

Jesus of Nazareth: God's Anointed Messiah

By Abu Alex

John the Baptist looked toward the coming Messiah as one far superior to himself. All the people of that time were in expectation of the coming Saviour and “questioned in their hearts concerning John, whether perhaps he were the Messiah” (Luke 3:15).

John replied to them all: “I baptize you with water; but he who is mightier than I is coming, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Luke 3:16).

These statements were all consistent with those of the former prophets who had predicted the glory of the coming Messiah whom John openly identified as Jesus. John too spoke of the pre-existence of the Messiah as Micah and others had done before him and, being the only prophet to rise at the same time as Jesus, rejoiced at the honor of being appointed to reveal him to the nation (John 1:31). John was indeed sent from God, but only as a prophet to bear witness to the true light who was coming into the world just as the former prophets had done. “He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light” (John 1:8).

Some months later a Samaritan woman came to the well of Jacob at Sychar and saw Jesus sitting next to it. A brief discussion followed and, when she saw that he could see right through her and could read the background of her life, she said, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet” (John 4:19). Yet, as he continued to discuss with her and now began to speak of a new age that was about to be brought in where opportunities would arise for all men in all nations to have a living knowledge of the truth of God in their hearts and thus worship him fully in spirit and in truth, she sensed that he was far more than a prophet. So she said to him: “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things” (John 4:25). To this Jesus openly declared: “I who speak to you am he” (John 4:26).

Her question was an indirect way of prompting Jesus to disclose himself—was he just another prophet or was he possibly God's Supremely Anointed One, the heavenly ruler of ancient days who would bring the full and final revelation of God to man? Jesus gave her an emphatic answer—“I am he.”

On another occasion, when the Jews said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly” (John 10:24), Jesus again answered quite openly “I told you, and you do not believe” (John 10:25). He had no doubt whatsoever that he was the Messiah, the man of glory foretold in the prophecies of the prophets who came before him. Indeed when the high priest of Israel himself directly asked him “Are you the Messiah?” (Mark 15:61), he answered equally directly, “I am” (Mark 15:62). He could not have declared his messiahship more clearly.