

The Exalted Jesus Part 2

Way disciples came to see Jesus
during his life with them

Way disciples came to think of Jesus
after his Resurrection

1. Gospel accounts of the Resurrection

2. 'the gospel concerning his Son, who was
descended from David according to the flesh
Rom. 1:4 and was declared to be Son of God
with power according to the spirit of holiness
by resurrection from the dead, Jesus **Christ**
our **Lord** (Romans 1:3-4)

Judge

- ‘Just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; and he has given him authority to **execute judgment**, because he is the Son of Man’(John 5:26-27).
- ‘We must all appear before the **judgment seat** of Christ’(2Cor 5:10).
- ‘I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to **judge** the living and the dead’(2Timothy 4:1).

‘God has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead’(Acts 17:31).

To speak of Jesus as ‘judge’ is to recognise that what matters in our lives is that we respond to God’s inspiration, as Jesus did, by living lives of love. As Jesus himself said: ‘I have one commandment: love one another as I have loved you’(John 15:12). This is also clear from Jesus’ parable: What ultimately matters is that ‘I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink’(Matthew 25:35).

Son of God

Earlier we noted that ‘**Son of God**’ was a title for the king of Judah. God declares:

‘I will be a father to him and he a son to me’ (2Samuel 7:14).

‘You are my son. Today have I begotten you’ (Psalm 2:7).

This text is applied to Jesus in Acts 13:33 and Hebrews 1:5; 5:5.

Son of God

‘He shall cry to me, “You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation!” I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth’ (Psalm 89:26-27).

New Testament authors use the imagery of Psalm 89 to speak of the risen Jesus as being the ‘firstborn’ into the risen life (Colossians 1:15, 18; Revelation 1:5).

Many texts speak of Jesus as ‘God’s Son’.

Mark features this title in his opening verse; John in his concluding one:

‘The beginning of the Good News about Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God’ (Mark 1:1).

‘These signs are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through him’ (John 20:31).

In another significant text we see how people misinterpreted Jesus' claim to be God's Son, and how Jesus responded to his critics: 'They were seeking all the more to kill Jesus, because he was calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God. Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing' (John 5:18-20). In claiming to be God's Son, Jesus is acknowledging that everything he is and has comes from God.

Jesus was confident in God's special love for him, and it is his intimate knowledge of God as Son that he wants to share with others. In one of his parables he refers to the prophets whom God had sent to Israel. He adds: 'Last of all the owner of the vineyard sent his beloved son' (Mark 12:6).

On another occasion he declared: 'No one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him' (Matthew 11:27).

Jesus is God's Son.

He receives his life from God:

‘I draw life from the Father’(John 6:57).

He receives instruction from God:

‘The Son can do only what he sees the Father doing’(John 5:19).

‘I come from him. It was he who sent me’(John 7:29).

Jesus' one desire is to do his Father's will:

‘I always do what pleases my Father’(John 8:29).

Jesus is the living image of God:

‘To have seen me is to have seen the Father’(John 14:9)

‘The Father knows me and I know the Father’(John 10:15)

‘The Father and I are one’(John 10:30)

‘The Father is in me and I am in the Father’(John 10:38)

Jesus hands on to others the life he has received from God:

‘The Father who is the source of life has made the Son the source of life’(John 5:26).

To welcome Jesus' life is to be adopted as 'sons':

'God sent his Son to enable us to be adopted as sons'(Galatians 4:4).

'God the Father of our Lord Jesus, the Christ ... chose us to live through love in his presence, determining that we should become his adopted sons through Jesus Christ'(Ephesians 1:3-5).

The uniqueness of Jesus is highlighted by speaking of him as God's 'only Son':

'The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth'(John 1:14);

'No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known'(John 1:18)

'God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life'(John 3:16)

The uniqueness of Jesus is highlighted by speaking of him as God's 'only Son':

'God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him'(1John 4:9).

To say that Jesus is the only Son is to recognise his unique communion with God. We share in this communion by sharing Jesus' life and Jesus' Spirit.

‘Jesus Christ our Lord was declared to be

Son of God with power

by resurrection from the dead’(Romans 1:4).

‘Then comes the end, when Christ hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is plain that this does not include the one who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all’ (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

In the Creed we declare:

‘I believe in God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit born of the virgin Mary’.

