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THE 444: The Messiah

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Messianism/Messiah in the Book of Acts

In the book of Acts in the New Testament, Jesus is called the "Righteous One." There has been much theological disagreement about this title, which occurs many times in the text. This essay will analyze the "Righteous One" notion in Acts and determine whether it differs between Acts 1 and 2.

Novenson argues that the term "Righteous One" is part of an attempt by the authors of Acts to position Jesus as the Messiah of both the Jews and the Gentiles. In his article, Novenson claims that the term is utilized to build a Christology highlighting Jesus' worldwide importance as the Messiah. According to Novenson, "the book of Acts depicts Jesus not just as the Jewish Messiah but also as the Messiah of the Gentiles, and not only as a king but also as a prophet, priest, and judge"(Novenson). In Acts 3:14, Peter refers to Jesus as the "Righteous One" to stress his innocence and holiness. Yet you refused the Holy and Just One and prayed to be given a murderer, Peter argues (Acts 3:14). This term is designed to highlight the moral superiority of Jesus over his deniers.

As Stephen calls Jesus the "Righteous One" in Acts 7:52, saying, "Who of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? and they slaughtered those who proclaimed ahead the advent of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and slain," there is see a similar reference to Jesus in Acts 6:8. (Acts 7:52). The term is used to cast the Jewish leadership in a bad light for their part in Jesus' killing and to draw parallels between Jesus and the ancient prophets.

The Jews' rejection of Jesus is the primary backdrop for the term "Righteous One" in the first half of Acts. Both Peter and Stephen utilize this term when speaking to Jewish audiences, highlighting the sin of those who rejected Jesus while highlighting his innocence. The trial of Peter and John before the Sanhedrin in Acts 4-5 and Peter's struggle with Simon the Sorcerer in Acts 8-11 are both examples of the subject of Jewish rejection that runs throughout the first half of Acts.

In contrast, the second Acts emphasizes Jesus' Messiahship on a global scale. The "Righteous One" concept is utilized in a new context, albeit the topic of Jewish rejection is still evident (Paul's speech in Acts 13:27-28). The Philippian jailer is told by Paul and Silas, "Belief in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." In Acts 18:5, Luke says, "Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus." The title "Righteous One" emphasizes Jesus' innocence and the guilt of his Jewish opponents, but it also emphasizes Jesus' role as the Savior of all humanity.

Novenson contends that Acts' characterization of Jesus as the Righteous One is part of portraying him as the Messiah to the Jewish people and the Gentiles. The term is used to build a Christology highlighting Jesus' centrality as the Messiah across all cultures and periods. "Acts shows Jesus not just as the Jewish Messiah but also as the Messiah of the Gentiles" (Novenson). "He is presented as both a king and a prophet."

The book of Acts uses the name "Righteous One" to build a Christology highlighting Jesus' relevance to Jews and Gentiles as the Messiah. The second Acts emphasizes the far-reaching consequences of Jesus' role as the Messiah. This term is meant to emphasize his mission to save all people everywhere. Acts 16:31 records Paul and Silas' words to the Philippian jailer: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your home." Jesus' innocence and his status as the Christ are emphasized by the title in Acts 18:5. Here,

the term "Righteous One" serves to underline Jesus' position as the Savior of all humankind while simultaneously emphasizing his innocence and the guilt of his Jewish opponents.

Work Cited

Novenson, Matthew V. "Names, Titles, and Other Possibilities." *Christ among the Messiahs* *Christ Language in Paul and Messiah Language in Ancient Judaism*, 17
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