Matthew 2:1-6).

5) John the Baptist — At the baptism of Jesus, he proclaimed: “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

6) Nathaniel — “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel” (John 1:49).

7) Martha — “Yes, Lord, I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God . . .” (John 11:27).

8) The People — “This is of truth the Prophet who is to come into the world” (John 6:14).

9) The Jews — “He has made Himself out to be the Son of God” (John 19:7).

10) Two Blind Men — “Have mercy on us, Son of David!” (Matthew 9:27). For similar occurrences, see Matthew 20:29-34, Mark 10:47 and Luke 18:35-43.

11) The Disciples — After Jesus calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee, His disciples worshiped Him, crying out, “You are certainly God’s Son!” (Matthew 14:33).

12) A Canaanite Woman — “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David.” (Matthew 15:22).

13) The Multitudes — As Jesus entered Jerusalem the last time, the crowds called out, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” (Matthew 21:9).

*Responding to the notion that Jesus was just “a great moral teacher,” C.S. Lewis wrote in Mere Christianity:*

**“A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with a man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse.**

**You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”**



- 14) Pilate — There is no evidence that Pilate believed in Jesus as Savior, but in response to one of his questions, Jesus was given the opportunity to proclaim that He was “King of the Jews” (Mark 15:2). Later, in an attempt to make fun of the Jews, “Pilate wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. And it was written, ‘Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews’” (John 19:19). Thus, working through Pilate’s hatred of the Jews, God orchestrated events so that one of Jesus’ Messianic titles would appear on the cross. See also Mark 15:26 and Luke 23:38.
- 15) The Thief on the Cross — “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!” (Luke 23:42).
- 16) The Centurion at the Cross — “Truly, this was the Son of God!” (Mark 15:39).
- 17) Thomas — When confronted by Jesus after the resurrection, he cried out, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28).
- 18) Mark — He declares that his gospel is about “Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mark 1:1).
- 19) Phillip — In witnessing to the Ethiopian Eunuch, Phillip declared that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 53 (Acts 8:26-39).
- 20) Stephen — As he was being stoned to death, he cried out: “Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:56).
- 21) Jude — He ends his epistle with the words, “To the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen” (Jude 25).

**A**s you can see from this voluminous biblical evidence, the divinity of Jesus is not some johnny-come-lately concept that was invented by a group of First Century superstitious peasants who desired to make a god of a man they admired. It was foretold in Hebrew prophecy, affirmed in the life, teachings and miracles of Jesus, and confirmed by God the Father Himself. One would have to deny the Bible as the Word of God in order to

deny the divinity of Jesus.

There is one other form of evidence that needs to be mentioned. I have in mind the hundreds of millions of lives that have been radically changed over the past two thousand years through faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Jesus came alive in their lives and gave them supernatural power to overcome the weaknesses of their flesh. Who else but God could have changed a slave trader like John Newton into a beloved pastor and inspired hymn writer when he placed his faith in Jesus?

God became man. That is the central fact of history. It is mind-boggling to conceive a God who would love us that much; but He did and He continues to do so. Your response to that fact will determine your eternal destiny.

#### A Plea

If you have never done so, I pray you will open your heart to the truth that Jesus was God in the flesh; that He died for your sins; that He currently serves as the High Priest of believers before the throne of God; and that one day soon He will return in glory as King of kings to resurrect the dead, judge the world, and reign over all the nations in peace, righteousness and justice.

**Maranatha! ❖**

Notes:

- 1) Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy, *The Jesus Mysteries: Was the ‘Original Jesus’ a Pagan God?* (New York, NY: Random House, 2000).
- 2) Robert W. Funk and Roy W. Hoover, *The Five Gospels*, (San Francisco, CA: Harper, reprint edition, 1997).

We are indebted to Don Perkins, evangelist for According to Prophecy Ministries in San Diego, CA, for the magazine covers that are used as illustrations in this issue’s articles about the deity of Jesus.

# "Who do you say I am?"

## Observations about the Deity of Jesus

by Dennis Pollock

This question, which Jesus asked His disciples is, beyond dispute, the most important question you will ever have to answer. Life makes room for mistakes in many things. For thousands of years the majority of men on earth were convinced that the earth was flat, and managed to make it through life without being unduly harmed. Likewise it was assumed by nearly all that the sun revolved around the earth for most of recorded history, and we were not much the worse for our error.

You may be wrong in your views of politics, sports, or weather, and still function quite nicely. But when it comes to the question, "Who is this Jesus?" you cannot afford to be wrong. Everything rides upon your answer.

### The Testimony of Americans

George Gallup decided to discover what America thought about Jesus. He took a survey which he called "How America Sees Jesus." The poll revealed that, while 81 percent of Americans considered themselves Christians, there was a major difference in how they viewed the Savior. Eighty percent of Americans believe that Jesus was the Son of God. However, only 42 percent believe that He was God among men. Apparently most Americans can accept His Sonship, but only a minority can accept His deity.

The question may be asked, "Isn't it enough to believe that Jesus is the Son of God? Why must we proclaim Him to be God?" My answer would simply be that we must believe everything the Scripture says about Him — nothing less and nothing more. If the Scripture declares Him divine, co-equal with the Father, we dare not believe anything less. One thing the Scriptures most definitely emphasize is that what we believe about Jesus is of the utmost importance. Jesus declared to the Jews of His day, "If you believe not that I am (He), you will die in your sins" (John 8:24).

