

“Behold the man!”

The titles and descriptions of Jesus of Nazareth

8. A regal man

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THE AIM of this article is to demonstrate that Jesus was and is a man of regal bearing. Jesus is to be seen as the greatest king besides Yahweh that there has ever been. The majesty and power that belong to the King will be seen to be right. Jesus of Nazareth will be elevated in our minds to the highest office. When we consider the titles that he is here given we must ask ourselves, Why is it fitting for Jesus to be addressed this way? The answer is that his character is so beautiful that he fully deserves the honour that is given. Why is it that Jesus is described in more glowing terms than any other king? We must look at his character for the answers.

Lord

This is an extremely common title of Jesus in the New Testament. The word ‘Lord’ is used of him several hundred times, either alone or in combination with other titles. The Greek word *kurios* is translated in several other ways, such as ‘Sir’ and ‘Master’. There are several meanings to be found from a lexicon for the word, and they are all appropriate to Jesus. The following information is from *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*:

- “1) he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding;
1a) the possessor and disposer of a thing
1a1) the owner; one who has control of the person, the master
1a2) in the state: the sovereign, prince, chief, the Roman emperor
1b) a title of honour expressive of respect and reverence, with which servants greet their master”.

There is another word translated ‘Lord’ in the New Testament, the Greek word *despotēs*, from which comes our English word ‘despot’. The word is found in Jude verse 4. Its use is obscured in the AV as it does not appear to refer to Jesus. The NIV has “deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord”. Here the word is translated as “Sovereign”, which carries with it none of the unfortunate con-

notations that the word ‘despot’ has today. The point Jude is making is that the false brethren refused to acknowledge Jesus as their Lord, and so yield their lives to him. Translated as “master” it appears also in 2 Timothy 2:21, referring to our need to be of service to our Lord.

When we speak of Jesus as our Lord, these are the thoughts that God intended us to contemplate. Our Lord owns us. He purchased us with his blood. He it is who will decide whether we are fit for his use or not. Our Lord is the Sovereign or Emperor of the coming Kingdom of God. Our Lord is deserving of respect and reverence.

The question we need to ask ourselves is, Is he Lord to us? Do we regard him as our Lord? Do we regard ourselves as his slaves? Do we honour him? Do we long for him to be exalted as King? God has made him Lord. We must honour him in our words, our actions and our hearts.

Lord of lords

This title is found in Revelation 19:16. Both of the words translated ‘Lord’ are *kurios* (see above). Whilst there may be many lords, only one is the Lord of lords. The title applies to Jesus in the Millennium when he stands in the place of God and therefore assumes His position and titles. We note that even as such he is still subject to God Who gave him the position of Lord of lords: “And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him That put all things under him, that God may be all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28). Jesus is to be so highly exalted because he has been so humble and meek and died for us: “he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him” (Phil. 2:8,9).

King of kings

This title is also found in Revelation 19:16. The Greek word translated ‘king’ both times is *basi-leus*, from which comes the English word ‘basis’,

as in a foundation.* The way that the word is used conveys to us that the king is so important to the kingdom that he is the basis or substance of it. We are being told that no king ever had as much claim to be the foundation of his kingdom as Jesus the King of kings. Jesus is the Sovereign of sovereigns. The reasons for this title are the same as those for Lord of lords.

Prince of the kings of the earth

This title is found in Revelation 1:5: “. . . and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth”. The title differs from the above in that the word ‘prince’ means ‘to be first in rank’. We are to understand that, if we graded all the kings that have ever lived according to greatness and majesty, splendour, righteousness, and many other attributes, Jesus would clearly rank first. There is nothing about the King or the Kingdom that will in any way be inferior to any other dynasty. The very opposite is true. The King of God’s coming Kingdom will outshine all others, who will be made to submit to him and worship before him. The foundation of the King is his character, which so totally eclipses all others that it is appropriate for God to elevate him in this way.

King of saints

This title is found in Revelation 15:3: “And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvel-

lous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints”. The original Greek is in dispute amongst translators of Scripture. Some would have the word *hagios*, or holy ones (and hence saints), and some would have the word *ethnos* (and hence people from the nations). It does not seem to me to change the situation markedly either way, for we are told, “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands” (7:9). Clearly the saints are drawn from the peoples of the earth, and Jesus Christ is their King.

This title has personal relevance to us. Our Lord is not merely to be seen as the King of everything and everybody else. He is our King. Does he occupy that place in our hearts and in our lives? Is sin enthroned as a king in the place where Jesus Christ ought to be? We will never be among those who live and reign with him in immortality if we let sin reign in our mortal bodies (Rom. 6:12). Let us strive to be his faithful servants now, that he may by grace have us work with him in his Kingdom.

[\(To be continued\)](#)

* According to *Collin's English Dictionary*, the word ‘basis’ comes from the Greek *bainein*, meaning ‘to step’, the connection being that you step with the foot, which is the base on which the body stands.—T.B.