

Jews Were Angry Jesus Said He Is God

It is common to hear religious leaders who claim to be Christians and those from various cults and religions say that Jesus never claimed to be God. Muslims say that Jesus was a prophet and was not God. Some years ago Deepak Chopra appeared on a Larry King television program and said that Jesus was not God. The Jehovah's Witnesses claim that Jesus is Michael the archangel. The Mormons believe that Jesus became a god, but was not always God. There are many who reject the reality that Jesus is God. The Jewish leaders of Jesus' day did not believe that He was God either and rejected His claim to be the Messiah. Worse yet, some claim that Jesus never existed. These individuals ignore the many secular and Jewish ancient documents that state that Christ existed. It is clear that some have never read the gospel accounts of Jesus' teachings and works. The rejection of Christ ignores the testimony of those who saw and heard Him. In this study you will discover that Jesus claimed to be God and why many refuse to believe this truth. Our study is John 10:31-42.

I and The Father Are One. In the previous study, Jesus was not saying He and the Father were in agreement, the last verse we read was John 10:30, but that they are one. An inadequate illustration is the concept of "parents." A husband and a wife are "parents." They are not two "parents." They are two individuals who are parents. Now this illustration is inadequate since the husband

I and the Father are one. John 10:30 (NASB)

This verse records an important statement that Jesus made to the religious leaders and those around him. A correct understanding of His statement hinges on the meaning of the Greek word that is translated as "one" and on the Greek grammar. We discovered that Jesus declared He and the Father were two individuals who were one in essence - a Trinity. We will discover later in verse 38 that Jesus said He was in the Father and the Father was in Him. He will repeat this statement again in John 14:10-11 and 17:21. These are powerful statements.



**Jews Wanted To Stone Jesus
For Claiming To Be God**

and the wife will never be of the same substance or essence. But for our illustration, both are parents and yet two individuals. The Greek word that is translated as "one" is the number one. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are God.

The Jews Were Angry. The religious leaders were angry when they heard Jesus declare that He and the Father were one. They understood what He was saying even if some today do not.

The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. John 10:31

(NASB)

The Greek word for “to stone” is *lithazo* and it means “to kill someone with stones.” Once again they wanted to murder Him. They had wanted to murder Him in the summer of A.D. 31 (John 5:18) and then a few months later they tried to stone Him twice in the Fall of A.D. 32 (John 8:59; 11:8). These religious leaders had hatred in their hearts and ignored the Roman law that prohibited them from causing others to die. These pious, religious leaders were even willing to violate Roman Law. The apostle John tells us once again they wanted to murder Christ by stoning. When Jesus saw them pick up the stones, He asked them, “Why are you going to stone Me?”

Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?” John 10:31 (NASB)

He asked, “Why do you want to do this? What good work did I do?” Jesus did not ask them what bad work He did because He never did a bad work.

Jesus Claimed To Be God. The Jews explained why they wanted to murder Him.

The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.” John 10:33 (NASB)

The Greek word that Jesus used for “good” and the religious leaders used is *kalos*. In the Greek language there are two primary words that are translated as good. They are *kalos* and *agathos*. *Agathos* refers to something that is beneficial while *kalos* refers to something that is intrinsically good. That is, the things Jesus did were intrinsically good. It is amazing that the religious leaders did not challenge Jesus’ use of the word *kalos*. They just accused Him of blasphemy because He claimed to be God. It is truly amazing how many people ignore the obvious statements of these Jewish leaders. Now two thousand years later some say that they know Jesus did not claim to be God. One would think that the Jewish leaders who were part of the discussion would have more accu-

rately understood what Jesus claimed. Today, we do not have a recording of that ancient conversation, yet some think they have a better understanding than the Jewish religious leaders did.

When Jesus said that He and the Father were one, they understood that Jesus was not simply saying that He and the Father were in agreement or were united. As we have pointed out, Jesus’ Greek grammar meant that He and the Father together were one. That is, when Jesus said, “I and the Father are one,” they both described the One. Jesus claimed to be God and the religious leaders understood that. Jesus’ message was simple. He was both man and God.