### The Testimony of the Church

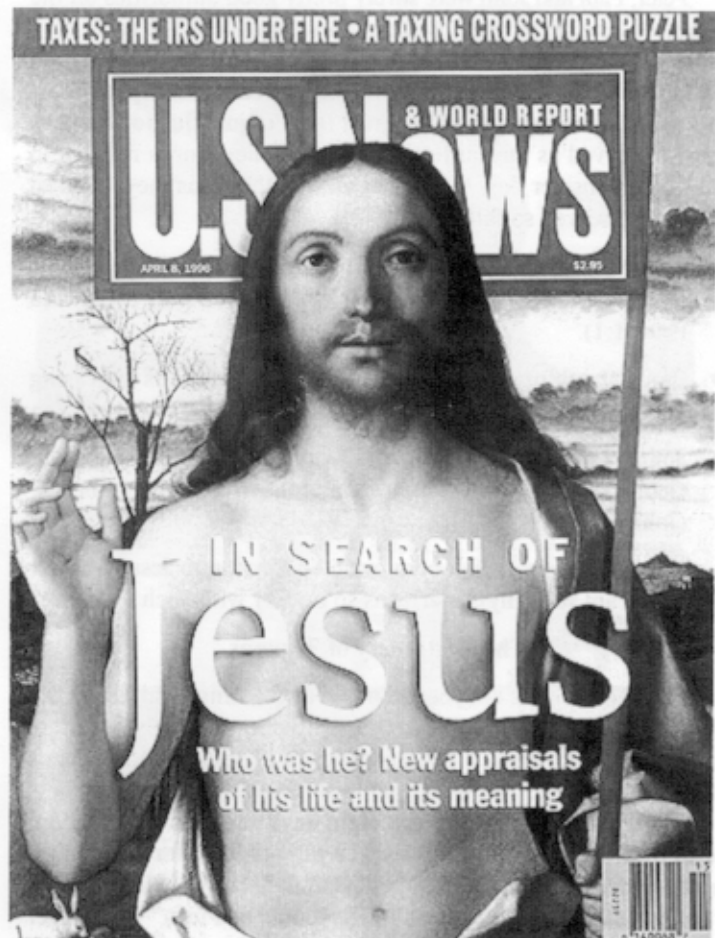
The historic Church has always affirmed Jesus' deity. The early Church Fathers, beginning with the apostles John and Thomas, readily acknowledged the amazing fact that the man named Jesus, who roamed the hills of Galilee and taught in the synagogues of Israel, was and is God made manifest in human flesh.

This startling declaration sets Christianity apart from the other world religions of modern and ancient times. Moses made no such claim, nor Buddha, nor Confucius, nor Mohammed. Amazingly it is the lowly thirty year old ex-carpenter from Nazareth who was proclaimed equal with God by John, Thomas, Paul, and millions of Christians since then.

If Jesus is not God, then the Church, from its very infancy, has been grossly deceived and has been guilty of idolatry. To worship, praise, exalt, pray to, and supremely love one who is anything less than God would be blasphemy of the highest order.

Consider what some of the earliest Church Fathers said about Jesus:

- **Irenaeus**, around the year 178 AD, declared that "Christ, as God, was adored by the Prophets; was the God of the living and the living God; that He spoke to Moses in the bush."



- **Justin Martyr**, around the year 140 AD, declared that "Christ the first born Word of God, existed as God" and that "He is Lord and God, as being the Son of God . . . He was the God of Israel."
- **Tatian**, Bishop of Antioch in the latter part of the second century, stated, "We declare that God was born in human form."
- **Melito**, Bishop of Sardis at the same time said, "We are worshipers of one God, who is before all, and in all, in His Christ, who is truly God the Eternal Word."
- **The Council of Antioch**, which convened about the year 264, declared, "In the whole Church, He is believed to be God, who emptied Himself, indeed, of a state of equality with God."

### The Testimony of the Scriptures

The reason the historic Church has always affirmed the deity of Jesus is really quite simple — the same Bible which tells us of His virgin birth, sinless life, death on the cross, and resurrection the third day speaks powerfully about His place in the Godhead. If Jesus was not God, the apostles Peter, Paul and John (writers of the vast majority of the epistles in the New Testament) were clearly deceived. If these men were in error, what hope is there for any of us to understand and know the truth? Throw out Jesus' deity, and all you have left is an uncertain, watered-down, impotent gospel which is no gospel at all.

Peter, Paul and John were surely pretty good authorities on the person of Jesus. Peter was the pre-eminent apostle in the early days of the Church, and was chosen by Jesus to be the first to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles. John was considered the disciple closest to Jesus, and Paul was given the great truth of justification by faith that has served as the cardinal doctrine of the Church relating to salvation. Consider how these men viewed the Jesus they loved so dearly and served so faithfully:

- **Peter:** "To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our *God and Savior Jesus Christ*" (2 Peter 1:1).
- **Paul:** "Looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great *God and Savior Jesus Christ*" (Titus 2:13).
- **John:** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God*. . . and the Word became flesh." (John 1:1, 14).