Each human being is unique. In Jesus’ case, his disciples focused on the uniqueness of his relationship with God. They believed that it was this relationship that Jesus wanted everyone to have. His disciples knew that if they were to share in Jesus’ intimacy with God it would only be if they welcomed his offer to be attached to him.

John speaks of Jesus as God's vine, drawing life from God and bearing the fruit that is God's love.

He does not have Jesus showing us how we, too, can become a vine. Rather he speaks of us as branches. If we are to enjoy the divine intimacy we see in Jesus we must be like branches that cling to, and draw life from, the vine.

Everything Jesus is and has comes from his Father. His conception, his human life, is itself a gift of God's Holy Spirit. He was conceived in the womb of Mary, his mother, because of the special intimacy of Mary with God. As a virgin she gave her first love to God, and so, as Luke says:

‘the child will be holy, and will be called Son of God’(Luke 1:35).

Jesus as Priest

In the Newer Testament only the Letter to the Hebrews speaks of Jesus as a priest. The reason for this are not difficult to find: Jesus did not belong to the tribe of Levi and was not eligible to be a priest in the Jewish cult. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews, however, recognised that in his person and in his ministry, culminating in his self-giving on the cross, Jesus brought to perfection the priestly ministry.

Jesus as Priest

Priesthood focuses on the Holy. It is, as the following diagram illustrates, about the presence of God (in the 'sanctuary') and drawing people into communion with God. While Jesus was not a Levitical priest, he brought to fulfilment their ministry, not by offering animal sacrifices in the sanctuary, but by the offering of himself, to God and to the world, throughout his ministry, culminating in his self-giving in love from the cross. It is as priest, in his self-offering in love, that he lived the ministry of king and prophet.

Priesthood of Christ is  The picture can't be displayed.

not Levitical, but

‘according to the
order of Melchizedek’

(Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6).

The priestly ministry of the Levitical priest

‘The priests officiate in the sanctuary and approach Yahweh to serve him’(Ezekiel 45:4).

‘The Lord set aside the tribe of Levi ... to stand in the presence of Yahweh, to do him service, and in his name to pronounce blessing’(Deuteronomy 10:8).

‘Moses consecrated Aaron ... to bless his people in the name of the Lord ... to offer sacrifice to the Lord ... to make atonement for the people. He entrusted him with his commandments, committed to him the statutes of the law, to teach Jacob his decrees and enlighten Israel on his law’(Sirach 45:18-21).

Jesus perfects the mediation of the Levitical priests
They carried out their mission in the sanctuary. Jesus is
God's chosen temple, the sanctuary in which God
dwells and where God's Word is incarnate.

They mediated between God and the people when
they spoke God's word from the sanctuary and when
they declared God's will as inscribed in the Torah.
Jesus speaks only what he receives from the Father
(John 8:28), and he reveals God's will, thereby showing
who God is and how we are to respond to God and so
enjoy the divine communion in which holiness
consists.

The Levitical priests mediated between the people and God when they received gifts from the people and offered them to God as sacrifices. Jesus gives God's Spirit without measure (John 3:34), welcomes everyone and offers to God all who are in communion with him. Through this communion in self-offering, he sanctifies and saves all who come to the Father through him.

'He is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them'(Hebrews 7:25).

The priestly ministry of the High Priest

The high priest carried out his special function on the feast of Yom Kippur (the 'day of the cover'). He took the sins of the people into the inner sanctuary of the temple to the 'cover'(the 'mercy-seat'), God's throne. This is the meaning of to 'expiate' or 'atone': bringing sin into contact with divine mercy annihilates sin, for nothing impure can survive in God's presence.

Hebrews 2:17-18

‘Jesus had in all things to become like his brothers and sisters so that he might become a merciful and trustworthy high priest for the things of God,
in order to expiate the sins of the people.
For in what he has suffered himself, being tested,
he is able to offer help to those who are being tested.’

Jesus perfects the mediation of the high priest

‘He is the expiation-sacrifice that takes our sins away, and not only ours but the whole world’s’(1 John 2:2; also 4:10).