Offended At The Truth. Jesus replied to these leaders by quoting Psalm 82:6. This was unexpected.

Jesus answered them, “Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I SAID, YOU ARE GODS’? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?” John 10:34-36 (NASB)

Before we study Jesus’ statement, we need to understand the message of Psalm 82:6. Here is the verse,

I said, “You are gods,
And all of you are sons of the Most High.”
Psalm 82:6 (NASB)

Psalm 82:6 was a reply to the unjust judges at the time it was written. A careful reading of Psalm 82 reveals that the chapter is a rebuke of the judges of the nation. The judges judged unjustly by being partial (v. 2). They were like Lady Justice but with one corner of her blindfold lifted so that she could see the person who was accused of guilt. Verses 3-4 called them to defend the weak, fatherless, destitute and needy and to remove the wicked. Verse 5 says the judges walked in darkness. The judges were evil and the nation was shaken because of them. In short they disobeyed the true God and acted like gods themselves. Therefore, verse 6 was a rebuke. Verse

6 announces, "You are gods . . ." but verse 7 says, "But you die like men!" Then verse 8 calls God to judge the earth and punish them. Psalm 82:6 was a slap in the face. It was not a statement of truth but a rebuke.

Why did Jesus quote this verse? The answer is that these Jewish leaders knew this passage was a rebuke of the judges and not a statement of fact. They did not object to the statement in Psalm 82:6 that rebuked the judges by calling them gods even though it was not true. But then when Jesus said He was God and the statement was true, they were angry. Since they accepted the truthful description of rebuke in Psalm 82:6, they should have accepted the truthful and accurate statement that Jesus was and is God because it is true!

Son Of God Means God. Then Jesus concludes His

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus . . . 1 Timothy 2:5 (NASB)

You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. James 2:19 (NASB)

The prophet Micah prophesied that God would become a man when He was born in Bethlehem. Notice that the prophet tells us that the "One who will go forth" is "from long ago, from the days of eternity." The Hebrew word for "long ago" means from antiquity and "eternity" means forever. He is describing God. That is, God is and will be born

WHEN CHRIST SAID HE WAS THE SON OF GOD, THE JEWS UNDERSTOOD THAT HE CLAIMED TO BE GOD.

reply with a question.

"You are blaspheming," because I said, "I am the Son of God"? John 10:36b (NASB)

Jesus' statement is simple and clear. In verse 33 we are told that the Jewish leaders accused Christ of blasphemy because He claimed to be God. Now Jesus reveals that they accused Him of blasphemy because He claimed to be the "Son of God." This means that "Son of God" actually means "God." When Christ said He was the Son of God, the Jews understood that He claimed to be God.

God has told us in both the Old and New Testaments that there is only one God. Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Timothy 2:5 and James 2:19 all say that there is only one God.

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! Deuteronomy 6:4 (NASB)

in Bethlehem.

