

Scripture Standard

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Pleading for a total return to New Testament principles.

contend earnestly for the faith
Jude 1:3

Scripture Standard
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Definitely Blest

Luke 11:14 -27

Jesus' amazing response to a certain woman who complemented His mother.

Jesus' rebuke to those in a crowd who accused Him of "casting out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils" prompted a certain woman in the crowd to loudly call out to Him: "Blest is the womb that bore you, and the breasts which you have sucked."

His response to that was:

"In that case definitely then,* those are blest who hear the word of God, and keep it."

So hearing the word of God, and keeping it is of vitally more significant importance than what the woman did who gave birth to Jesus and breast fed him. This He said about his mother whom some worship as God's mother. It's not as though He depreciated his mother who bore Him. The last thing He did before succumbing to His death was to ensure His mother would be lovingly taken care of. (John 19:25-30).

Jesus was acknowledging with that "certain woman", that Mary was truly blest (Luke 1:28,42,48). However, He wanted that woman, and those hearing her, to grasp this vital truth: since the womb which bore and breasts which fed even such a child as **Him** were blessed, **those who hear the word of God and keep it are most definitely blest.**

Jesus' reaction would not only be a mind blowing thought for a woman. It is even a mind blowing thought for men.

Yet it was that very child that emphatically advised that woman, the crowd, and us that:

**those who hear the word of God,
and keep it are definitely blest.**

DO WE? ARE WE?

Footnote:

***“In that case definitely then”** [*μεν-ουν-γε (menounge)]

is one Greek word made up from three Greek words:

- “μεν” (men) means: “in that case”,
- “ουν” (oun) means: “then” and
- “γε” (ge) emphasizes “ουν” to mean: “definitely then”.

That's Epic

Jonathan Ashurst, Lexington, Kentucky

Concluding a series on the twelve sons of Jacob.

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things

Hebrews 1:1-2

In 2011, during a visit to the Isle of Wight, I first encountered a popular phrase of the time: “That’s epic.” This remark was often used in reference to situations that were mildly surprising or amusing, but not necessarily unusual.

In my imagination, however, the term ‘epic’ connoted images of legendary heroes, performing mighty deeds in exotic realms. It was strange to hear the word ‘epic’ being used to discuss people, situations, and places that seemed relatively familiar and ordinary.

Is it hyperbole to use the word ‘epic’ to describe everyday

situations? Many times, it is. But not always.

Personally, I try to be careful in my choice of words, especially when writing. Therefore, I tend to reserve the use of the term 'epic' for special stories: ones that I find deeply moving and awe-inspiring.

Nevertheless, we easily forget the epic undertones hidden within our everyday lives. As followers of Jesus, we are part of His redemption story. Because of this truth, our daily choices can have eternal impact.

The Bible gives details from the lives of various men and women, boys and girls throughout history. Many of them knew that the Lord had special plans for them and their descendants. Even so, it is interesting to wonder how often they considered this when they made decisions? Did they only consider their individual and familial interests, or did they remember their part in God's salvation plan for the whole world?

In September 2011, I began a series about the apostles. In June 2017, I started writing a series about the children of Jacob. Looking back on both of these collections of articles, I am amazed to trace the Lord's hand at work through these historical events.

The apostles knew that they were part of something very special. Yet they sometimes acted in selfish and immature ways. The children of Jacob surely knew the promises God intended for their family. Yet they often allowed daily pressures and problems to overshadow these promises in their thinking.

In spite of their shortcomings, we look back with respect and admiration, because they demonstrated faith in the Lord. Because of this devotion to their Maker, Jacob's family helped in bringing about God's promise that through Abraham "all nations would be blessed." (Genesis 12:3) By God's power, twelve ordinary men became apostles who "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6).

Let us remember that we too are children of Abraham, because we share his faith. In our daily lives, let us recognize the epic nature of the redemption story the Lord is still telling, even today.

Scripture Standard Website

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www.ScriptureStandard.eu

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Many thanks to Graeme Morrison for his work and support of this effort. More information about the history of the Scripture Standard can be found on pages 1, 13-15 of the September 2015 issue:

http://scripturestandard.eu/SS_2015_Vol_82.pdf

Did Jesus Claim He was God?

James Lim, Lavender, Singapore

Some claim that Jesus never said He was God.

One way of testing is to find out how His audience, friends and foes understood and reacted to His claim.