‘All are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation-sacrifice by his blood, to be received by faith’(Romans 3:24-25)

The priestly ministry of the King

Psalm 110 recognises the priestly role of the king by speaking of him as ‘a priest according to the order of Melchizedek’(Psalm 110:4), the priest-king of Jerusalem (Genesis 14:18). His priestly role transcended that of the Levitical priests, for his sanctuary was not just the temple, but the ‘Holy Land’. He was a sacrament of God and was to bring about God’s reign, firstly in Israel, but then throughout the world. He was to do this by governing the people according to God’s Law and in such a way that they would be faithful to the Covenant and ‘be holy as the Lord God is holy’ (Lev. 19:2).

Jesus perfects the mediation of the priest-king

The king was God's especially anointed one, mediating God's word to the people by governing according to God's law and binding the people together as God's covenant people.

Jesus made the reign of God effective among those who became his disciples: 'a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek' (Hebrews 5:6).

He is the 'the one mediator between God and humankind' (1 Timothy 2:5).

‘We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek’(Hebrews 6:19-20).

‘He lives to make intercession for us’(Hebrews 7:25).

‘We have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. Let us, therefore, hold fast to our confession and approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need’(Hebrews 4:16, 18).

‘Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ’(1Peter 2:4-5).

Each of these 'titles'

Christ, Lord,

Judge, Son of God, Priest

picks up an aspect of the relationship which Jesus' disciples had with Jesus after his death, different aspects of the way Jesus was experienced as being with them, forming them into a community and commissioning them to continue his mission in and to the world.

When the disciples reflected back on the Jesus they knew in the light of his resurrection they came to see him as

God's Wisdom

God's Word

Lord (the presence of YHWH)

Saviour

Christology in the early church (to Chalcedon 451)



