

SESSION THREE ✠ CHRISTOLOGY & EPISTEMOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

SYS 502 – The Christ’s Incarnation, Personhood, and Life on Earth – Chapters 6-8

UNDERSTANDING YESHUA THE MESHACH

If we are to come to a spiritually, evangelistically, and didactively valuable comprehension of the Christ, we must come to grips with how we understand how Deity, in this case the Anointed One, came to earth as human. While lots of religions speak of their key figure as having deity-linked attributes such as power, goodness or intelligence, what we now call Christianity distinguishes itself as asserting Yeshua of Nazareth was indeed Deity incarnate. Born in Bethlehem, Jesus pooped, worked, taught, healed, was executed, and –being Deity – rose from the dead.

Make no mistake about it, Jesus the Christ is admired, if not venerated, by many of the religious and non-religious. For example, Islam respects Isa; Mohammed called Him the greatest prophet.⁶ But, Islam rejects the notion of His death, yet affirms His virgin birth and role in the final judgment as “Judge.” Many Hindus accept and respect Jesus as Deity, along with all the other deities. Many Judaic theologians respect this Jesus as an orthodox Jew, but firmly reject Him as Meshach. They cringe when we call Jesus of Nazareth “Messiah.” Other religions have used the Christ as a key marketing element, while nonetheless denying His full deity because He is the **Son** of Father God (LDS, Jehovah Witnesses). As to respect among secular entities all one needs, for example, is to note the many “good Samaritan” laws states have among their statutes.

UNDERSTANDING THE INCARNATION OF YESHUA THE MESHACH CHAPTER 6 PAGES 96-122

1. Summarize in **one** sentence **why** Walvoord asserts the incarnation of the Christ as Jesus of Nazareth is “the central fact of Christianity.” Pages 96-122

2. Why is/was there a paucity of extra-Biblical evidence noting the historicity, the very existence of Jesus? What religion never questioned the reality of Jesus? Pages 96-97

3. Why did Walvoord use the ASV when describing His birth? Hint: Luke 2:14; Pages 100-101

⁶“I [Mohammed, compared to Isa] am but a mere ‘warner.’ ” –Surah 46:9 To learn more about Islam and its challenges for the Christ believer, read/consult <https://dthomasporter.com/BibleStudies/BackgroundStudyPapers/A Christian Looks at Islam.pdf>

4. To what extent is the literal virgin birth of Jesus from Nazareth critical to the core theology of Christology? Beyond epistemological concerns, why? Pages 101-105

THE PERSONHOOD OF YESHUA THE MESHACH CHAPTER 7 PAGES 107-122

1. Which view of Jesus' personhood is most useful to people who wish to assert He was not Deity: (1) Jesus was a great teacher, (2) Jesus was a good and sincere man, or (3) Jesus is a great model by which people can live their lives? Pages 107-109

2. Why did the Christ come to earth as a baby human, and then wait until His late twenties, early thirties to begin His ministry as the Christ? In other words, why is the **humanity** of Jesus just as critical as His deity? Pages 109-112

3. To what extent was the union of Deity and Humanity made permanent in the personhood of Jesus the Christ? Why is this "union" of the human & divine natures of Jesus important? Pages 112-119

4. To what extent is our appreciative understanding of the hypostatic union of Jesus as Deity and humanity a failure to understand fully either stasis? In other words, is our ignorance of the "nature of God" and the "nature of human" the root cause for our difficulties? Pages 112-122

5. Which of Walvoord's seven "communion of attributes" do you find the most difficult to understand? Most difficult to accept? Pages 116-118

6. Was the little, 5 year old, little Yeshua growing up in Nazareth conscious of His role as the Meshach? If not, does it matter? If so, why/how does it matter?⁷ Pages 118-120

7. If the Christ wanted to “pass this cup,” does this not support the dual/duel nature of the human Jesus and the Divine Christ? How is this paradox⁸ resolved? Pages 118-120

8. Which manifestation of the Christ’s nature as human **and** Deity do you find the most important, and why? Why did the Christ need to be human to understand we who are human? Hint: Genesis 22:12, Hebrews 2:18 or Matthew 4:2; Pages 120-122

⁷Consider the motive behind the “wild stories” from the Apocrypha regarding the Jesus child and young man; see <https://www.wisdomwordspdf.org/2018/08/10/the-wild-child-jesus-tales-from-the-apocryphal-literature>

⁸The word “paradox” is not used here as used on the street – an inconsistency. In systematic theory and theology development, paradox refers to an *apparent* inconsistency, which when all the evidence is collected and/or the right question is answered, the apparent inconsistency will be readily resolved.

Consider for example, answers in Scripture to the question: “What must I do to be saved?” Scripture supports the notion that one is redeemed by faith alone, and yet in other passages supports the notion that redemption is a matter of human effort (“If you believe, you will be saved...”) versus faith alone (“But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works...”) This is not an inconsistency, but a paradox easily resolved –when the correct question is addressed.

See <https://DiggingDeeper.Life/content/WhatMustIDoToBeSavedOnline.pdf> for an extended analysis of this paradox.

THE LIFE OF YESHUA THE MESHACH ON EARTH CHAPTER 8 PAGES 123-152

1. Of all the events recorded in the gospels, which one have you found the most useful spiritually? Evangelistically? Didactively? Why? Similarly, what reactions to the gospels as reflected in Acts, the epistles, and Revelation have you found the most useful spiritually? Evangelistically? Didactively? Why? Pages 123-152

2. Given that the Christ was to bring good news to current believers (i.e., Hebrews;⁹ Romans 1:16), how do you account for His special reaching out to pagans/heathens/gentiles? Pages 123-152

3. To what extent do you agree with Walvoord's delineation of "three spheres" of governance, theology, and orthodoxy when the Christ was on earth? That is, "The Law, The Kingdom, or The Church." Pages 133-136

4. How do you explain the so-called "humiliation of the Christ" as reflected not only in His being beaten, spit upon, and killed, but also in Paul's delineation of same in Philippians 2:5-11?¹⁰ Pages 137-145

5. Walvoord uses the construct of "impeccability" as rationale for why the Christ when on earth as Jesus did not "sin." Why was the Christ unable to "sin?" Or, if He was not able, was He truly human? Pages 145-152

⁹Note: "The Lord did not set his love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loved you and kept the oath which he swore to your forefathers" (Deuteronomy 7:7-8).

¹⁰For one approach to this issue, read my article: https://DiggingDeeper.Life/content/The_Kenosis_Problem.pdf