

JESUS FOUND IN THE SCRIPTURES OF FOUR MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD.

By Pastor Isaac Wilson – December 26, 2006.

Last week one of my friends sent me a note mentioning the following conversation between a Jewish man and a Christian man. The Jewish man, after visiting the Middle East was reporting to a Christian friend about the severity of the situation there. His friend asked about any chances of peace, to which the Jewish man said, “There is no chance; the Jews and Muslims are too far-gone in their hatred”. “There is one way to peace”, said his friend, “by accepting the love and forgiveness of Jesus.” To this, the Jewish man said, “You know my friend, I have no problem with Jesus, but I do have a problem with Christians and accepting their faith because they don't live by it.” “Who said anything about Christians?” said the Christian. “Jesus was not a Christian, he was a Jew.”

It is often true that when we look at a Christians we expect to see the characters of Christ in them and most often are disappointed. People of different faith, rarely have any problem with Christ. No one questions his teachings, his love and compassion for others and the way he lived his life to help and to heal people. The fact that Jesus is portrayed in the sacred Scriptures of the 4 major religions of the world, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, may answer the questions: ‘Why did Jesus come to this world?’ and ‘What could it mean to you personally?’

In the Torah, the sacred book of the Jewish people, the prophet Isaiah wrote nearly 700 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, in chapter 7:14 saying “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” Isaiah again says in chapter 9:6 “For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah’s prophesy unveils God’s plan to take on the form of man through virgin birth and was fulfilled when Jesus came into this world. For there is no one else this description fits perfectly. Does this not sound like a Christmas story from the Torah?

In the Qur’an, the sacred book of the people of Islam in Sura cha 3: 45-47 it says “Behold the angel said: ‘O Mary! God giveth thee glad tidings of a Word from Him; His name shall be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary held in honor....’ She said: ‘O my Lord, how shall I have a son when no man has touched me?’ The angel replied, “Even so: God createth what He willeth: When He had decreed a plan, He but said to it, ‘Be’ and it is!” What Qur’an has said here beyond question is that:

1. Mary was a virgin;
2. The angel told her of the coming birth of Jesus;
3. Mary was astonished as to how she could be pregnant when she was a virgin;
4. God created what he wanted;
5. Mary conceived her child;
6. Jesus was born, just as it was written in the Qur’an, and was called Jesus, according to the word spoken to Mary by the angel;
7. Jesus was born of the will of God. Jesus had no human father.

Based on these facts given in the Qur'an, is not this Jesus the Son of God?

The, Hindu scriptures, the Vedas and Upanisads, were written between 1200 to 2000 years before Christ. These books are written in the Sanskrit language and represent a sincere search for God and a deep quest for salvation.

A well known prayer from one of the Upanisads demonstrates the goal of this search - a prayer to God Almighty "Asato ma sat gamaya – Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya – Mrtyrma amrtam gamaya", which means, "From the unreal lead me to real – From darkness lead me to light – From death lead me to immortality."

Hinduism, over the centuries, has developed several methods called Margas or Yogas to achieve the spiritual goal of salvation and moksha or heaven: Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga.

But, according to the Vedas, the way of salvation is the Supreme Sacrifice of the Supreme God. In Vedic literature the Supreme God or the Almighty God is known as Prajapati and Purusha. The Vedas portray this Prajapati with many specific characteristics:

1. The term Prajapati is translated as the "Lord of all creation" or the "Almighty God". (But, there are also man-made characters in the Vedas and Puranas called Prajapati.)
2. According to the Vedas, Prajapati is called Purusa, the "perfect and sinless one".
3. This Purusha-Prajapati is the one who "gave himself in sacrifice for the remission of the sins of the whole world". He burned out the sins before all.
4. He possesses the "omni characters of God". (Omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient and eternal.)
5. The sacrifice of Purusa is a total giving of himself according to Rg Vedic term "Purusasukta".
6. The sacrificial man should be rejected by men; he should be a silent sufferer and should shed his blood. And his bones should not be broken.
7. The sacrificial victim of the Prajapati-sacrifice should return to life after the sacrificial death.

Jesus Christ is the only one from ages past who perfectly fits the characteristics of the 'Purusha-Prajapati' the Sinless Savior. He is the one who 'sacrificially' gave himself as He died on the cross, shedding His blood and was rejected by men. So, I present to you Jesus as the person the Vedas talked about as the ancient Sages were searching for the way for salvation. I trust that they were given a glimpse of God's divine plan during their quest.

Finally, the Bible says in the gospel according to John, chapter 1: 1-3 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." This passage says that Jesus (who is referred to as the Word) existed before all creation and He is the one who created every thing that was created. Verse 14 says, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us," which speaks of the

coming of Jesus into this world to live a sinless life so that He could be sacrificed for our sins on the cross. And verse 12 says, "To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." Because of what Jesus did, we have the opportunity to become the children of God. This is what the Christian Scriptures talk about Jesus Christ. The above examples have proven that Jesus is presented as God in the scriptures of the four major religions of the world. I pray that the eternal God of grace may give you peace, health and happiness in this blessed time of the year. I wish you all a very merry Christmas.

Padinjarekara, Joseph Dr. Gospel for India in Indian cups. (information on Islam and Hinduism).