

Was Jesus Just A Man?

No. 125

Introduction.

- I. At Caesarea Philippi Jesus began to ask His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" (Matt. 16:13-17).
 - A. We learn that some looked upon Christ as John the Baptist, others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the other prophets risen from the dead.
 - B. From this list we might add that some looked upon Christ as a mere man and nothing more.
 - C. Jesus claimed, however, to be more than a mere man. He claimed to be the Son of God in the flesh. (Matt. 16:16, 17; Jn. 8:24; Matt. 26:63, 64; Matt. 27:40).
- II. At this time I would like for us to consider some proof of the fact Jesus was the Son of God as He claimed.
 - A. As we begin to consider this proof I am **reminded of a story Harry Rimmer** tells in his book, "The Magnificence of Jesus." On one occasion he showed an Indian the various sights of San Francisco. The Indian was greatly impressed with the tall buildings, the Golden Gate bridge and the many other sights of this city. He was especially impressed with the Pacific Ocean and he made several visits to it during his brief stay in the city. On the last day of the visit, the Indian asked to see the Pacific Ocean once more. When they came to the beach, the Indian took a jar from his pocket and filled it with water from the ocean. When asked the reason for doing this he explained that the Indians back home would never believe that he had seen such a large body of water. He thought that the jar of water would be conclusive proof that he had seen the ocean.
 - B. This story depicts our feebleness in explaining the Deity of Jesus Christ. Our attempts to explain His Deity are like taking a jar of water from the ocean thinking he was proving the Pacific ocean existed. With this thought in mind I would now like to give some reasons why I believe that Jesus was more than a man. I would like to give the reasons why I believe Jesus was the Son of God.
- I. **Prophecy** - I believe Jesus was the Son of God because of prophecy.
 - A. The Old Testament contains hundreds of prophecies of the Son of God to come.
 1. If Jesus had fulfilled just one of these prophecies, it could be argued that this was by chance. If Jesus had fulfilled two or three of these prophecies, it could be still be argued that this possibly could have happened by chance.
 2. This was not the case.
 - B. Jesus did not just fulfill one or two or three or four of the prophecies. He fulfilled every one of them. This could not have happened by mere chance.

Prophecy, the Bible and Jesus

How do you respond to someone's claim that the Bible is not inspired? Is there a way to

prove inspiration or, at least, intelligently present evidence for its inspiration? The answer is "Yes!" One of the best ways to prove inspiration is by examining prophecy. There are many religious books in the world that have many good things to say. But only the Bible has fulfilled prophecies--with more fulfillments to come. The Bible has never been wrong in the past, and it won't be wrong in the future. It claims inspiration from God (2 Tim. 3:16). Since God is the creator of all things (Isaiah 44:24), then He is also the creator of time. It is under His control. Only God, then, would always be right about what is in the future, our future.

Fulfilled prophecy is strong evidence that God is the author of the Bible because when you look at the mathematical odds of prophecy being fulfilled, you quickly see a design, a purpose, and a guiding hand behind the Bible. If just one prophecy failed, then we would know that God is not the true God, because the creator of all things, which includes time, would not be wrong about predicting the future. Deut. 18:22 says, "If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously" (NIV). Isaiah 46:9-10 says, "Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please."

One approach to use with an unbeliever is to turn to Psalm 22 and read verses 12-18. This is a detailed description of the crucifixion--1000 years before Jesus was born. After you read the section ask him what it was about. He'll say, "The crucifixion of Jesus." Then respond with something like, "You're right. This is about the crucifixion. But it was written 1000 years before Jesus was born. And on top of that, crucifixion hadn't even been invented yet. How do you think something like this could happen?" After a brief

discussion, you could show him (or her) a few other prophecies like where Jesus' birthplace was prophesied (Micah 5:2), that He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), that His side would be pierced (Zech. 12:10), etc.

Born of the Seed of the Woman

Genesis 3:15, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

Matthew 1:20, "But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."

Born of a Virgin

Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

Matthew 1:18, 25, "This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary...was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit... But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus."

Son of God

Psalms 2:7, "I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son today I have become your Father."

Matthew 3:17, "And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'"

Seed of Abraham

Genesis 22:18, "and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

Matthew 1:1, "record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:"

Son of Isaac

Genesis 21:12, "But God said to him, 'Do not be so distressed about the boy and your maidservant. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.'"

Luke 3:23-34, "Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli...the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,"

House of David

Jeremiah 23:5, "The days are coming, declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land."

Luke 3:23-31, "Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli...the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,"

Born at Bethlehem

Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem

Matthew 2:1, "After Jesus was born in

Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

He shall be a Prophet

Deuteronomy 18:18, "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him."

He shall be a Priest

Psalms 110:4, "The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: 'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.'"

He shall be a King

Psalms 2:6, "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill."

He shall judge

Isaiah 33:22, "For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; it is he who will save us."

He would be preceded by a Messenger

Isaiah 40:3, "A voice of one calling: 'In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.'"

Rejected by His own people

Isaiah 53:3, "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

His side pierced

Zechariah 12:10, "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants

Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem."