My God and my All

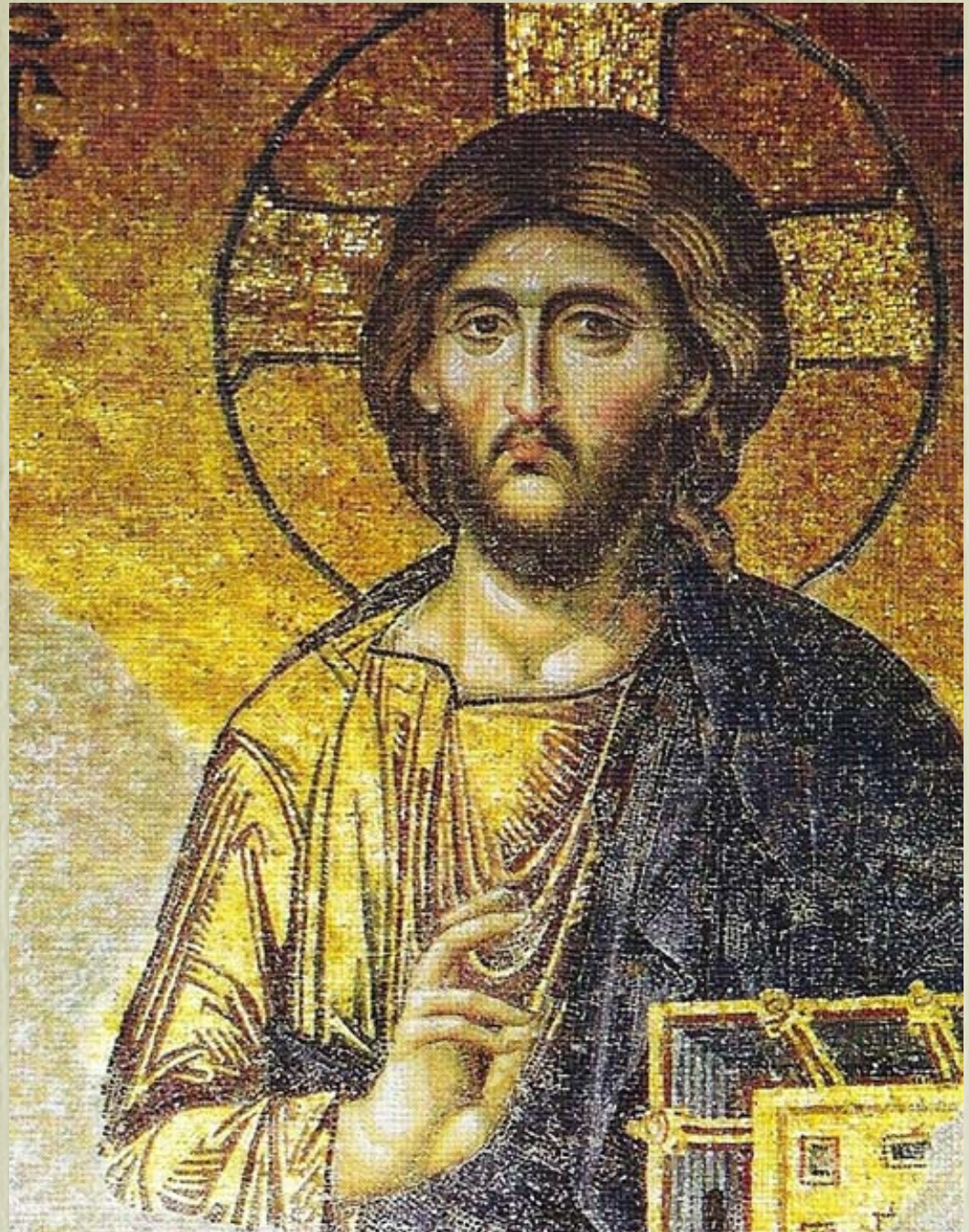
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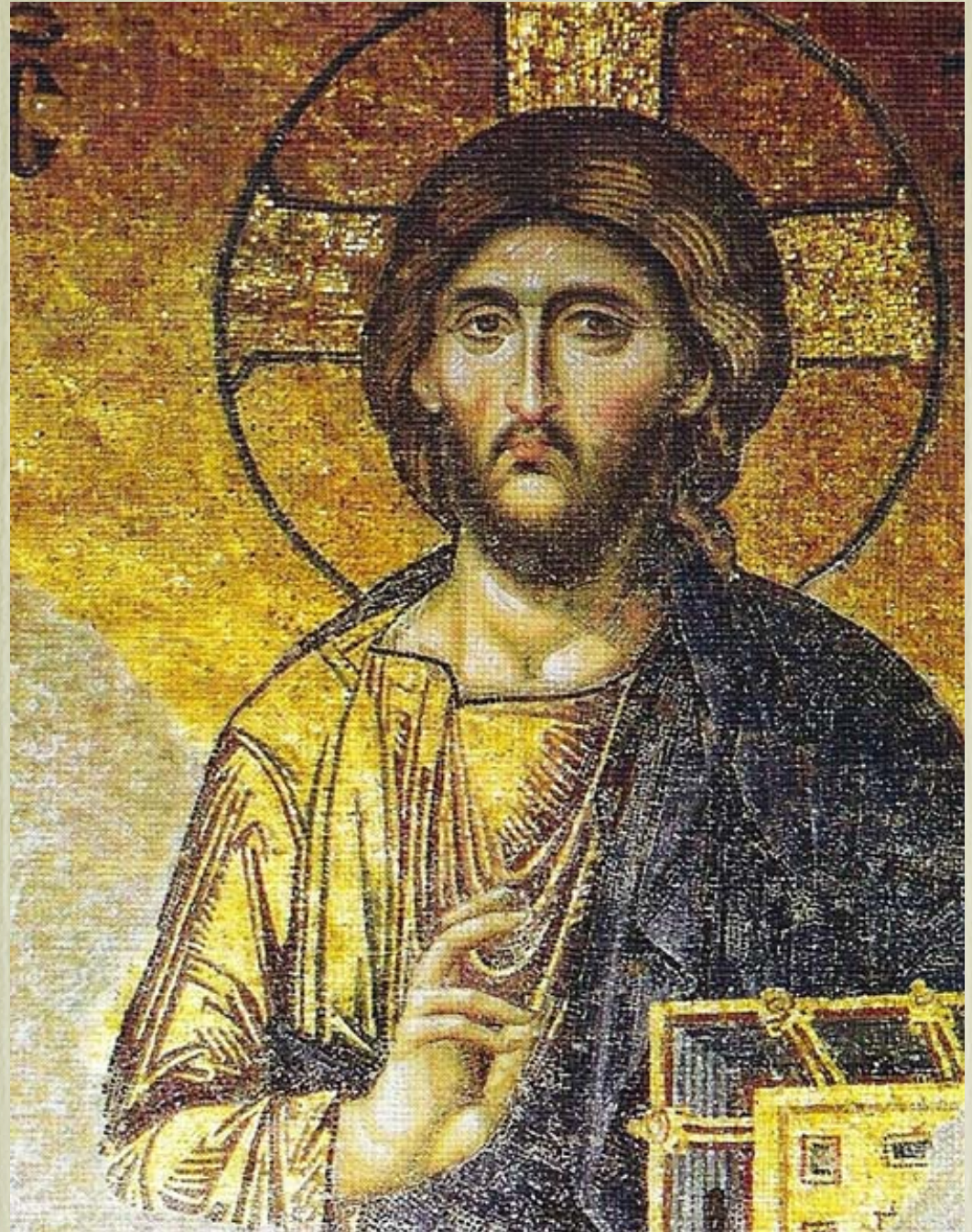


