The Wednesday Word, June 20, 2012: "Call His Name Jesus."

*"---thou shalt call His name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins. Matthew 1:*21

This remarkable verse is both a promise and a prophesy. It is a prophesy because it was inseparably linked with His future work of saving His people. It is also a promise for all of us who are so ruined that we know we cannot save ourselves. Listen again as the angel says, "He shall save." What a thrilling promise! He's not going to try to save or make his best effort to save … no, He SHALL save. Listen to me, since He saves, it makes abundant sense to abandon all our silly efforts to save ourselves!

Right here, in this verse we also see great instruction on Christ's deity. Notice how His parents were to "Call his name Jesus." This name is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name Joshua which means "Yahweh, our Saviour."

Of course, the name Jesus was a common name in those days. Obviously people who bore that name were not the LORD incarnate. Obviously, for example, General Joshua of Old Testament fame was not God manifest in the flesh. But when we read of the naming of Jesus we are confronted immediately by the truth that Jesus is Yahweh.

So what's the difference? Why is Jesus God, but Joshua a mere man? Good question!

To answer it, let's look at the text and ask why it is that Jesus is Yahweh the Saviour. The reason is, "He shall save his people from their sins!" Now let me remind you, salvation is the work of Yahweh alone (Isaiah 45:22). And, since Jesus accomplished salvation, we must conclude that, by doing so, He declared His true identity and demonstrated that He is Yahweh the Saviour!

Let's put it this way, since it is the unique function of Yahweh to save His people, and since the Lord Jesus has this same characteristic function, we must conclude that Christ and Yahweh are one and the same! Jesus is God! If, however, Jesus does not save His people, He is not Yahweh.

So what about those other children who were called Jesus or Joshua in those days? Were they also Jehovah in human flesh? No! They were called 'Jesus' by their parents. The difference between them and the Master was that Jesus was named by the Father. It was by God's direct instructions that Christ was to be named Jesus.

Often in Scripture, when God names someone He identifies them as who they really are. Consider this, God has called (named) all believers sons of God (1 John 3:1). The reason we are called this is that we are actually and really Sons of God.

Again, we see that God changed the name of Jacob, whose name meant 'supplanter', to Israel, which means 'one who rules with God'. This is who he actually had become, and God, therefore, called him accordingly.

When God named a person, His naming of them decreed what they were and what they would

do. Thus, the Master was named Jesus. In effect, the angel said, "Call him Yahweh Saves, for He is the one who shall save His people from their sins."

In conclusion, this child would be not merely "Yahweh a Saviour" for He is much more; He is "Yahweh our Saviour", the one through whom our sins and iniquities have been taken away. So remember, every time we call on this wonderful name of Jesus, we are affirming our belief that He is the mighty God!

If we don't believe that He is God, we should not call Him Jesus.

And that's the Gospel Truth!