If these three men felt comfortable referring to Jesus as their God, why are so many Americans so uneasy with such a claim?

#### The Testimony of Thomas

Poor Thomas has long been known as the king of all doubters. And while perhaps he came to this distinction honestly, we often fail to give him credit for his confession of Jesus that far excels every other confession in both understanding and faith.

The apostle John tells us that eight days after His resurrection, Jesus finally appeared to Thomas. Having missed Him on His first appearance, Thomas had firmly declared, "I won't believe unless I can see and touch the wounds in His hands and feet." Jesus, ever merciful, accommodated him. "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." Thomas needed no more evidence. His reply to Jesus is perhaps the most astonishing declaration ever made by the lips of man, when he cried out in awe, "*My Lord and My God!*" (John 20:24-28).

Jesus did not rebuke him for blasphemy or idolatry. He did not declare, as Peter did to Cornelius, "Stand up; I myself am also a man" (Acts 10:26). Rather, He received Thomas' worship and declared, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

#### Your Testimony

How about you? Have you ever worshiped Jesus as Thomas did? Have you ever praised Him as your Lord and your God? It is interesting to see how God the Father addresses Jesus the Son. He does not call Him "Sonny Boy" or "Junior." In Hebrews 1:8 we read: "To the Son He says, 'Your throne, *O God*, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.'"

This is what makes Christianity unique. All the world's religions attempt to show us how man, by his diligent efforts can somehow reach up to God and achieve acceptance, relationship, and purpose. The record of the Scriptures reveals rather that God has emptied Himself to become a man, in order to make those things possible. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifested in the flesh*, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Timothy 3:16). All praise to our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ! ❖



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# A Day of Celebration

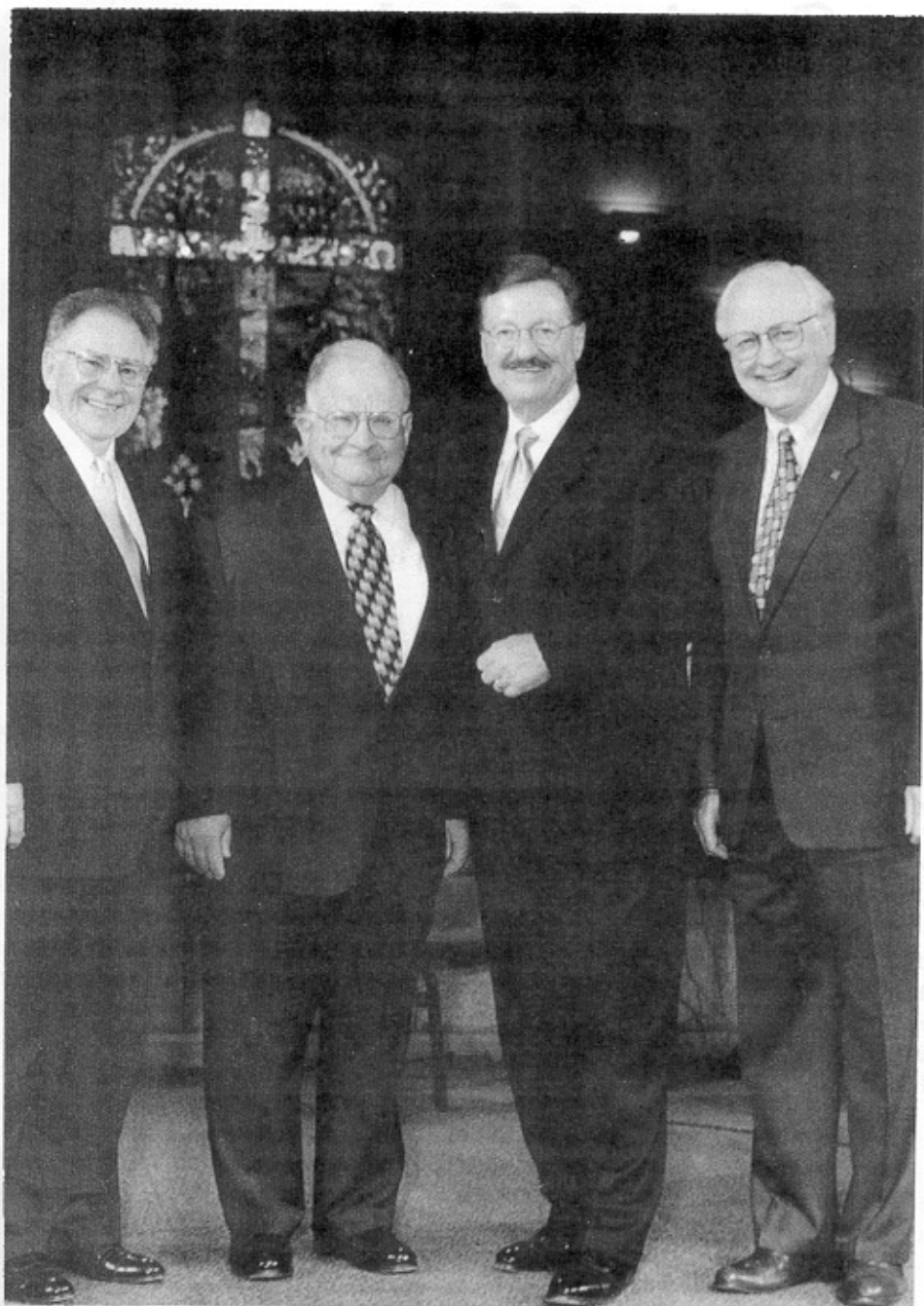
On June 18 Central Christian Church in Wichita, Kansas celebrated the opening of its new sanctuary which seats 3,200. There were 4,750 people present at the two Sunday morning services on dedication day.