O Dios mio
mi Dios,
mi todo,
Jesu, Jesu.

(3)

My God, my all,
My God, my all;
Jesus, Jesus.

(2)



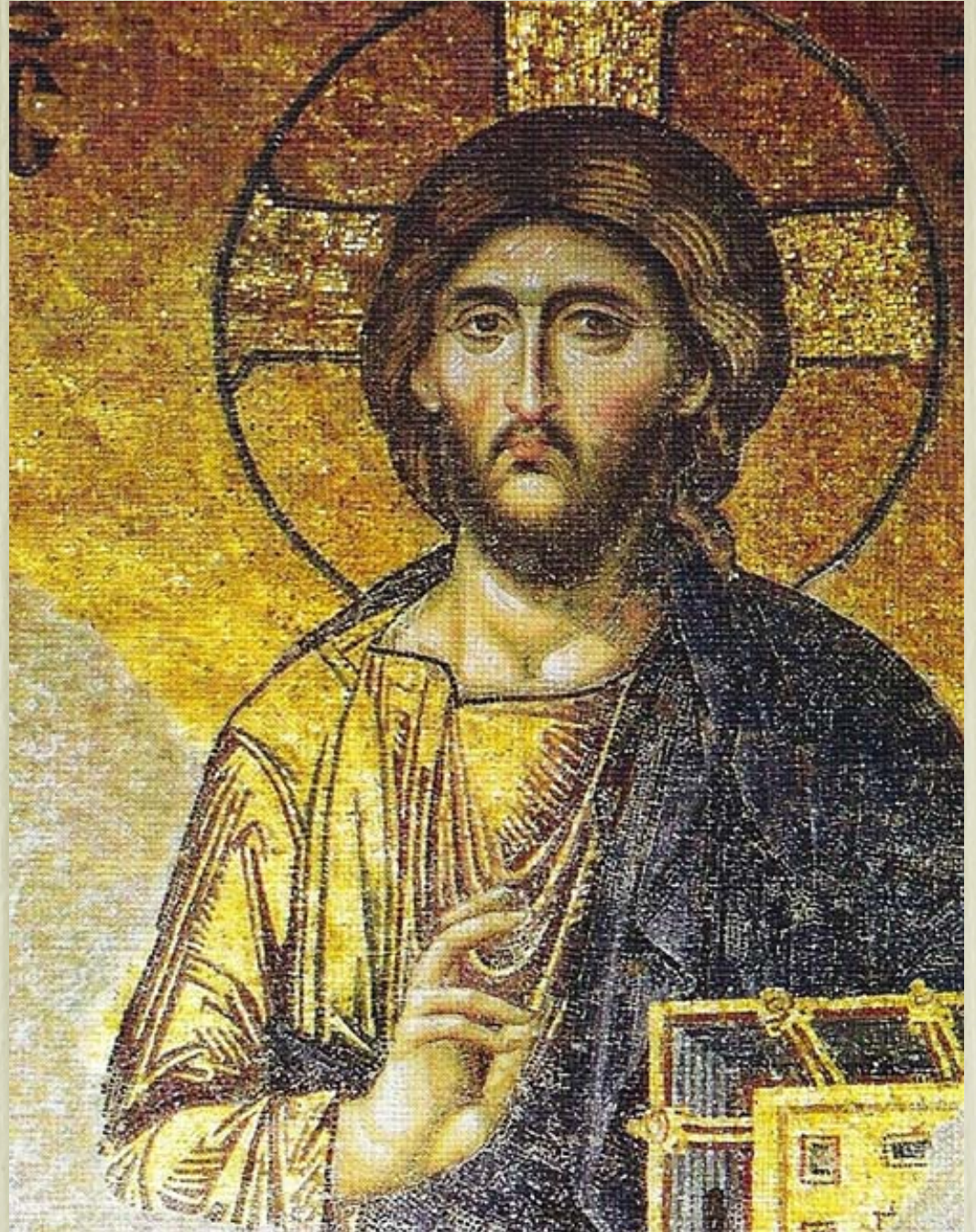
Jesus, my only desire.

