

What Saith the Scripture?

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Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour

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Christianity is more than a discussion of pictures and symbols, though Christ Himself furnished us with one of the most powerful statements of His identity, using imagery. "Jesus saith unto him, I am The Way, The Truth, and The Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). What is the origin of the Christian fish symbol? We are told that the Early Christians used the sign of the fish for identification, especially in times of Roman persecution, where a cautious Christian might scribe on the ground the top arc of the fish, awaiting the respondent to draw the countersign of the bottom arc, sketching the fish symbol, thus completing the password. "Safety is of the LORD" (Proverbs 21:31). Why the identification with the fish? Perhaps because the Apostles were told that the LORD Jesus Christ promised to make them "fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). Since the Early Christians were identified as followers of "that Way" (Acts 19:9, 23; 24:22), it could be construed that they would also be fishers of men. "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1Corinthians 9:22).

What is the meaning of the Christian fish symbol? The Greek word for fish is *ichthus*, pronounced ikh-thoos' and spelled with the Greek letters "Iota-Chi-Theta-Upsilon-Sigma", which *providentially* formed the acrostic

"Jesus Christ, of God, the Son, the Saviour"

(**I**esous [Jesus], **C**Hristos [Christ], **T**Heou [of God], **U**iou [the Son], **S**oter [the Saviour]).

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"

(Isaiah 9:6).

Jesus explained His purpose for coming into the world in connection with a fish story. "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man [Jesus Christ] be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth" (Matthew 12:40). This was in reference to His Suffering and Death on the Cross, His Burial for three days in a borrowed grave, and His Triumphant Resurrection from the Dead, just as He predicted. "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day" (Luke 9:22). "God is love" (1John 4:16), and the history of His dealings with man, is a story of faithfulness and love. "Great is Thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:23). "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an Everlasting Love: therefore with Lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jeremiah 31:3).

Jesus. The first Greek letter of *ichthus* -- **i**-ch-th-u-s-- is Iota (pronounced, ee-oh'-tah), which is the same as the first letter of *Iesous* (pronounced, ee-ay-sooce'), which is Jesus in New Testament Greek. "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His Name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). *Jesus* is the Greek

form of the Hebrew name *Joshua*, which means *Jehovah is Salvation*. The name *Jesus* speaks of His humanity because it identifies Him in the same fashion your first name distinguishes you. "And the Child grew, and waxed strong in Spirit, filled with Wisdom: and the Grace of God was upon Him" (Luke 2:40). It must have amazed the angels in Heaven as much as it confounded the Devil, that the Divine Son of God actually "was made Flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). [Read "[The Amazing Humanity of Jesus Christ](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Jehovah/Amazing.Humanity.of.Jesus.html)" -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Jehovah/Amazing.Humanity.of.Jesus.html> --, to study the benefits to mankind which resulted from this One Birth.] What was the reason for God to become human flesh? To demonstrate that Perfect Obedience to the Moral Law of supreme love to God and an equal love of our neighbour is possible, as well as "to seek and to save" (Luke 19:10) a world of rebel lawbreakers, Jesus came into the world. "15 For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin... 8 Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 4:15; 5:8). "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that ye should follow His steps" (1Peter 2:21). But, since "all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God" (Romans 3:23), an Atonement was necessary; and, the Father was creating the circumstance that would allow Him the liberty to forgive lawbreakers who repent, without repealing or making a mockery of obedience to His Eternal Law of Love. "And without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into Glory" (1Timothy 3:16).

Christ. The second Greek letter of the fish acrostic -- *i-ch-th-u-s* -- is Chi (pronounced, key). It is the same as the first letter of *Christos* (pronounced, khris-tos'), which is translated as Christ in our New Testament. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat loveth Him also that is begotten of Him" (1John 5:1). The Divine Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures was the *Mashiyach* (pronounced, maw-shee'-akh) predicted to appear in "troublous times" (Daniel 9:25), only to be "cut off, but not for Himself" (9:26), which is understood by Christians to signify the selfless Atonement of Jesus Christ on the Cross in the beginning of the Christian Era. The Greek form of Messiah (Hebrew, *Mashiyach*) is translated as *Messias* in the New Testament. "He [Andrew] first findeth his own brother Simon [Peter], and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (John 1:41). The name *Messias* (or, literally the Anointed One) for the New Testament Saints, connected the ministry of Jesus Christ to that of the the Promised Holy Spirit of the New Covenant, i.e., "31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an Husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