The pastor, Joe Wright, invited three of his closest friends in ministry to speak at the dedication services. Wayne Smith, former pastor of Southland Christian Church in Lexington, Kentucky, and currently a traveling evangelist, spoke at the dedication banquet on Saturday evening. Ben Merold, former pastor of Eastside Christian Church in Fullerton, California and presently pastor of Harvester Christian Church in St. Charles, Missouri, spoke at the first Sunday morning service. Dave Reagan, evangelist for Lamb & Lion Ministries, spoke at the second Sunday morning service.

## A Remarkable Ministry

Joe Wright's ministry at Central has been greatly blessed by the Lord. When Joe arrived in 1991, the church was heavily in debt and was struggling to keep its head above water. Joe revolutionized the worship, emphasized biblical preaching, spoke out in behalf of righteousness, and focused on evangelism. The result was spectacular growth. The debt was paid off, but the growth in the congregation and the church's Christian school necessitated new facilities.

It was at that point that the Lord gave Joe a bold vision for lost souls. Joe summed it up in the slogan: "10,000 free by 2003." Members submitted names of family members, neighbors, and work associates who did not know the Lord, and the congregation began to pray for these people by name.



Ben Merold, Wayne Smith, Joe Wright, and Dave Reagan.



Then came the vision for the new sanctuary. It cost 12 million dollars. Seven million of that had been raised when the congregation moved into the new facility.

At the dedication ceremonies, Pastor Wright referred to Wayne Smith as his "father in the faith." He thanked Ben Merold for being his "constant mentor and encourager." He introduced Dave Reagan as one of his "closest friends and favorite preachers."

On dedication day, Dr. Reagan spoke on "Hosea: God's Prophet of Love." A video of that presentation is available for \$12 plus the cost of mailing (and sales tax for Texas residents). You can order it by calling 1-800/705-8316. ✚

# Shooting in Israel

Fortunately, the title of this article does not refer to the violence that is going on in Israel today. Rather, it refers to the video shooting that a crew from Lamb & Lion Ministries did in Israel during the first two weeks of September.

The crew consisted of six people: Dave Reagan, Don Gordoni, George Collich and two of his sons, Trey and Preston, and Ronnie Jones, the chairman of the Lamb & Lion Board of Trustees. Don directed the video shooting. George served as the sound technician, and Ronnie worked as the equipment handler and lighting technician.

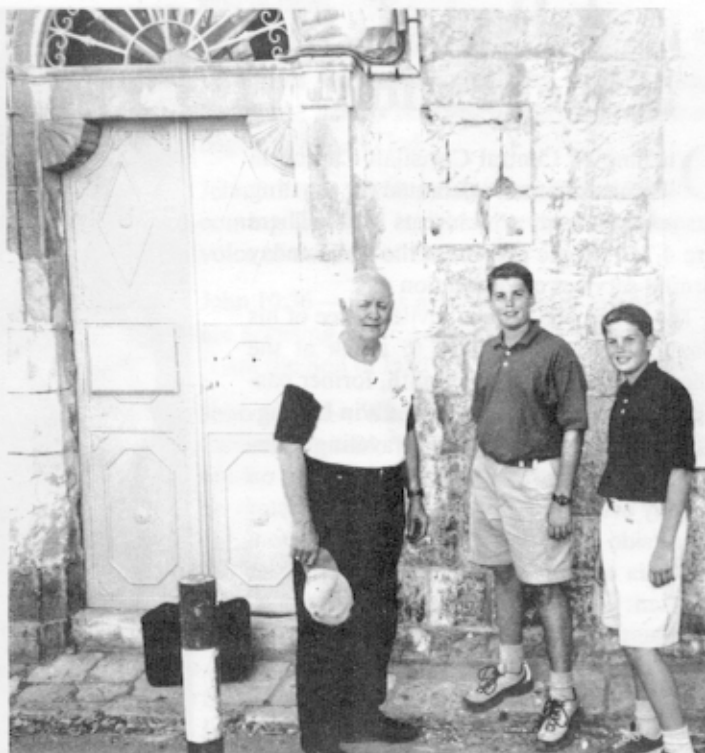
The two boys appear with Dr. Reagan in the video program. The program, to be titled *Israel in Bible Prophecy*, is a re-make of a very popular program which the ministry first produced in 1987. The decision to redo the program was based on two factors. First, Dr. Reagan has aged 12 years since the program was taped. Second, Dr. Reagan had an idea for improving the quality of the program by switching from voice-over to dialogue.