Jesus, my only desire.

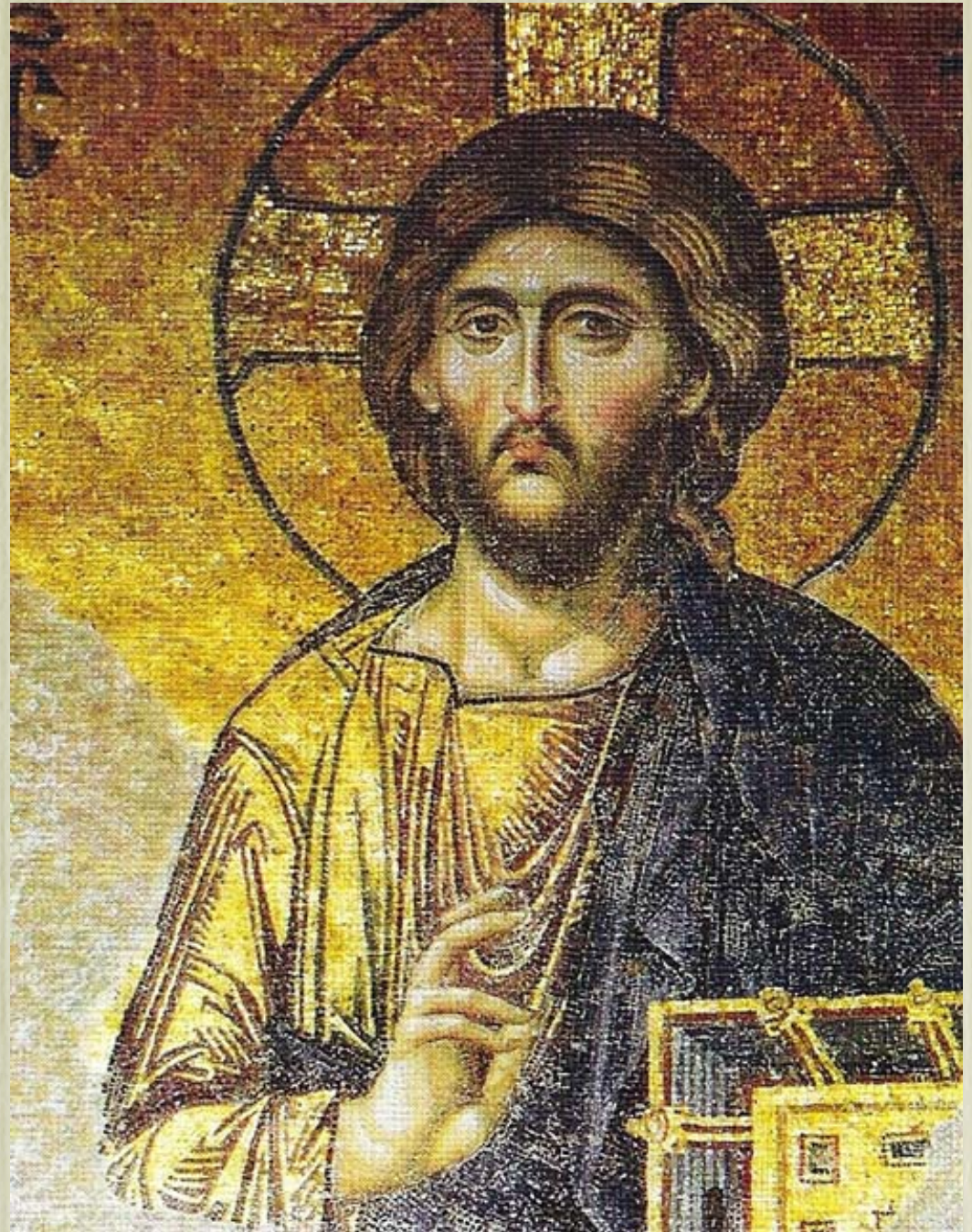
Jesus, my love;

Jesus, my beauty.

