

“Are You the One?”

Matthew 26:59-68 &
John 18:33 – 19: 15

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Matthew 26:59-68 Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, 60 but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at

last two false witnesses came forward 61 and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" 62 And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?" 63 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!" 64 Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." 65 Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! 66 "What do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death." 67 Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, 68 saying, "Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?" John 18:33-19:15 Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?" 35 Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." 37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." 38 Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all. 39 "But you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" 40 Then they all cried again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber. 1 So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. 2 And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. 3 Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands. 4 Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him." 5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!" 6 Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." 8 Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, 9 and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" 11 Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." 12 From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar." 13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" 15 But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"

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The case against Jesus was weak to say the least. Even convincing liars were hard to find! But at least they had a mob! That's always helpful, if not essential, when you are up to no good.

“I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it again in three days...”

For the most part, the people failed to understand just what Jesus meant when He made this statement. Because of such, it was therefore taken out of context, turned against Him, and used in attempt to discredit Him. The

inference therein was that Jesus was a nefarious plotter seeking a coup d'état. But in reality, nothing could be further from the truth. Jesus was not speaking of, nor seeking, a violent insurrection when he spoke of rebuilding the destroyed temple in three days, but He spoke rather of His crucifixion, death, and resurrection. **HE** was the temple that He spoke of! Ironically, their very murderous actions would play party to the fulfillment of what they wanted to kill Him for! Revolution? *No*, the “revolution” was in what Jesus would say next...

Now Jesus was essentially having no part of this courtroom sham, but finally, under Jewish Law the high priest could righteously demand an answer. In doing so, Jesus was thus posed the ultimate question. One that many will today still claim He never answered...a declaration He never made. The question from the high priest was given, and I think all of history and the host of heaven held their breath: “*Are you the Christ? Are you the Son of God?*” “*Are you the One?*”

The high priest had pulled the “God card”; the discussion was over.

What Jesus would now say would change the very course of history. It would be an acknowledgement that would change the world, and would transform the lives of countless individuals throughout the years. It was a declaration that would suck the air out of the room. “*Yes...I am He, just as you say!*” Jesus even went on to put the period at the end of the sentence by then attributing two messianic prophecies to Himself, Psalms 110:1, and Daniel 7:13.

Now, in response to the very statement that so many will claim was never made by Christ, the high priest “*tore his clothes.*” Tearing one’s clothes in the Jewish culture was a sign of the highest emotional response. This high priest had no trouble grasping what Jesus said! He didn’t pretend it wasn’t said. No, to him, Jesus’ response was blasphemy and was deserving of death. Indeed it **would** have been blasphemy for sure, *had it not been true!* From the beginning we can only accept Jesus in one of two ways: either He was indeed who He said He was, or He was a crazy man with a God-complex.

In verse 66 the high priest affectively asks those in attendance the most important question in the lives of every one of us here today, and every man or woman that has ever lived: ***What do you think?*** What do you think about such a claim? Is He or isn’t He? It is a question that we all must answer. The position you take will determine your **tomorrow**, and will determine your **forever**. Jesus Himself asked virtually the same question to his apostles in the gospels... “*who do you say that I am?*” Predictably, it seemed that those who were present that day in court decided that *their* answer was “no.” For them, He was deserving of death.

Just as predictable is the “follow-through” that is meted out by those who rejected Him. Just like it was then, seldom does the name of Jesus and the question of His divinity illicit just a tired yawn. No, people tend to get quite defensive and often *offensive* at merely the verbalizing of His name. One need only peruse the web to find numerous violent reactions to congressional prayers, political gatherings and even high school graduation prayers where someone was brazen enough to use the name of Jesus in a public prayer and nearly elicited a riot by doing so. It is a spectacle to watch such violently hateful groups bitterly label such Jesus people and Christian groups as “hate-groups.” The irony is staggering. Those who rejected Him that day at this pseudo trial did not at this point just go on home with hopes of catching Oprah. They wanted to hurt somebody. Remember, anger trumps all other emotion, and any guilt, jealousy, regret, or uncertainty will now be beaten back through the incredibly powerful emotion of zealous anger and even violence. Thus the physical abuse of Jesus begins.

It all seems like such a strange over reaction and it is inexplicably happening today also! I mean, if His claims were void, then who would care what He said and did? Why wouldn’t they simply ignore Him? Why wouldn’t **we** simply ignore Him?

Instead we have multiple dedicated websights to essentially say something isn't true and isn't real. There are countless people who regularly gather together in clubs, organizations, coalitions, and societies that exist only to attack Jesus Christ and His followers. Ironically, to attack something that many of those same folks say doesn't even exist! It's a ghost-chaser club apparently!

Professor Peter Stoner wrote a book called *Science Speaks* back in the 1950's. He was at one time the chairman of the mathematics and astronomy departments at Pasadena City College until 1953 and later moved to Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California, where he served as chairman of the science division. At the time he wrote this book, he was professor emeritus of science at Westmont. In his book, Stoner calculated the probability of just 8 Messianic prophecies being fulfilled in the life of Jesus. Please note that the estimates and calculations are quite conservative:

1. The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem ([Micah 5:2](#)).
The average population of Bethlehem from the time of Micah to the present (1958) divided by the average population of the earth during the same period. (7,150/2,000,000,000 or 2.8×10^5 .)
2. A messenger will prepare the way for the Messiah ([Malachi 3:1](#)).
One man in how many, the world over, has had a forerunner (in this case, John the Baptist) to prepare his way?
(Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^3 .)
3. The Messiah will enter Jerusalem as a king riding on a donkey ([Zechariah 9:9](#)).
One man in how many, who has entered Jerusalem as a ruler, has entered riding on a donkey?
(Estimate: 1 in 100 or 1×10^2 .)
4. The Messiah will be betrayed by a friend and suffer wounds in His hands ([Zechariah 13:6](#)).
One man in how many, the world over, has been betrayed by a friend, resulting in wounds in his hands?
(Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^3 .)
5. The Messiah will be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver ([Zechariah 11:12](#)).
Of the people who have been betrayed, one in how many has been betrayed for exactly 30 pieces of silver?
(Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^3 .)
6. The betrayal money will be used to purchase a potter's field ([Zechariah 11:13](#)).
One man in how many, after receiving a bribe for the betrayal of a friend, has returned the money, had it refused, and then experienced it being used to buy a potter's field?
(Estimate: 1 in 100,000 or 1×10^5 .)
7. The Messiah will remain silent while He is afflicted ([Isaiah 53:7](#)).
One man in how many, when he is oppressed and afflicted, though innocent, will make no defense of himself?
(Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^3 .)
8. The Messiah will die by having His hands and feet pierced ([Psalm 22:16](#)).
One man in how many, since the time of David, has been crucified?
(Estimate: 1 in 10,000 or 1×10^4 .)

Multiplying all these probabilities together produces a number (rounded off) of 1×10^{28} . Dividing this number by an estimate of the number of people who have lived since the time of these prophecies (88 billion) produces a probability of all 8 prophecies being fulfilled accidentally in the life of one person. That probability is 1 in 10^{17} or 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. That's one in one hundred quadrillion! Now the kicker in all of this, *if you are not already sufficiently impressed*, is that Jesus fulfilled **330 prophecies**. You could try to wrap your mind around **that** number of compound probability, or maybe you should just adjust your position to the original question: *Who do you say He is?* Is He the One? And if he is the Messiah, the Son of God, "God in flesh," how then should we live in light of that truth? What should that fact do... *what should it alter*, in the way we live our lives? And if He is "**the** one," then there is no other. There is certainly no one else fulfilling ancient prophecies to the tune of one in one hundred quadrillion. There "is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved." (Acts 4:12) Elitist? *No*. Exclusionary? *You bet*.

Jesus went on from here to appear before the ruler of Israel, a man by the name of Pilate. Pilate was not ignorant as to the main issues on the table. He asks Jesus to confirm or deny the rumors: "*Are you the 'king of the Jews?'*" Are you the one? Throughout history we have missed the presence of God in our midst. Always it seems because

we are not truly looking for Him with all our hearts. Jer 29:13 *And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*

Jesus turns the tables on Pilate and asks him if he *really* and *personally* wanted to know the answer to that question. Certainly there are a lot of people out there on varying levels of personal “quest.” But asking questions and really wanting answers is two very different things. Asking questions is easy. Accepting answers, receiving proof, is something *very* different.

Pilate, no doubt, considered himself as too wise, too strong, too enlightened to accept this man before him as a king. The Bible is implicit; *there is no way ‘home’ without a great deal of humility.* As James 4:10 tells us, *“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”* But Pilate was unwilling. So are most folks on the streets every day. We can truly be *so* close, yet fail to ultimately find the truth. How many have sat in our midst, heard the ‘good news’ of salvation, perhaps even *“tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come”* as Hebrews 6:5 says, yet in the end walked away?

Pilate asked the ultimate question of perishing humanity. ***What is truth?*** The answer in our generation is there simply isn’t any. But the truth is that we are lost, sinners by nature, doomed to ultimately destroy ourselves in our egos and lusts. The truth is the reality that Christ is the one and is the only path out. He has provided redemption, salvation for mankind, simply because He loves us.

Pilate had Jesus whipped, probably hoping that such a humiliating and gruesome punishment would satisfy the masses and ultimately secure His release. The soldiers were not satisfied with dispensing mere physical pain; they went the ‘extra mile’ in doing all that could be done to humiliate Jesus. They mocked Him, placed a crown of thorns upon His head, and put upon Him a purple robe, a sign of royalty, taunting Him with verbal jabs, “Hail, King of the Jews!”

Men can live with nothing in the physical worldly sense: no real money, no real possessions, no power, clout, fame, or talent, yet still they will not give up *themselves* for Jesus. The great missionary, Jim Elliot, who died in the field attempting to take the gospel to a lost group of people, once was quoted as saying: *“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.”*

There are many today who will say that Jesus never claimed deity. But these people understood clearly what Jesus was saying to them. They wanted Him to die because of it. They understood that He was claiming to be God incarnate. Like Pilate, we think we are in control, that we alone are the rulers of our lives and destinies. But Jesus tells Pilate what we all need to hear: *“You could have no power at all...unless it had been given you from above...”* No matter how much we might want to believe it, *we might chant it like a mantra*, but we are **not** in control! Life and death have a way of overruling any feeble attempts on our part to wrestle dominion out of God’s hands.

Most of us will fight this battle our whole lives and every one of us will finally lose the war in the end. We can’t stop getting sick, we can’t force our economic position, we can’t make people love us or even like us. We are *not* in control of much of anything. The bottom line is that Jesus is the king of kings no matter what you decide.

The Bible tells us that *“at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...”* (Philippians 2:9-10) We all will get there, albeit for many of us it will too late. Much like the soldier at the cross...in the midst of the earthquake and the tearing of the temple veil, who spoke those immortal words as Jesus breathed his last: *“Truly this was the Son of God...”* (Matthew 27:54)