## A Revised Format

In the original version, Dr. Reagan simply walked around the various sites in Israel while voice-over narrative described the significance of the site. Dr. Reagan did some direct speaking into the camera, but most of the program consisted of voice-over narrative.

This time Dr. Reagan re-wrote the script to make it a dialogue between him and the boys. They ask questions, and he answers them. The result is a much livelier presentation of the material.

Because of the different format, this proved to be a much more difficult shoot than the one in 1987. Twenty-four pages of dialogue had to be memorized. And segments of each scene had to be shot several times to get close-ups of each person saying their lines so that Don would be able to switch back and forth between speakers in his editing.



Dr. Reagan with Trey and Preston Collich in front of the home of Eliezer Ben Yehuda in Jerusalem.

## An Empty Land

When the crew arrived in Israel on September 5th, the land was eerily empty of tourists. The crew stayed at the King Solomon Hotel in Jerusalem, and for the first few days, they were the only people in the hotel except for the owner and his wife! The lack of tourists was due to the fact that Arafat had announced that he would declare a Palestinian state on September 13th. Since it was believed that such a declaration would provoke a war with Israel, tourist groups had re-scheduled their trips for October or November.

The absence of tourists made it possible for the crew to cover their sites much more quickly. Still, the days were long and the work was very hard. The crew left the hotel each morning around 6:30 and usually did not return until almost 12 hours later. The weather was perfect for shooting, but the sun was very intense, and the crew ended up spending more money on drinking water than on gasoline!

## A Blessed Experience

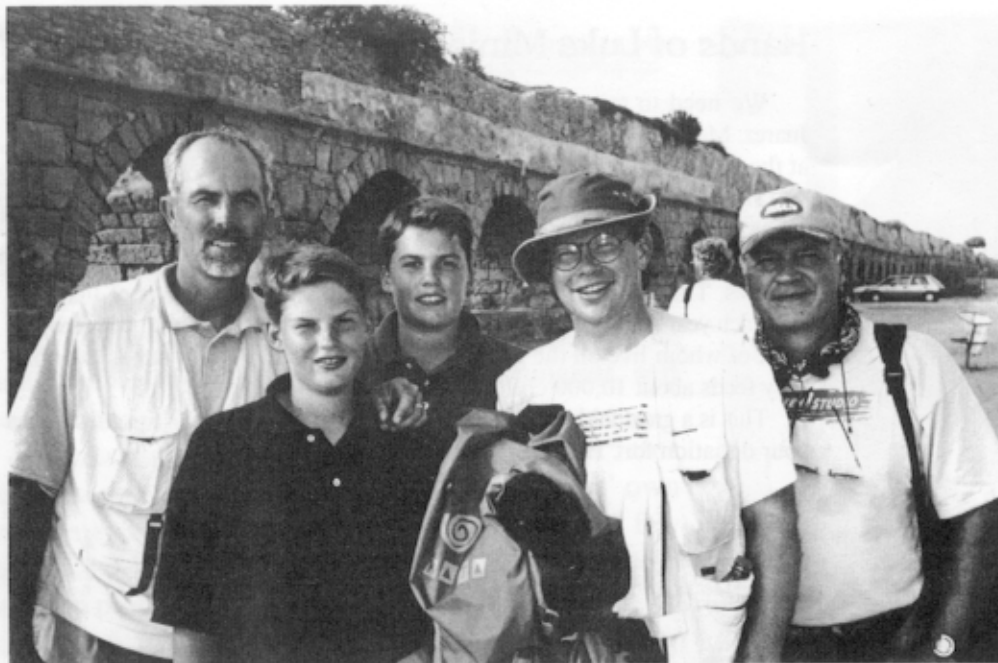
The Lord blessed the crew with safety and good health. He also blessed the video shoot in many ways.

One of the greatest blessings occurred on the day that the crew was scheduled to shoot at the home of Eliezer Ben Yehuda, the man who singlehandedly revived the Hebrew language from the dead. The place where he lived and worked is located near Ben Yehuda Street in Jerusalem. It faces a very narrow, alley-like street that is only a couple of blocks long.

In 1987, the crew had not experienced any difficulty shooting scenes at this location because the narrow, isolated street was devoid of traffic. But this time, the situation was completely different. The street was being



Shooting a scene on an Egyptian tank destroyed at Kibbutz Yad Mordecai during the War of Independence in 1948.



The video crew in front of the Roman aqueduct at Caesarea Maritime on the Mediterranean coast. George Collich, Preston Collich, Trey Collich, Don Gordoni, and Ronnie Jones.

used as a short cut to get from a very busy main street to a school. The traffic was bumper to bumper, and it was loud. The crew tried shooting the needed scenes repeatedly, but after an hour, they still had nothing they could use. At that point, Don Gordoni was at his wit's end.

That's when the Lord stepped in. The crew's Israeli guide and driver, Shai-Shalom Matter, suddenly appeared and announced that he had gone around to the side of the house and looked in a window. He had spotted two workmen inside who were remodeling the place. He knocked on the door and asked them if the video crew could come inside and shoot their scenes. The workmen agreed.

