

# The Man Who Stepped Down

## Cosmic Controversy Series: Part 16

### Study Guide

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## I. JESUS, THE MAN WHO STEPPED DOWN

### Psalm 24:1-4

<sup>1</sup> *The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein;* <sup>2</sup> *for he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers.*

<sup>3</sup> *Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place?* <sup>4</sup> *He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false, and does not swear deceitfully.*

### Jude 9

*But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, disputed about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a reviling judgment upon him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."*

### Romans 6:23

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

### Romans 3:23

*For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God.*

### Psalm 14:3

*They have all gone astray, they are all alike corrupt; there is none that does good, no, not one.*

### Psalm 53:3

*They have all fallen away; they are all alike depraved; there is none that does good, no, not one.*

## A. The Test of Perfection

1. In Psalm 24:3, a question is asked that would not be fulfilled until Jesus came to earth. No human being had met the test of perfection recorded in Psalm 24: *“Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD and stand in His Holy Place?”* In four thousand years of human history, no man had met the test of moral perfection.
2. It is true that Enoch was translated to Heaven without dying and that Elijah was caught up to God in a fiery chariot. Yet, if Jesus had not come to earth and lived a perfect life and died for the sins of the world, both would have had to return to earth and experience death.
3. Jude 9 indicates that when Moses died, he was resurrected shortly thereafter when the Archangel Michael reclaimed his body from the power of death. He said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you,” and He reclaimed the body of Moses from the power of Satan.
4. If Jesus had not come to this earth and lived a perfect life, Moses would have been required to return and die all over again. Why? Because “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). And “all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God” (Romans 3:23).
5. Who can ascend the Hill of the Lord and stand in His holy place? After the sin of Adam, no human being on earth was found good enough to stand. No human being had ever met the moral test. ***No human being had met the test of perfection until Jesus stepped down to live among men*** (Psalms 14:3; 53:3).

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### Luke 9:18-20

<sup>18</sup> Now it happened that as he was praying alone the disciples were with him; and he asked them, “Who do the people say that I am?” <sup>19</sup> And they answered, “John the Baptist; but others say, Eli’jah; and others, that one of the old prophets has risen.”  
<sup>20</sup> And he said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” And Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”

### John 19:5

So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!”

### John 7:38

“He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’”

### Romans 5:19

For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man’s obedience many will be made righteous.

### John 1:41

*He first found his brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ).*

### John 4:25-26

<sup>25</sup> *The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things."* <sup>26</sup> *Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."*

### Romans 10:9-10

<sup>9</sup> *If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.* <sup>10</sup> *For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved.*

## **B. Who Is Jesus?**

1. The answer to the question, "*Who is Jesus?*" is the most important answer to the most important question in life! (Luke 9:18-20)
2. Who is Jesus to you? Is He just a good moral man with sound teaching? Is He just someone you rely on to feel good about yourself?
3. Jesus asked two critical questions:
  - (1) "*Who do others say that I am?*" (Luke 9:18)
  - (2) "*And who do you say that I am?*" (Luke 9:20)
4. The answer from others was impressive by human standards:
  - *First, John the Baptist.* John the Baptist was a man who shook the nation and called his people back to God. In Jesus' day, with the singular exception of Jesus himself, there was no greater man on earth than John the Baptist.
  - *Others said, "Elijah."* Elijah was the greatest of the prophets. He was the greatest example in the Old Testament of a prophet's courage and commitment to God. He brought the Northern Kingdom back to God and to the Law of Moses.
  - *Still others claimed, a prophet had been raised from the dead.* Perhaps some thought of Moses who, according to Jude 9, was raised from the dead.
5. Any one of the above would have been impressive credentials to build a career upon, but Jesus swept them all aside and asked, "Who do you say that I am?" That is, forget the titles, the prophetic credentials, and the great men of past and present:
  - "*Who do you say I am?*"
  - "*What is your confession of me?*"
  - *The question is, "Who am I to you?"*

6. When we answer that question accurately, we have opened door to Paradise.
7. Peter answered, ***“You are the Christ of God”*** (Luke 9:20). The word “Christ” is the Greek word for “Messiah.” It means literally, the “Anointed One.”
8. Peter was saying, ***“You are the Anointed One of God.”*** That is another way of saying ***“You are the Chosen One of God.”*** In other words, ***“You are the Ultimate Man and more than man to me”***:
  - *You are not a great man. You are The Man. (John 19:5)*
  - *You are not just a spiritual leader. You are the source of the Spirit. (John 7:38)*
  - *You are not a righteous and moral one. You are God’s perfect Anointed One who makes us righteous and morally clean. (Romans 5:19)*
  - ***You are God’s Messiah – the one to follow! (John 1:41; 4:25,26)***
9. Peter got it right! The Bible says that to be saved you must believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord (Romans 10:9). Not a teacher, not a preacher, not a spiritual philosopher. None of these, and yet more than this is He.
10. You must confess with your mouth and believe with your heart that Jesus is God’s Messiah, the LORD, to be saved (Romans 10:9-10).

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#### Luke 9:28-31

<sup>28</sup> Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup> And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white. <sup>30</sup> And behold, two men talked with him, Moses and Eli’jah, <sup>31</sup> who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem.