Jesus, my God and my all.



Jesus, the mercy of God.
Jesus, the mercy of God.
Jesus, my truth;
Jesus, my justice.
Jesus, my God and my all.



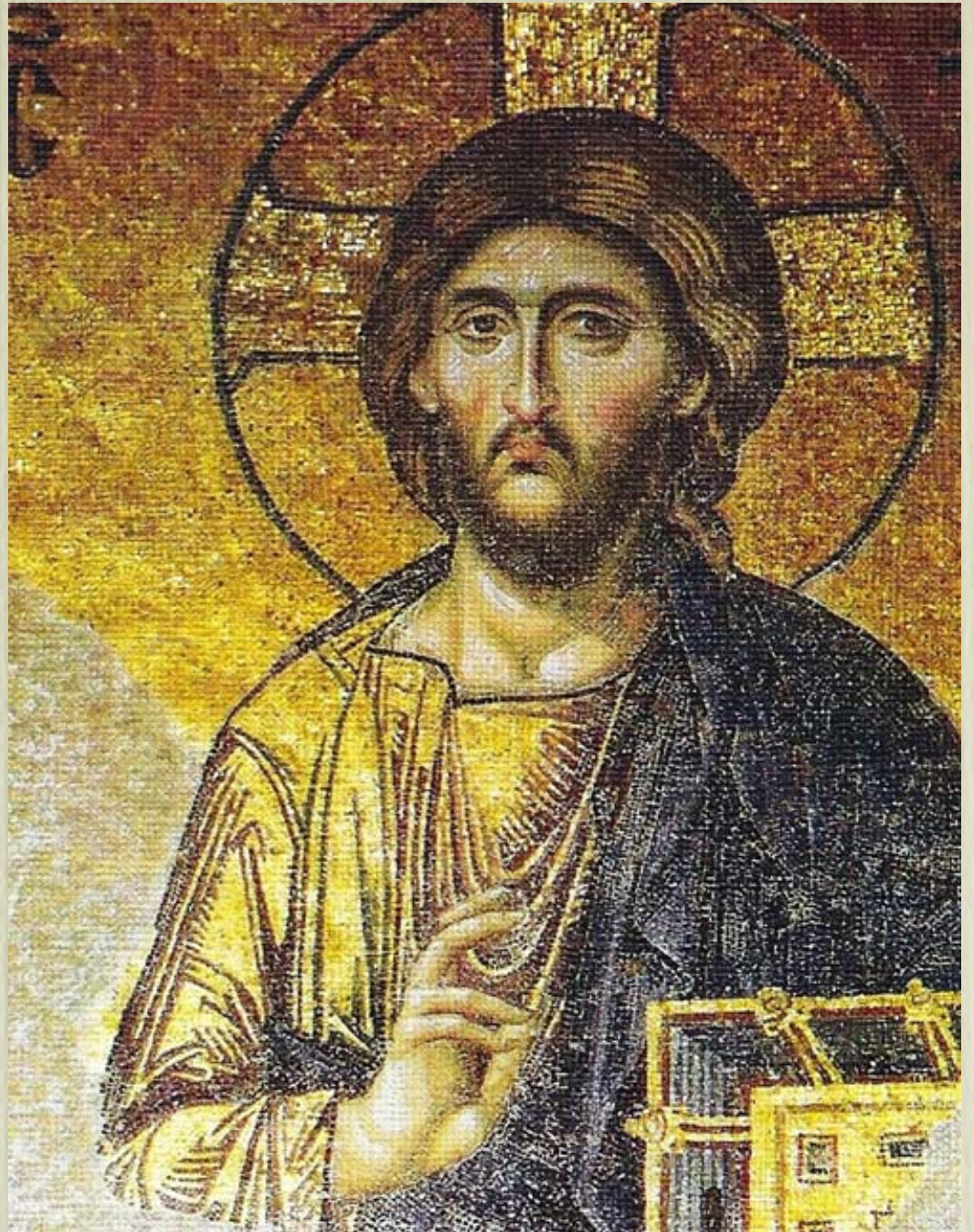
Jesus, my life-giving Lord.