1. The Demons

Moreover demons came out of many people, shouting "You are the Son of God! But He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak because they knew He was the Christ.

Luke 4:41

Conclusion: Son of God = Christ

2. His Disciples

Nathaniel declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel" John 1:49

Conclusion: Son of God = King of Israel

"Yes Lord," she told Him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the

Son of God who was to come into the world" John 11:27

Conclusion: The Christ = Son of God = The One who was expected by the Jews to come into the world

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and by believing you may have life in His name.

John 20:31

Conclusion: Jesus = Christ = Son of God =
The Name which gives life

At once he began preaching that Jesus is the Son of God. Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 9:20,22

Conclusion: Jesus = Son of God = Christ, and this can be proven

3. Jews

The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God. Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God

Matthew 26:63

Conclusion: To the high priest, the term Christ = the Son of God.

The Jews insisted, "We have a law and according to that law he must die because he claimed to be the Son of God"

John 19:7

Conclusion: Claiming to be the Son of God
deserves the death penalty but why?

Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at work to this very day, and I too am working" John 5:17

For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God John 5:18

Conclusion: Calling God his own Father =
making Himself equal to God

The claim of equality with God was blasphemous.

Jesus said, "I and my father are one" ...

"We are not stoning you for any of these", replied the Jews,
"but for the blasphemy because you, a mere man claim to be
God" John 10:30-36

Conclusion: I and my Father are one =
a claim He was God = Son of God

To declare Himself as the Son of God, one with the Father was to
declare He was God in human form. Any Jew who made such a
claim without any proof (Deuteronomy 18:22) would be guilty of
blasphemy thus deserving death by stoning. (Leviticus 24:16)

Overall Conclusion

Jesus = Christ = one with the Father = Son of God
= King of Israel = GOD

How did God invite us to confirm this?

Resurrection! No human can rise from the dead with his own
power and timing. How many people can claim to resurrect from
the dead after THREE DAYS?

Jesus said : No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of
myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it
again

John 10:18

Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was
necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead
THE THIRD DAY, and that repentance and remission of sins
should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at
Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.

Luke 24:46-48

Names of God

Kim Boland, Monmouthshire

Many years ago there was a booklet of Names of God. If you search you will see that people talk about from 7 to more than 100 names. In Hebrew there are many names referring to God.

It is not our purpose to collect as many as we can, but to realise how, when we read our Bibles differing names and titles descriptive of God are shown to us:

Elohim

In Genesis 1:1 (KJV) we read “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” The Hebrew word here is Elohim, which is the plural of eloah. We see it is plural when later we read: “And God said, Let us make man in our image” (Gen 1:26) We do not need to dwell long on the use of the word “us”. We know that Jesus was there at the beginning: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1)

This may be seen as a generic word for God. When it refers to the true God it is spelled with a capital G thus God. When it refers to false gods a small g is used.

It is used when referring to the God of someone. (“I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Ex 3:6)

We see this in words that end in “el”, and refer to God. For example: Bethel “House of God” (Gen 12:8); Israel “Prevailed with God” (Gen 32:28); Ezekiel “God will Strengthen”; Daniel “Judge of God”. But we need to take care here, it is not always the case with English words. Angel, although it ends in “el”, is derived from Greek (angelos, “a bringer of tidings”) not from Hebrew (mal’âk “messenger”).

Adonai or adonay

“And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:” (Gen 18:3 [KJV])

This word is also used as a general show of reverence.
(BDB/Thayer)

Although it does not refer directly to the God of creation, and can be used for a person who is a “Lord”, it is widely used to refer to God.

(Ps 147:5 [ESV2011]) “Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.”

In this case the Hebrew is the “double” word Adon, adon.
Emphasising the majesty due to Him.

Note that the word is spelled with a capital “L” in most English translations.

This is the same word used by Sarah when she laughed at the Lord for telling her she would conceive. This word is used 290 times in the Old Testament, not always referring to God but to a master.

The word has an interesting variant which we see in Genesis 17:1 (ESV2011) “When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless...” Here God is a shortened form of ah'-yil

Jahweh

The next word we encounter is Jahweh, often “transcribed” into Jehovah. The letters in Hebrew are YHWH. When mixed with the vowels from Adonai, we get YeHoWaH. Jehovah, is thus not a translation but an invented word. It is an important word, being used 7,026 times in the Old Testament. It is used more as the personal name of God: “And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.” (Gen 15:7) The word LORD is the Hebrew JHWH.