To the perplexity of the Jews, Jesus the Anointed One (Hebrew, *Mashiyach*) was the appointed means to bring in the New Covenant. "26 A New Heart also will I give you, and a New Spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My Statutes, and ye shall keep My Judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:26-27). How was this connection between the Anointed One and the Holy Spirit made? Christians are given the abiding presence of God Himself in the form of the "Spirit of Christ" (Romans 8:9; 1Peter 1:11) when they are "born again" (John 3:3, 7) into the family of God. That Spirit of Christ *is* the Anointing or Unction that empowers and teaches the True Saints, to perform the Perfect Obedience that has long been prophesied. "And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him" (Acts 5:32). And, which obedience is a sign of our Salvation. "And being made perfect, He [Jesus Christ] became the Author of Eternal Salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9). Presently, the New Testament ministry of Jesus Christ to the Christian is chiefly through the Indwelling Anointing of the Holy Spirit-- instructing the Saints concerning the meaning of the Scriptures for daily living, evangelization, and understanding of the prophesies of "things to come" (John 16:13). "But the Anointing [Greek, *chrisma*] which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same Anointing teacheth you of all things, and is Truth, and is no lie, and even as It hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (1John 2:27).

Son of God. In the fish acrostic -- i-ch-**th**-u-s -- the third and fourth Greek letters are Theta (pronounced, thay-tah) and Upsilon (pronounced, oop-sih-lawn), which correspond to the first letters of the Greek words, *Theou* (pronounced, theh-ou') and *Uiou* (pronounced, hwee-ou'), respectively. In combination, they are properly translated from the New Testament Greek into the name *Son of God*. "3 Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our LORD, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4 and declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:3-4). To some, the Humanity of Jesus Christ is not a problem, because He seems to have historically existed; but, His Divinity has to be questioned, because after all, how can someone be both man and God? To them it is answered, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead demonstrates His Divinity. "18 Then answered the Jews and said unto Him, What sign shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things? 19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy This Temple, and in three days I will raise it up. 20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? 21 But He spake of the temple of His Body" (2:18-21). In the 5th Century, a True Saint, [Patrick of Ireland](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Stories/St.Patrick.Confession.html) -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Stories/St.Patrick.Confession.html> -- confessed of the Divinity of the Son of God:

"Jesus Christ, who manifestly always existed with the Father, before the beginning of time in the spirit with the Father, indescribably begotten before all things, and all things visible and invisible were made by him. He was made man, conquered death and was received into Heaven, to the Father who gave him all Power over every name in Heaven and on Earth and in Hell, so

that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and God, in Whom we believe."

Jesus Christ was and is not simply *a son of God*, as any Christian is called, i.e., "as many as received Him, to them gave He Power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name" (John 1:12); but, He is *the Son of God*, as only God calls Himself. "8:58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am... 10:36 Say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? 37 If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. 38 But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him" (John 8:58; 10:36-38). Truly appreciating the Divinity of Jesus Christ as the Son of God is to grasp the "mystery of Godliness" (1Timothy 3:16). And, translating that mystery into Eternal Substance for the benefit of dead and dying man, is eminently worthy of the Life, Death, and Resurrection of the Son of God. "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name" (John 20:31).

Saviour. The last Greek letter of the fish acrostic -- i-ch-th-u-s -- is Sigma (pronounced, sig-mah), corresponding to the first letter of the Greek word *Soter* (pronounced, so-tare'), which translates to the word *Saviour*. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the LORD" (Luke 2:11). Our necessity for a Saviour is manifest in that we are humans, stuck in the mire of sin and desperately needing assistance to free ourselves and to keep ourselves from further entanglement, i.e., "He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Salvation from the Penalty of Sin, i.e., "6:23 the wages of sin is death... 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil; 15 and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Romans 6:23; Hebrews 2:14-15), and Salvation from the Necessity of Sinning, i.e., "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His Seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1John 3:9), is the purpose and benefit of Jesus Christ in His role as the "Saviour of the World" (John 4:42)-- but, as always, "we trust in the Living God, Who is the Saviour of all men, specially [and *only*] of those that believe" (1Timothy 4:10). "31 Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. 32 And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him" (Acts 5:31-32).

That Jesus Christ is our Saviour, can be seen, if we give up our self-righteous attempts at persuading ourselves that we are acceptable in His sight. "4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus 3:4-6). Jesus Christ as Saviour brings to us Life and Immortality, much better than a life preserver brings blessed physical relief to a sailor in the water. "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel"

(2Timothy 1:10). The privilege of every True Saint is to spend our life learning of our Saviour in every Name, capacity and relationship that He sustains to us. "But grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (2Peter 3:18). A trait of the Saints will be their eager expectation to soon see their Saviour return for them. "For our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the LORD Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20). And, we will never tire of praising the LORD Jesus Christ, the Son of God, for being our Saviour. "To the only wise God our Saviour, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 25).

Imagine that! All of this is attached to a simple Christian fish symbol scrawled onto the ground!

Maranatha!