#### Hebrews 1:1-3

<sup>1</sup> In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; <sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup> He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

#### Psalms 24:3

*Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place?*

Luke 22:42

*“Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”*

Hebrews 2:13

*And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again, “Here am I, and the children God has given me.”*

### **C. The Transfiguration of Jesus**

1. Three apostles did not have to wait to see Jesus coming in the Glory of the Father. In Luke 9:28-29, Peter, John and James witnessed the Glory of God emanating from Jesus Christ on the holy mountain as Heaven opened. The Shekina fire of God’s Glory illumined Jesus like a torch.
2. The Greek translation reads His garments were streaks of lightening breaking forth (Luke 9:29). Jesus lit up the night like lightening in a stormy sky. The Greek says His face became that of another. The God within Him was shining in the face of Jesus (Luke 9:29; Hebrews 1:1-3).
3. Psalm 24:3 asks, “Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD, and stand in His Holy place?” Jesus had met the condition of a pure heart and clean hands (Psalm 24:4). Jesus lived the perfect life. He had defeated the Devil in the wilderness, and had every right on the holy mountain to take one step higher into Heaven’s Throne. Jesus is perfection and He had manifest all the Glory of God within Himself (Hebrews 1:3).
4. ***Jesus could have taken one step up on the mountain and never returned. He had every right to leave and not die on Calvary’s Cross.*** Jesus had met the test, and the Kingdom of God was His. He did not have to wait for the future – Heaven was His on the mountain. Yet, to save us, He had to journey on, to Calvary and the Cross.
5. Jesus had to step down to die on the Cross. He had to deny Himself and lose His life to save your life (Luke 22:42). He did not want to return to Heaven without you. Jesus would not step into Glory without you stepping into Glory with Him (Hebrews 1:2; 2:13). ***Jesus stepped down to save humanity from the face of God’s displeasure with sin.***
6. Moses and Elijah were spokespersons for the human race on the Mount of Transfiguration (Hebrews 1:1). One had never died, and the other had been reclaimed from death. Together they stood on the mountain to talk with Jesus about the departure that He would accomplish at Jerusalem. The “departure” is literally the Greek word for “exodus.” (Luke 9:30-31).
7. If Jesus had stepped up into Glory on the mount of His Transfiguration, having met the conditions of absolute perfection, the story of humanity would have been over. The cross was the only way to save us out of this world. ***Jesus could not step up to save us. He had to step down.***

## II. THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

### Luke 9: 20, 23-25

<sup>20</sup> And he said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” And Peter answered, “The Christ of God.” <sup>23</sup> And he said to all, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?”

### Revelation 14:6

Then I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people.

### Mark 16:15-16

<sup>15</sup> And he said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. <sup>16</sup> He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

### Luke 9:26-27

<sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. <sup>27</sup> But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”

### Mark 9:34-35

<sup>34</sup> But they were silent; for on the way they had discussed with one another who was the greatest. <sup>35</sup> And he sat down and called the twelve; and he said to them, “If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.”

### **A. Profession of Our Faith**

1. Peter’s profession that Jesus is the “Christ of God” was a prophetic proclamation of the “*Everlasting Gospel*” (Luke 9:20; Revelation 14:6).
2. The historical evidence suggests that the Gospel of Mark is the Gospel according to Peter, which was transmitted to Mark. In Mark 16:15-16, Jesus put it plainly: “*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.*”
3. Peter’s profession gets to the heart of the matter that matters most. Faith that calls on the name of the LORD is faith in God’s Messiah who is the LORD. It is a personal faith in Jesus, and He is the perfect man that everyone needs to know.
4. So what is the single most important quality in Jesus’ life that can transform your life forever? (Luke 9:23-25)

5. In Luke 9:23-25, Jesus is saying that who you are on the inside is more important than what others think of you on the outside. And whoever follows Him must step down to follow.
  6. The world says, step up to the plate and be great. The world chooses greatness that rules over others. The world says you must step up and step over others in order to succeed.
  7. Whoever follows Jesus must step down and deny himself or herself to be great (Mark 9:34-35). Jesus denied Himself the right to live so that He would have the right to save us from eternal death. *By this definition, Jesus is "The Man Who Stepped Down."*
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#### 1 Corinthians 1:18

*For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

#### Galatians 6:14

*But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

#### Galatians 2:20

*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

#### Luke 9:23

*And he said to all, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."*

#### John 10:17-18

<sup>17</sup> *"For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. <sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father."*

#### John 15:13

*Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

### **B. Stepping Down from Self**

1. The only way to perfection is the Cross of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:18). [See also: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.] The only way to Glory is to step down and seize the Cross (Galatians 6:14). One cannot get to Heaven any other way than the way Jesus went to Heaven (Galatians 2:20; Luke 9:23).

2. Jesus chose to step down from the *Mountain of Glory* and seize the *Cross* as the road to eternal life (John 10:17-18; 15:13).
3. When you kneel at the Cross of Jesus Christ, you see His Glory that gleamed on the mountain like lightening:
  - ***You see the Word of God*** that stood transfigured between *Moses and Elijah*.
  - ***You see the Chosen One of God***, who has chosen to save you.
  - ***You see the Face with eyes of fire like those of His Father***, looking deep within you with tears for your salvation.
  - ***You see the Feet*** bleeding on that wooden beam ~ the beautiful feet that stepped down to save you.