But Dr. Reagan refused to go inside without the owner's permission. So, the workmen called the owner on a cell phone, and he gave his consent. In fact, he soon arrived and watched proudly as the crew proceeded to shoot all the needed scenes on the patio of the house where Ben Yehuda often sat and worked on his great linguistic enterprise.

#### New Scenes for an Unchanging Message

The revised version of *Israel in Bible Prophecy* will have some new scenes that were not contained in the 1987 production. This time the crew was able to do extensive shooting at the tank museum of the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces). There are also some scenes that were shot in the Muslim cemetery adjacent to the Eastern Gate, showing that gate up close.

The message of the program will be the same — namely, that God is fulfilling ancient prophecies in Israel today that point to the soon return of Jesus. The prophecies that are highlighted in the program are as follows:

- 1) The regathering of the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth.
- 2) The re-establishment of the state of Israel.
- 3) The reclamation of the land of Israel.

- 4) The revival of the Hebrew language.
- 5) The resurgence of the Israeli military.
- 6) The refocusing of world politics on the nation of Israel.
- 7) The reoccupation of the city of Jerusalem.

The new video should be ready for distribution in January of 2001.

The Ministry wishes to express its appreciation to all of you who contributed so generously to make it possible for this updated version of *Israel in Bible Prophecy* to be made. ❖



## Ministry News

**Israel Tours** — The Ministry's next Holy Land pilgrimage is scheduled for June of 2001. The group will depart the States on June 1 and will return on June 12. The trip will include two nights in Tel Aviv, two nights in Tiberias (on the Sea of Galilee) and five nights in Jerusalem. Dr. Reagan will lead the tour. For a detailed brochure, call 1-800/705-8316.

**Video** — The special light package for studio lighting has been purchased (\$12,000), and all the furniture for the conversation set has been secured (\$3,000). Our biggest remaining need is the money to purchase three studio cameras. Each camera costs \$20,000. We have in hand \$26,000. We need to raise the remaining \$34,000 before the end of the year.

**Philippines** — Dave and Dennis are scheduled to depart the country on November 16th for the Philippines where they will conduct a prophecy conference for 100 ministers. We need \$10,000 to cover all the costs of this conference. Please designate donations for "Philippine Outreach." Thank you!

**Lamplighter Renewal** — It costs us about \$15 a person per year to print and mail the *Lamplighter* to you. If the publication is a blessing to you, please consider sending a special donation of \$15 or more to help us cover our costs.

*Please continue sending the Lamplighter to me during 2001.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help with publication and mailing costs.

Return to: Lamb & Lion Ministries, P.O. Box 919, McKinney, Texas 75070.



## Hands of Luke Ministries

We need to raise at least \$30,000 for the Hands of Luke Ministry in Juarez, Mexico. The ministry's director, Dr. Marco Samaniego, is pictured at the left with some of the 90 orphans which the ministry cares for.

The ministry also feeds over 300 children each day at nutrition centers it has established in the poorest areas of Juarez. Additionally, the ministry supplies free medical care to people in the name of Jesus, including surgical services. The ministry also has an outreach among the prisons of Juarez.

Each year at Thanksgiving the ministry feeds more than 20,000 people, most of whom live on the garbage dump in Juarez. At Christmas the ministry feeds about 10,000 children and provides them with gifts.

This is a great faith ministry that deserves your support. Please designate your donation for "Hands of Luke." Thank you!

## Dr. Reagan's New Book

Dr. Reagan's new book, *Living for Christ in the End Times*, sells in Christian bookstores for \$12. We are making it available through the Ministry for \$10 plus \$2.00 for mailing. (Texas residents must pay sales tax.)

The book presents in detail the two great challenges that confront Christianity at the beginning of the 21st Century: the decay of society and the increasing apostasy in the Church.

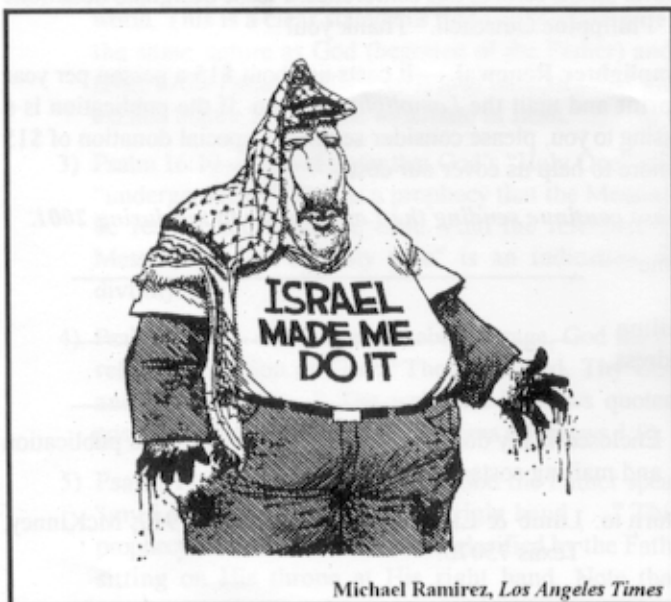
Dr. Reagan then presents ten chapters explaining how Christians can overcome these challenges:

- ◆ Standing on the Word of God
- ◆ Believing in the Power of God
- ◆ Relying on the Holy Spirit
- ◆ Practicing Tough Faith
- ◆ Ordering Your Priorities
- ◆ Keeping an Eternal Perspective
- ◆ Standing for Righteousness
- ◆ Persisting in Prayer
- ◆ Surrendering in Worship
- ◆ Clinging to Hope

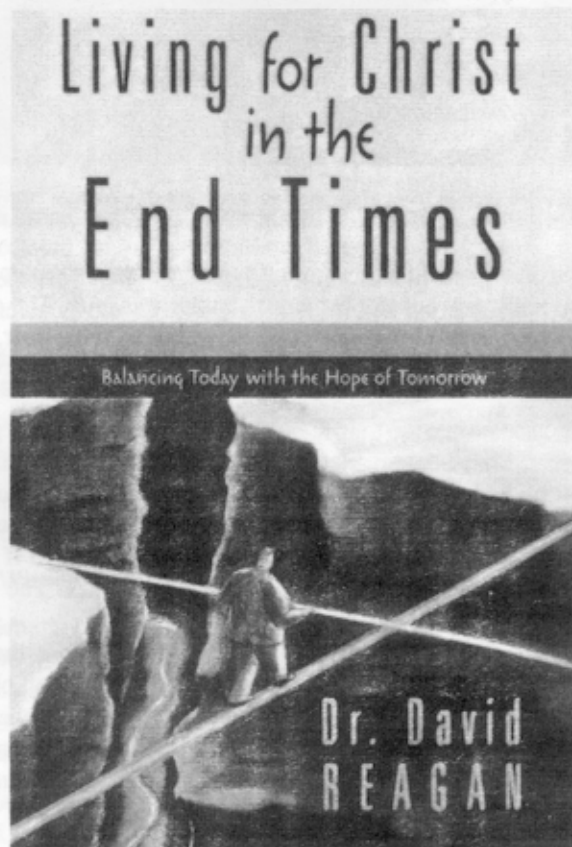
Dr. Reagan concludes the book with two chapters which outline what the Bible has to say about the ultimate triumph that will be obtained over paganism when the Lord returns to reign over all the world.

Keep this book in mind for Christmas presents. To order, call 1-800/705-8316.

## Middle East Update



Michael Ramirez, *Los Angeles Times*



At two recent weekend prophecy conferences Dr. Reagan has made an in-depth presentation about the current Middle East crisis, discussing it from a biblical perspective and drawing conclusions as to where it is headed. Both times the presentation was received with great enthusiasm.

At the urging of the Ministry's executive director, George Collich, Dr. Reagan agreed to video tape his observations for distribution to a wider audience.

The video tape, to be entitled, *The Middle East Crisis in Biblical Perspective*, will be available by the time you receive this copy of the *Lamp-lighter*.

In the program, Dr. Reagan provides the historical background of the dispute, analyzes the motives and strategy of each side, and points out how what is happening now is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. He concludes by explaining why he believes the events in Israel clearly point to the fact that we are on the threshold of the Tribulation.

The video is \$10 plus shipping costs (and sales tax for Texas residents). This is a great program for both individual and group study. ❖

# New Year's Greetings from the Lamb & Lion Staff



(First row) Cathie Grubb, administrative assistant; Rachel Houck, mail clerk; Leo Houck, director of outreach; and Kay Bien, executive secretary. (Second row) Dave Reagan, senior evangelist; Dennis Pollock, associate evangelist; Gary Byers, administrative minister; Don Gordoni, media director; and George Collich, Jr., executive minister.

## We need your support as a Prophecy Partner!

### Program Requirements

The financial base of Lamb & Lion Ministries is provided by its Prophecy Partners. These are the people who pledge to provide \$15 a month or more for one year.

We currently have 1,200 Prophecy Partners. We need to increase that number to at least 1,500 for 2001 if we are to continue expanding our media outreach with the message of the soon return of Jesus.

We ask our Prophecy Partners to aim at giving \$1 a day for a year — or \$30 per month. Many do this, and some give even more. The minimum contribution is \$15 per month.

### Program Benefits

There are many benefits and blessings associated with being a Prophecy Partner. First and foremost is the knowledge that your sacrificial support is going to a ministry whose purpose is to point people to Jesus Christ and to proclaim His soon return.

As a Prophecy Partner you will receive a monthly tape or special publication together with a personal report from Dave Reagan highlighting major events and decisions affecting the ministry.

The tape or publication usually covers some special study topic or current events topic related to Bible prophecy. From time to time a special gift, like the ministry's annual Jewish calendar, is sent to our Prophecy Partners in recognition of their support.

### Program Purposes

Your donations will be used to help pay for our media outreach all across this nation. They will also be used to help cover the cost of the thousands of free tapes and publications which we distribute yearly to people who cannot afford to pay for them.

**We need your support! Join us for 2001. ✚**

### Prophecy Partner Commitment

**Yes!** I want to be a Lamb & Lion Prophecy Partner during 2001.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2001 Monthly Commitment \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Goal of \$30 per month — minimum of \$15 per month)

or

2001 Yearly Commitment \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Goal of \$360 — minimum of \$180)

Mail to Lamb & Lion Ministries P.O. Box 919, McKinney, TX 75070

# Pilgrimage Video Ready for Distribution

For years people have been calling Lamb & Lion Ministries asking if we have a video that shows what sites we cover when we take a pilgrimage group to Israel.