Matthew 21:11 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

Hebrews 3:1, "Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess."

Hebrews 5:5-6, "So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.' And he says in another place, 'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.'"

Matthew 27:37, "Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS."

John 5:30, "By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me."

Matthew 3:1-2, "In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.'"

John 7:5, "For even his own brothers did not believe in him."

John 7:48, "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him?"

John 19:34, "Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a

of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one mourns for an only son.

Crucifixion

Psalm 22:1, 11-18, "For the director of music. To the tune of "The Doe of the Morning." A psalm of David. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?...Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help. Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan. Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing."

sudden flow of blood and water."

Luke 23:33, "When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals -- one on his right, the other on his left."

John 19:33, "But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs."

John 19:23-24, "When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. Let's not tear it, they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, "They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing." So this is what the soldiers did."

The Mathematical Odds of Jesus Fulfilling Prophecy

The following probabilities are taken from Peter Stoner in *Science Speaks* (Moody Press, 1963) to show that coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability.

Stoner says that by using the modern science of probability in reference to eight

prophecies, 'we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present

time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10^{17} ." That would be 1 in

100,000,000,000,000,000. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability,

Stoner illustrates it by supposing that "we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep.

"Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of

writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man."

Stoner considers 48 prophecies and says, "we find the chance that any one man fulfilled all 48 prophecies to be 1 in 10^{157} , or 1 in

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The estimated number of electrons in the universe is around 10^{79} . It should be quite evident that Jesus did not fulfill the prophecies by accident."

This information was taken from the book Evidence that Demands a Verdict by Josh McDowell.

II. Possessed All The Attributes Of Deity - I believe that Jesus was the Son of God because He possessed all the attributes of Deity. (Jn. 14:9; 10:30; Col. 1:15; 2:9).

A. God in Omniscient.

1. This means that God knows all things. (Matt. 10:29-31; Psa. 44:21).
2. Christ was unlimited in knowledge. He manifested this unlimited knowledge when He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem in great detail 35 years before it occurred.
3. Furthermore, Christ manifested His unlimited knowledge by the fact He knew even the thoughts of men.

B. God is Omnipresent.

1. This means that God is everywhere. (Psa. 139:7-10).
2. Jesus revealed His omnipresence when He said. (Matt. 18:20).

C. God is Omnipotent.

1. This means that God is all powerful. (Gen. 1:1; Matt. 19:26).
2. Jesus was also omnipotent.
 - a. He manifested this unlimited power by the many miracles He performed.. He was able to heal the sick, heal the deaf, the blind, the lepers, walk on water, feed thousands with a few loaves and fish and even raise the dead.
 - b. These miracles and the many others Jesus performed are conclusive proof Jesus was omnipotent and the Son of God. (Jn. 3:2; 20:30-31).

D. God is Eternal.

1. He is from everlasting to everlasting. (Psa. 90:2).

2. So is Christ. (Jn. 1:1-3 , 14).

III. **Resurrection** - I believe Jesus was the Son of God because of His resurrection.

A. Jesus was raised on the third day as He had promised. (Matt. 16:21).

B. If Jesus had not been raised from the dead, He would have been an imposter. (Psa. 16:10). If Jesus had been an imposter, God would not have raised Him up. He would have left Him to rot in the tomb. (Rom. 1:4).

C. Someone might ask, **“How do you know Jesus was really raised from the dead?”** Many good reasons could be cited for believing in the resurrection, but one of the most convincing to me is the fact even the enemies of Christ believed He was raised from the dead. (Matt. 28:11-15).

MAT 28:11 Now while they were on their way, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened.12 And when they had assembled with the elders and counseled together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers,13 and said, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.'14 "And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble." 15 And they took the money and did as they had been instructed; and this story was widely spread among the Jews, and is to this day.

IV. **Testimony Of The Father** - I believe Jesus was the Son of God because of the testimony of the Father. (Matt. 3:16, 17; 17:1-5).

Conclusion.

I. As you can see there is abundant evidence for the Sonship of Jesus. Jesus was the Son of God in the flesh.

II. One time General Lew Wallace, an unbeliever, was discussing the wonderful life of Christ with another unbeliever. General Wallace said, “I think an interesting romance could be written about Him.” The other man replied, “And you are just the man to do it. Tear down the prevailing sentiment as to His divineness and paint him as he was - a man among men.” The suggestion was acted upon and General Wallace began to study Jesus in order to write the romance. In the process of constructing it he found himself face with the unaccountable Man. The more he studied the life and character of Jesus the more profoundly he was convinced that Jesus was more than a man; until at length, like the centurion under the cross, he was constrained to cry, “Truly this was the Son of God.”

III. A study of the evidence convinced General Lew Wallace Jesus was the Son of God. A study of the facts will lead every honest mind to come to this indisputable conclusion. A study of the evidence should give us unwavering confidence that Jesus is the Son of God and inspire us to share Christ and the good news of salvation with others.

IV. If you are convinced that Jesus was the Son of God and have not put your trust in Him, why not put your faith in Him and be baptized that you have everlasting life! Come as we stand and sing the hymn of invitation.!

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