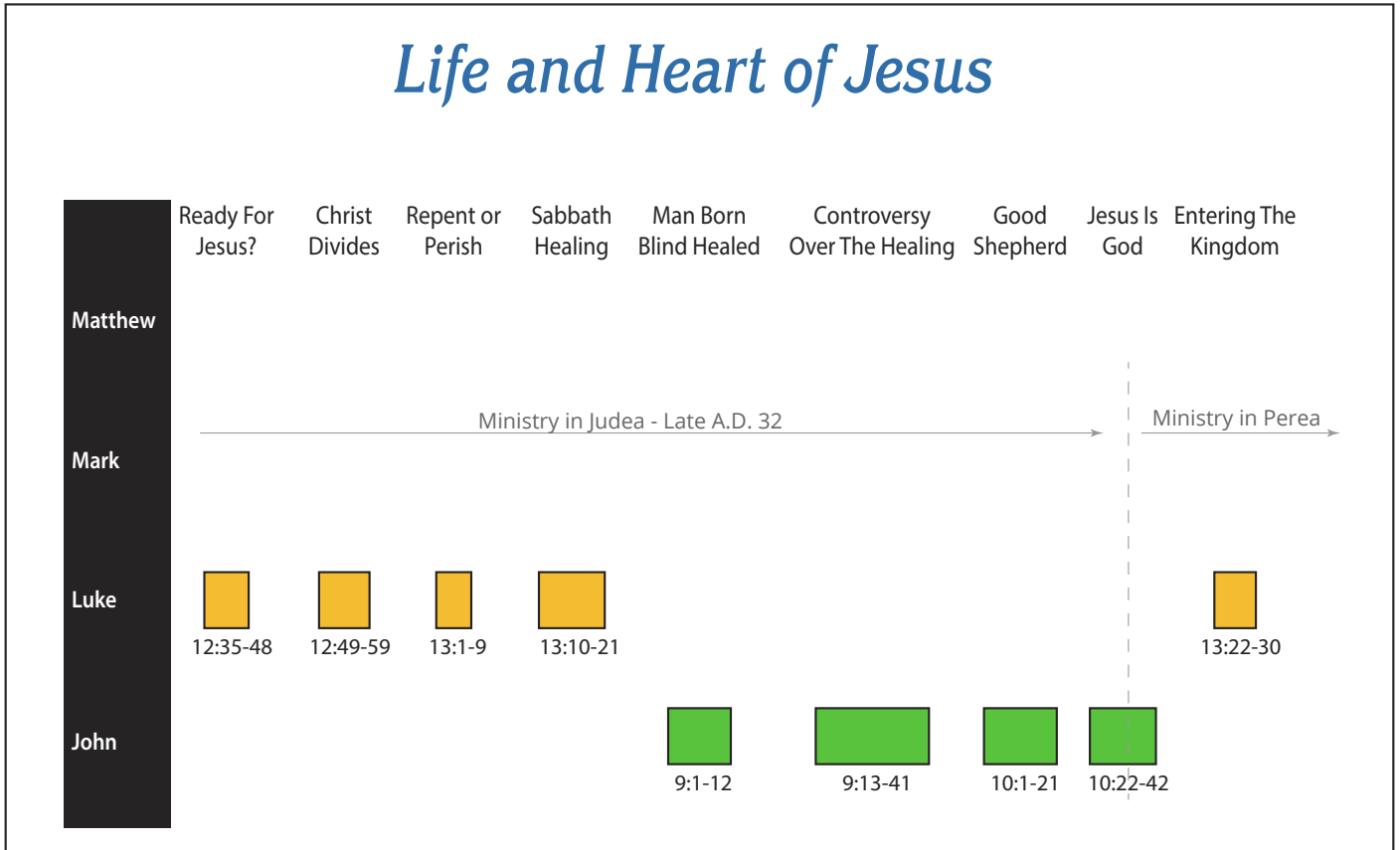
But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
Too little to be among the clans of Judah,
From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel.
His goings forth are from long ago,
From the days of eternity.
Micah 5:2 (NASB)

Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6 also prophesied that God would become a man and Matthew 1:23 tells us that the name Immanuel means "God with us." Titus 2:13 also affirms Christ was God.

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign:
Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and
she will call His name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14 (NASB)

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;

Life and Heart of Jesus



And the government will rest on His shoulders;
 And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor,
 Mighty God,
 Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
 Isaiah 9:6 (NASB)

10:37-38 (NASB)

Earlier in John 4:48 Jesus had commented that people did not believe unless they saw signs and wonders.

So Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe." John 4:48 (NASB)

Both the Old and New Testaments prophesy and confirm that Jesus Christ was and is God and became a man. If we combine all of these verses together, we discover that there are three persons in one God. God is a plural-one or a Trinity. The word Trinity is the term we use to define this concept.

Believe Me Because Of My Works. Jesus knew that the religious leaders did not believe in Him. Therefore, He appealed to them to believe His teachings, miracles, wonders and signs.

