

**February 3, 2019**

**Lord Jesus Christ**

**Philippians 2:9-11**

2:9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

2:10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

2:11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

## **1. Jesus**

The Apostles' Creed can be divided into three parts: the confession to the Father God, to Jesus Christ and to the Holy Spirit. The part following "I believe in God, the Father almighty" is the confession to the Father God, and the following "I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord" is to Jesus Christ, then, the part following "I believe in the Holy Spirit" is the confession to the Holy Spirit.

In the Apostles' Creed, Jesus is described in three words: "Christ," "God's only Son," and our "Lord" as God is described in three words: "Father," "Almighty." and "Creator." I will talk about "God's only Son" later. Today, I would like to learn about the three words: "Jesus," "Christ," and "Lord."

Regarding "Jesus," everyone knows that he was born in Bethlehem, raised in Galilee, talked about the teachings of love to people, and made numerous miracles. Even those who have never read the Bible heard some of his words. In the 19th century, the idea occurred that the Bible had no historical backing like other religious

literature. Many people did not accept Jesus' real existence. Lewis Wallace was one of them. So he went to Israel trying to prove that the Bible is unreliable and nonsense. However, the more he looked it out, the more the Bible was proved successively. Israel is also called "Bible Land." It is the stage of the Bible, and Jesus left footprints there. Lewis Wallace finally accepted the truth of God and experienced conversion. And he wrote a story in 1880 to testify for Jesus Christ. That was the exciting story "Ben-Hur."

Even if you suspect Jesus' real existence, you can find out that Jesus is the person as written in the Bible by just investigating a little. Historical documents other than the Bible also testify about Jesus, and any discovery of archaeology is exactly in line with Biblical accounts. Did Jesus really exist? Was he the person whom the Bible wrote? That is worth checking out. Because the name "Jesus" has the meaning of "God saves us." Jesus is the Savior of all people. Jesus is not unrelated to us. Everybody anywhere in the world, this Jesus is the indispensable person for them. Do you know this Jesus? Do you want to know from the heart?

## **2. Christ**

Next, Jesus is called "Christ." "Christ" is a word equivalent to the Hebrew "Messiah." "Messiah" is translated as "Savior." God has promised the Savior for mankind who has sinned. The promise was from the beginning when men has sinned, but the specific prophecies about the Savior began with Abraham, a man of two thousand years before Christ. As the name "Abraham" has the meaning of "father of people," God has promised that the descendants of Abraham would

become God's people and that the Savior will be born from the descendants of Abraham. However, after three generations from Abraham, the descendants of Abraham moved to Egypt because of famine, where they became slaves. And many years passed. But God did not forget his promise with Abraham, and delivered the people from Egypt by Moses and made them his people. This is called "Exodus."

The people of God soon began to have a king, and David became the second king of Israel. David was a man a thousand years from Abraham, that is, the one thousand BC. The name "David" has the meaning of "loved one." He was loved by God like his name, and was promised that the Savior would come out from the descendants of David. Israel was the most prosperous when Solomon, son of David, was the king. But, after the death of Solomon, the kingdom split in the north and south. The north kingdom was destroyed by Assyria, and the south kingdom by Babylon. The people were moved to the land of Babylon. This is called "Exile." However, God has given back those who were captured by Babylonia to their own land. It was impossible in the ancient times that the people who became slaves were released and the people of captivity returned to their land. "Exodus" and returning from the "Exile" were all works of God's salvation at all. And that was a precursor to the salvation from the sin given by the Savior and an event that became a model.

However, even after returning from Babylon, the country of Israel remained lost. In the days of Jesus, the people of Judea were under the rule of the Roman Empire, and were suffering from heavy taxes and forced labor. The descendants of David are no longer royalty, have no

power and become unnamed. However, as God promised to David, he chose Joseph, the descendant of David, and the Savior was born from Mary who was betrothed to Joseph. It was about a thousand years from Abraham to David, and also from David to Jesus was about a thousand years. For a long period of two thousand years, God has not forgotten the promises, and finally gave the Savior. Matthew 1:1 reads “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” It shows that Jesus is the promised Savior.