Well, now we have one! This past June when Dr. Reagan took a group to Israel, our media director, Don Gordon, accompanied the group and video taped the trip.

Some 15 hours of footage has been edited down to about 90 minutes by Don and Dr. Reagan. The resulting program, *A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land*, presents the pilgrimage day by day. You will see all the major sites that relate to the life of Jesus, as well as sites that relate to His Second Coming.

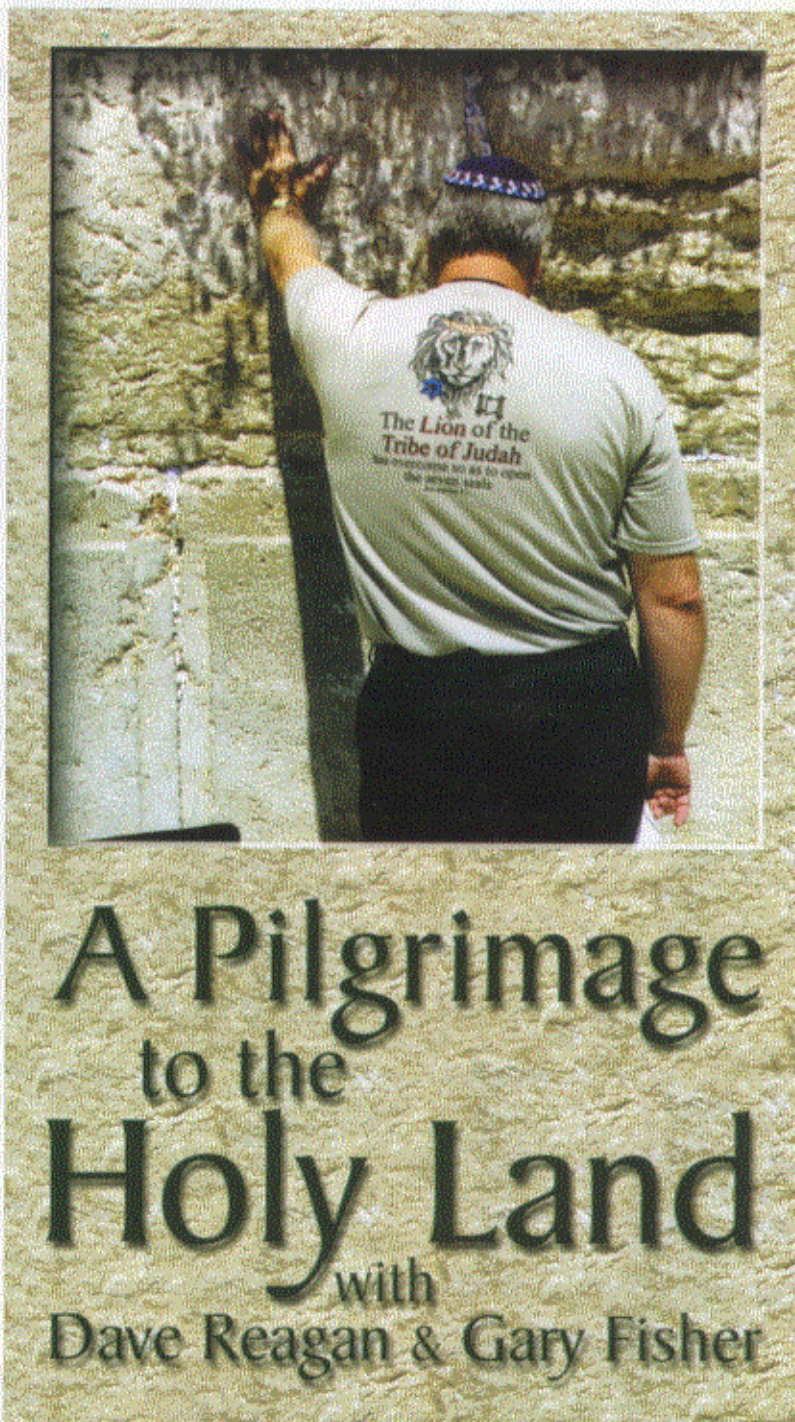
Gary Fisher, evangelist for Lion of Judah Ministries also accompanied Dr. Reagan and served as co-host. Gary and Dave shared the responsibility for presenting the devotionals at each site.

The video alternates between light moments that will have you laughing and very serious devotional talks that will challenge and enrich you spiritually.

This video would make a great Christmas gift. It is also an item that you will want to place in your church's library.

The video comes in a very attractive slip box. The cost is \$20 plus shipping (and sales tax for Texas residents). To order, please call 1-800/705-8316.

In January of next year the Ministry hopes to have another video about Israel ready for distribution. It will be a remake of our popular program entitled, *Israel in Bible Prophecy*. It surveys seven prophecies that are being fulfilled in Israel today, all of which point to the soon return of Jesus. It was video taped in Israel in September of this year. See pages 16-17.



The cover photo shows Gary Fisher praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Gary is the founder of Lion of Judah Ministries and serves as its evangelist.



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