Jesus, my life-giving Lord.

Jesus, my joy;

Jesus, my glory.

Jesus, my God and my all.



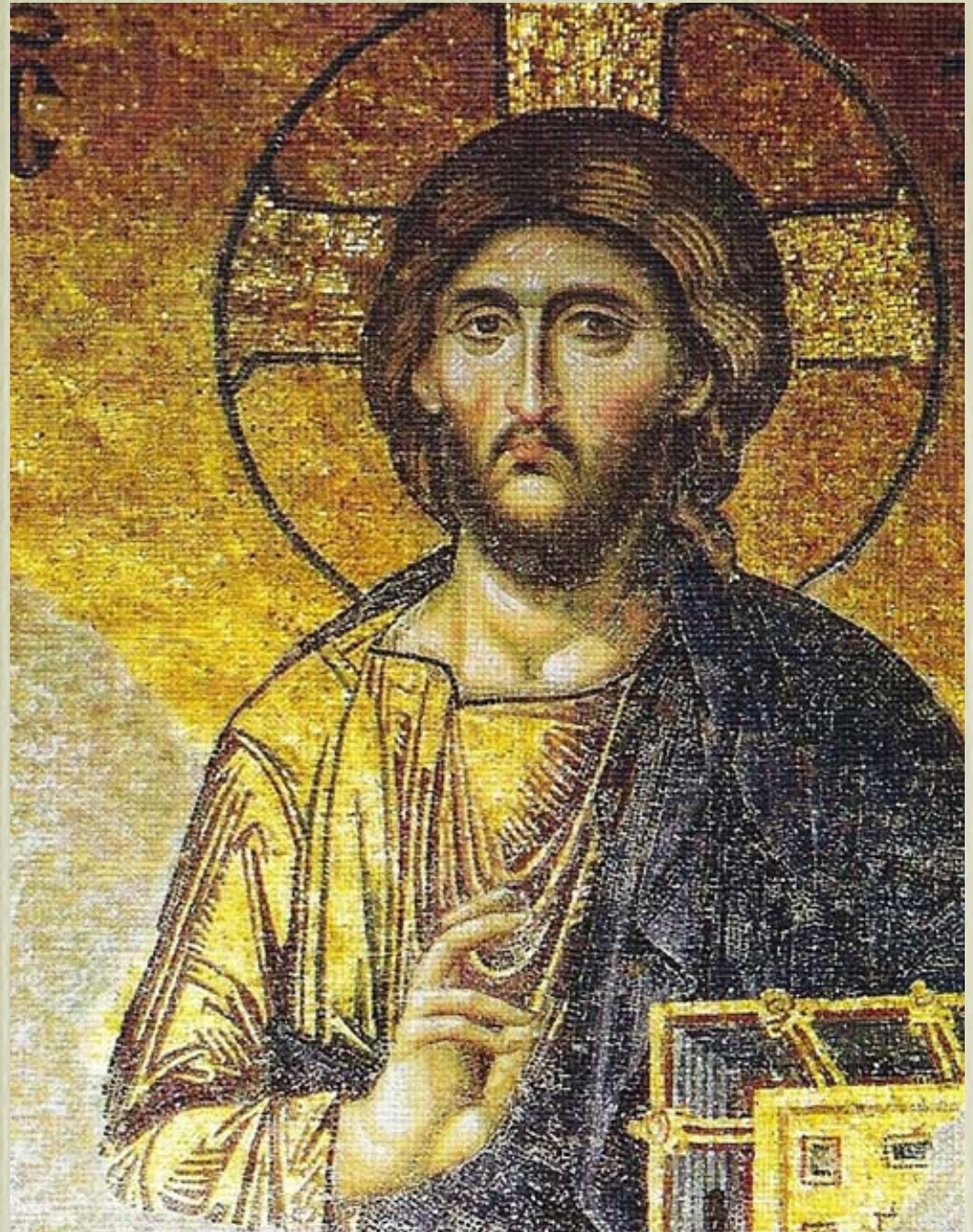
Jesus, the wisdom of God.

Jesus, the wisdom of God.

Jesus, my light;

Jesus, my vision.

Jesus, my Lord and my God.



Jesus, my God and my all

(2)

Love's radiant light

The light of God
flows throughout my soul

Jesus, my God and my all.