When Moses was to see Pharaoh, he was told: “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” (Ex 3:14) The word here is from the verb to be; in Hebrew haw-yaw : some scholars suggest this is the route of the word Jahweh.

Jahweh is often used together with another word, as in Genesis 15:2: “And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?” In this, ‘Lord God’ is ‘Adonai Jahweh’. This would seem to support the idea of JHWH as the personal name of God. Note JHWH is shown by being spelled LORD in English Bibles.

In much the same way that ‘el’ is used in words to refer to God, so is ‘yah’ used to refer to JHWH: Isaiah is ‘JHWH has saved’. At the beginning of words, ‘yah’ shows the name of JHWH: Joash means ‘JHWH has come to help,’ Joshua, yehôshûa’ means ‘JHWH saved’.

We do not know how to pronounce JHWH. Ancient Hebrew did not use vowels. Only relatively recently were vowels added to Hebrew words by the use of dots and signs. In Exodus 20:7 (ESV2011), we read : “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.” Because of this the name of God was never used except by the priests. It is said that because of the noise of events when His name was used, the name was not heard correctly. Today, Jewish publications will spell the name as “G-d”, to avoid using His name in vain. It is a pity we do not have the same respect today. The word used often and insistently of Jehovah, was only “derived” or invented around the 1200 – 1300’s by the Masoretes. The Masoretes were Hebrew scribes who sought to find the vowels for Hebrew words. Although this rendering was widely used through the Middle Ages, and by Tyndale, most sources will tell us that this is not likely to be the correct pronunciation. Do not be misled : Jehovah is not the name of God!

Adonay JWH.

In Genesis 2 we find both words of God used together: the LORD JHWH, God Elohim. Thus we have the generic name “God”, with the personal name “JHWH”. The same is used in Exodus 20:2:

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.”

Better translated in a very old version: “And the Lord spak alle these wordis, Y am thi Lord God.” (Exod 20:1 [Wycliffe])

“And the Lord spoke all these words, I am the Lord God.”

Clearly the Lord, identifies himself to Israel as JHWH. If this was his personal name to Israel, do we have any right to use it?

Joy, Joy, Joy

Ashurst family, Lexington, Kentucky

How could this be? She had been in a hospital bed for over six weeks and had tubes coming from her nose and her hands and her arms. And yet deep within her soul mum was able to express a heartfelt joy to Him.

Paul and Silas had been beaten and thrown into an inner prison cell. Yet what did the other prisoners hear? Prayers and songs of praise to God! (Acts 16:25) How could this be?

The apostles had been flogged and warned not to speak in the name of Jesus. But they went away rejoicing that “they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name” and “day after day ... they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.” (Acts 5:41-42) How could this be?

Shadrach, Mechach and Adednego were threatened to be burned alive, and yet they proclaimed, “If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and He will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we

want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.” And this made the king furious, so that he made the furnace seven times hotter and had them tied and thrown in the furnace. However, when “they saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them,” Nebuchadnezzar praised the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. (Daniel 3)

Satan wants to strip us of our joy. He would rather we wallow in despair and discouragement when things don't go the way we hoped and blame God for our disappointments and problems. Job certainly didn't understand his predicament, but he still believed his Redeemer lived. (Job 19:25) Nehemiah also had his share of difficulties, but he said that the joy of the Lord is our strength. (Nehemiah 8:10)

How do we have this joy?

Jesus tells us that we must remain in his love and be obedient to Him, just as He was obedient to the Father and remains in his love. “I have told you this, so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.” (John 15:11-12)

His love in our hearts is what will bring joy. When we find ourselves in situations that may threaten our faith, may we be ever thankful and able to proclaim from deep within the joy, joy, joy, joy, joy that Jesus has given us.

And we **rejoice** in the hope of the glory of God.
Not only so, but we also **rejoice** in our sufferings,
because we know that suffering produces perseverance;
perseverance, character; and character, hope.

And hope does not disappoint us,
because God has poured out his love into our hearts
by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

Romans 5:2-5

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The Church is very appreciative of the generosity of sister churches and individual brothers and sisters to the Ghana Fund. Since 2012 the fund has disbursed £31,600 for the Lord's work in Ghana. This provision has included significant support for evangelising and teaching, and for medical aid and other specific requests. We are grateful to Bro Wisdom Kpehor for his advice and guidance in meeting these requests.

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