

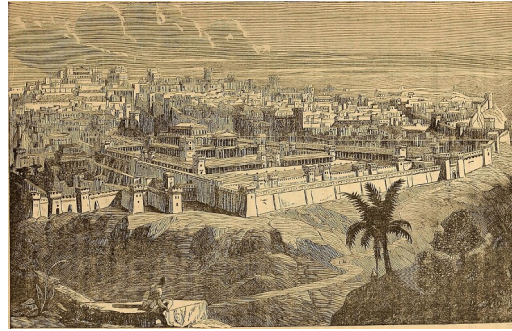
But Who do You Say that I Am?

Scriptures:

Matthew 16:13-20

John 1:1-4:2

Hebrews 12



Annie

Born to die for the sake of the salvation of the whole of humankind, and knowing that this is the sole purpose for Your life on this earth would have been daunting. But, I hear you say, Jesus was the Christ, God here on earth, the One who had created it all in the first place, He could cope with that – He is God. Yes, that is true, absolutely true, as He walked the well trodden roads and paths, He was always God, but He had chosen to take on flesh, the same flesh as you and me. Flesh and bone that would ache from endless walking, grow thirsty and hungry after hours of sharing the good news of God's Kingdom. Flesh that would bruise and bleed, flesh that could, and as He well knew, would be brutally, horrifically murdered.

Here was the Word become flesh, camping with us on this jewel of a planet set in the heavens that He had spoken into being. A tiny spinning dot in the middle of the universe, yet a dot that God had chosen to populate with His family. Those with whom He would spend eternity, the ones He had known before He formed the first cell of their bodies, those He had loved since before time had begun. God incarnate, living among us so that He might deliver us from ourselves, from the self that would be deluded and proud enough to utterly reject and despise Him. The only Hope for every soul who had ever breathed.

Jesus knew that He would have to face the most terrible torture and death, yet we are told He endured it all because of the joy that was in front of His eyes. He kept His gaze fixed on our salvation, our redemption, the joy that would be ours as we spend Eternity with Him.

One day, as His time with them was fading away, He asked His disciples, "who do the people say I am?". As the disciples heard these words, I wonder what they thought, whether they were puzzled by the question. For almost three and a half years the crowds had followed Him, surely He must have gleaned some idea of who they believed Him to be. Nevertheless, they replied. "Some say that You are John the Baptist, or Elijah, or Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets". In other words, the disciples could see that most of the people had not recognised that the long promised Messiah was standing before them, preaching and performing miracles.

Then came the big question, "so Who do you say that I am?". Peter was the one who is recorded as replying "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God". Jesus replied "*Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*"

Some scholars believe that Jesus wanted to reassure Himself that the disciples knew Who He was when He had asked that question, however, perhaps there

was also another reason. When you are instructing someone in how to perform a task, whether it is baking a cake or building some feat of engineering, the only way to reassure them that they have understood correctly, is to get them to repeat it back to you. Yes, it reassures you, but more importantly, it builds confidence in them that they will be able to carry out your instructions. I believe that this is what Jesus did with His disciples. They had to be completely clear in what God had been revealing through Jesus in His time with them, that He was indeed the Christ, the Son of the Living God. They needed to know in the depths of their being Who Jesus was.

So, my dear friends, ... Who do you say that Jesus, the Son of Man is?

Prayer: Abba Father, flesh and blood can never reveal to us Who Jesus is. It is only by Your Revelation that we recognise and believe that He is and always has been the Christ, Your Son, our Saviour. In humble gratitude, we worship and adore You. Amen