If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father. John

Later in John 12:42 we will be told that many of the religious leaders did believe, but not all of them. Many of them did believe after hearing His teachings and seeing the miracles, signs, and wonders.

This is an important lesson for Christians. Miracles, signs, and wonders do not guarantee or motivate every person to believe in Christ. After the miracle of the feeding of five thousand (John 6:1-14), many believed that Jesus was the Prophet that Moses prophesied would come in Deuteronomy 18:15. But they did not follow Him. In Mark 6:52 Jesus reveals that the disciples did not gain any insight or understand that Jesus

was God as a result of the incredible sign of the feeding of five thousand. They were so impressed with the miracle that they missed the message of the miracle. The message was that Jesus was God. Who else can create food from nothing?

In John 6:26 Jesus said that even though the five thousand saw all of the signs He did, the people were only interested in Him because they ate the food and were filled. People may believe as a result of signs and wonders, but most people will not.

Yet, Jesus appealed to the religious leaders to believe Him because of His works—the miracles, signs, and wonders. His works could only be performed by deity. Therefore, He appealed to them to believe the Father was working through Him and that He was in the Father. Once again Jesus claimed to be God, and the Jews understood His claim. Therefore, once again they wanted to murder Him.

Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp. John 10:39 (NASB)

The Greek tense for “seeking” is in the imperfect tense. This tense reveals that they repeatedly tried to seize Him. They were eager and serious. Most likely they wanted to drag Him before the Sanhedrin Council where they could hold a trial, accuse Him of blasphemy, and then murder Him; but Jesus eluded them. The Sanhedrin Council was the place they took Jesus after He was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night He was crucified (John 18:19-27). The literal Greek says that Christ “escaped out of their hands.” It leaves us with the impression that they tried to grab Him in order to seize Him. Maybe on one occasion their hands had almost grabbed Him; but He escaped their grasp.

Jesus Went Beyond The Jordan. As a result, Jesus escaped from Jerusalem and went beyond the Jordan River.

And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. Many came to Him and were saying, “While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.” Many believed in Him there. John 10:40-42 (NASB)

John 10:22 reminds us that Jesus was in Jerusalem. This verse tells us that Jesus traveled to the place where John the Baptist had been originally teaching. John the Baptist was dead now since He had died about two years previously. Those who knew John the Baptist were amazed that Jesus performed miracles and that everything John the Baptist had said about Jesus was true. As a result many believed in Jesus.

Conclusion. The closing verses tell us that the people beyond the Jordan River believed in Jesus because of the testimony of John the Baptist about Him. They did not see any signs performed by John or by Jesus. In sharp contrast, the religious leaders in Jerusalem had greater reasons to believe in Jesus. They had heard His teachings and had seen His signs and wonders. But these proud, wealthy leaders who had more reasons to believe, did not believe. This reveals that miracles, signs, and wonders alone do not convince people to believe in Christ. Belief in Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-11).

Those who believe will live with God eternally and others will live in hell forever. Factual information and the sensational did not and does not always result in belief. Romans 1:22 gives us a biblical principle. Those who think they are wise will sin by rejecting God.

Professing to be wise, they became fools . . . Romans 1:22 (NASB)

But those who are humble will become wise when they believe in God and follow Him.

The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. Psalm 19:7 (NASB)

Which are you? Jesus’ miracles were real. Christ’s enemies did not deny that He performed miracles, signs and wonders. Instead, they tried to explain how He did them. They accused Him of using demonic power. The gospels record three times that they accused Jesus of using demonic power (Matthew 9:34; 12:24; Luke 11:15). *The Babylonian Talmud* accuses

Jesus of using demonic power.¹ The author of this statement died about A.D. 135. The message is simple. Jesus did miracles, signs and wonders. The Jews accused Him of blasphemy but Jesus said, “I am God.” Do you need miracles, signs and wonders in order to believe in Christ, or will you seek God’s forgiveness for your sins so that you can go to heaven? Will you be like the people beyond the Jordan who only need to hear the truth about Christ?

¹ Sanhedrin 43a. The Babylonian Talmud.