### **3. Lord**

Jesus is also called the Lord. “Lord” was an ancient title for rulers. Even now in the UK etc, there is a title “Lord.” The father of Winston Churchill, Randolph Churchill was called “Lord Churchill.” Even now, we use “Landlord” for the owner of property we rent. In Japanese, a wife calls a husband “*Shujin*,” literally “Lord.” But in the Bible, the words, “Jesus is the Lord,” is not just a title. It means that Jesus is the “Lord of the lords,” and the highest sovereign. We call him “Lord” as we obey him as a sovereign, and worship him as God as today’s reading says, “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” The early believers were forced to worship the Roman emperor as a god, but they refused to emperor worship at the risk of life. As we sing in “Hymn of glory,” Jesus Christ is the one who is “holy,” one who is the “Lord,” and the one who is the “most high.”

And when Jesus is called the Lord, there is another meaning. It means that he is a person who loves us, approaches humans, and is

with us. Because “*Yahweh*”, a name of God in the Old Testament, is a very precious name, the Jewish people read it as “*Adonai*” (My Lord) without reading it as it is. So in the New Testament, the place where “*Yahweh*” in the Old Testament was translated as “Lord.” The name “*Yahweh*” is used in the place where describes close relationship between God and man. For example, in Genesis chapter 1, “*Elohim*” meaning “powerful person” is used for God’s name. We can read Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning *Elohim* created heavens and earth.” However, the chapter 2 and followings, the name of “*Yahweh*” is used. Genesis 2:7 reads, “the LORD (*Yahweh*) God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man.” He gave his life to a man, and put him in the garden of Eden, and keep him in the fellowship with God. Even after man sinned, the LORD (*Yahweh*) God called out to him, urging him to repent, saying, “Where are you?”

God ordered Moses to lead Israel from Egypt, but Moses first declined God’s calling, “I can not do such things very much.” At that time, God persuaded Moses, “You don’t do it by yourself, I will be with you to save the people.” And God revealed his name and its meaning. He said, “My name is ‘I AM,’ and I am that I am.” We humans do not exist by our own power. We are made by God and made alive. We can say that we do not exist by ourselves, but we exist by God. God is the only One who exists by himself. But when God told Moses, “I am that I am,” it meant that God would be with Moses. God is with him, and for him. God who exists by himself is with and for us, who cannot exist by ourselves. “I AM” also has the meaning of “presence” as long as “existence.” Our salvation is really in the

presence of God. Therefore, the name of “Lord” means the “God who is with us and saves us.”

Isaiah prophesied like this. “For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.’”(Isaiah 57:15) This word was fulfilled by Jesus who became a man and lived in the middle of people. Though he was the Holy One, he was with the people who know their sins and weaknesses, their smallness and their poverty. Matthew 1:23 says about Jesus “they shall call his name *Emmanuel* (which means, God with us). Jesus is the Lord, *Yahweh*, *Emmanuel* who is with us.

In Philippians 2:9-11, three names of “Jesus”, “Christ” and “Lord” come out at the same time. “Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” The place where “Jesus Christ is Lord” in the verse is translated as a form of sentences, but in the original sentence is not. There only three words “Lord”, “Jesus”, “Christ” are lined up. But where these three are one, there is a confession of faith; the confession of faith that Jesus is Christ and Lord. Being a Christian is not just about admitting and respecting Jesus as a historical figure. The Christian faith is where we believe that this “Jesus” is the “Christ,” the Savior of the world, and the “Lord” we should obey and God who is with us.

Lewis Wallace has assigned a subtitle “A Tale of the Christ” to

“Ben-Hur.” He doubted even Jesus’ historical reality, but when he found out that Jesus was the one that the Bible wrote, he could understand that Jesus was the Christ and the Lord. In the story he wrote, Ben-Hur’s heart was burning with revenge, but the heart of hatred was melted while he looked up to the cross of Jesus. In addition, his mother and sister who were affected by leprosy were healed by the resurrection of Jesus. These are the testimony of the experience of the author himself. He was forgiven by the cross of Jesus Christ, and received the new life by the resurrection. I think that he called this story “a tale of the Christ” because he wanted to say that the real main character of the story was Christ. Everyone who wishes to know Jesus, and seriously seek him, and face the cross and resurrection, will find that Jesus is the Christ and the Lord. And so believing and being saved, life is changed. Jesus Christ becomes the main character of the believers’ life and they will be able to know the purpose and meaning of life. And the life will be filled with joy. We can live life vigorously.

### **(Prayer)**

Father God, thank you for giving us the name of the salvation “Lord Jesus Christ.” Sometimes we end up just by chanting “Lord Jesus Christ,” but help us not do so, but confess the Lord Jesus Christ with faith, obedience, and the heart of worship. We pray this in the name of Lord Jesus.