

Proving From Scripture That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God

- I. The Premise: Imagine that you are a Jew living in the mid-first century in or around Jerusalem. Your country seems to be heading towards an increasing political turmoil. The sentiments for independence from Rome are growing stronger.
- A. You are an informed individual and consider yourself a good citizen.
 - B. Like most of your countrymen, you have looked forward to a restoration of the liberty and prosperity which the rabbis have taught is the divine right of Israel.
 - C. You have anticipated that one day God would establish His kingdom in Israel and give your country supremacy over the nations.
 - D. You have heard that God would send Messiah to take David's throne and save Israel.
 - E. Like most of your countrymen, you have defaulted to the traditions of the elders as an accurate interpretation of the Law and the Prophets. **1PE 1:18.**
 - F. You are somewhat unsettled by recent events which had caused a great consternation in much of Judaea.
 1. One Jesus had arisen as a sort of prophet and had attracted much attention. He had a meteoric rise to popularity for a while.
 2. Multitudes had embraced his teachings and many suspected he was the Messiah of promise. **JOH 6:14; 7:31, 40-41.**
 3. However, his movement lost many followers and things had not really improved politically or economically since his appearance and early demise.
 4. He had been sometimes blunt in his speech, hardly befitting a man sent from God.
 5. He had consorted with publicans and sinners and even commended them rather than the scribes and Pharisees. **MAT 9:10-11; 21:31-32.**
 6. He had openly challenged and berated the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, the holy elders of Israel who were the experts in the blessed law of Moses. He argued that the real reason that they didn't appreciate him for who he was lay in the fact that they didn't really even believe Moses. **JOH 5:45-47.**
 7. He had openly disrupted the services at the temple, making a scene by overturning tables and whipping some of the officials. **JOH 2:13-17.**
 8. Worse yet, he had apparently even intimated that God may have an interest in Gentiles, which had justifiably irked his hearers. **LUK 4:24-28.**
 9. He had been sentenced to death by the Sanhedrin and Pilate had consented to his crucifixion. The charge had been *blasphemy*, for he had apparently claimed to be the Son of God. **MAR 14:61-64.**
 10. You were satisfied that the Jewish elders had done the right thing and besides, a real Messiah would not bear such shame and reproach. So, being in Jerusalem at that time, you had given your voice in calling for this Jesus' death. **MAT 27:20-25.**
 11. Rumors had circulated that this Jesus had risen from the dead, but then again, other rumors were that this was a sham set up by some of his overzealous disciples. **MAT 28:12-15.**
 12. Some of Jesus' followers were still trying to advance his views and you have noticed that a fair number of your countrymen have aligned with their cause, which for a while enjoyed considerable popularity. But then the tide turned against them in a bitter persecution and they were relegated to the status of a despised sect: a cult group. **ACT 24:5; 28:22.**
 13. These deceivers were adamant about their beliefs, willing to suffer gladly for them. This gives you pause, because since when do phonies and hypocrites ever make good martyrs?

- II. Then, one week you are in Thessalonica on business and you attend synagogue worship. Some character gets up and advocates that Jesus of Nazareth IS the Christ. What's more, he says he can prove it. You want to scream. You come to church to hear the familiar message about Israel being God's chosen people but then this guy starts pushing hot-buttons. You are about to leave when you realize that this is Saul of Tarsus, once the darling of the seminary set and a known enemy of the notorious "Christians." **ACT 17:1-3.**
- A. Next week, you have to be in Corinth and you happen to hear an impressive orator named Apollos. He is basically doing the same as Saul and was making a pretty good case for his belief about this Jesus. **ACT 18:28.**
 - B. There are some things that you notice about both Saul and Apollos.
 1. They weren't "in it for the money" as if Christianity was a gold mine. In fact, in Saul's case, his conversion was a huge financial and status downgrade.
 2. They were not just giving their opinions. They were quoting the sacred Scriptures which seemed to prove their point.
 - C. You feel a prick in your heart. Both men state that Jesus had likewise encouraged men to not accept him at his word, but to check his claims out in the Scriptures. **JOH 5:39.**
 - D. Saul's and Apollos' reasonings make you resolve to take out those old scrolls and finally read them for yourself. **ACT 17:11.**
- III. You have heard enough of the story of Jesus' birth, life, ministry and death that you feel you can check him out against what the Scriptures said about Messiah.
- A. You know that this Jesus was born to descendants of King David, and sure enough, you find where the prophets declared that this is the line of Messiah. **2SAM 7:12; PSA 132:11.**
 - B. Well, that could mean a lot of folks. But what of this claim of being *born of a virgin*? Lo and behold, a great prophet had said this of Messiah. **ISA 7:14.**
 1. His parents could have just made up this claim. But,
 2. If Joseph really was Jesus' father, why did he try to privately divorce his espoused wife when she got pregnant (**MAT 1:19**) and if that was a ploy to cover his own indiscretion, why did he relent and keep her?
 3. Second, if Mary was trying to put one over on her husband, wouldn't the lack of tokens of virginity eventually have proved her a liar? **DEU 22:20-21.**
 4. Third, if Mary was carrying a bastard, why did Joseph change his mind and decide to keep this unchaste woman as his wife and raise some other guy's child?
 5. Sooner or later SOMEBODY had to be born of a virgin if Isaiah were a true prophet. And after all, was it not Isaiah who had also prophesied that all Israel shall be saved? **ISA 45:17, 25.**
 6. Also, the virgin's son would be Immanuel (*God with us*, **MAT 1:23**), which apparently is just what this Jesus claimed to be. **JOH 8:58.**
 - C. You remember that Paul said that Jesus was born in Bethlehem (the genealogical and tax records bear that out), and how that some had overlooked this in their rush to deny him as Messiah. **LUK 2:1-7; JOH 7:41-43 c/w MIC 5:2.**
 - D. But many folk were born in Bethlehem, probably many of David's lineage. You remember Apollos saying that Joseph, Mary and Jesus slipped away into Egypt while he was young and returned after Herod's death. Then in your studies, you come across an interesting prophecy about God's Son. **MAT 2:13-15 c/w HOS 11:1.**
 - E. After that, Jesus and his family dwelt in Nazareth and you suddenly recall something that an old rabbi had said. **MAT 2:23.**

- F. Apollos, who was very familiar with John the Baptist's teachings, had mentioned that Jesus had basically picked up from and built upon John's work. Sure enough, that was what the prophets had said about Messiah: He would have a fore-runner. **MAR 1:1-3 c/w MAL 3:1; ISA 40:3 c/w JOH 1:23, 29.**
- G. Curiously, both John and Jesus preached that the *kingdom of God was at hand* (**MAT 3:1; MAR 1:15**). Then you stumble across the venerable prophecy of Daniel which said that God would set up His (obviously Messianic) kingdom in the days of the Roman empire and that Messiah would appear about 500 years after the Babylonian captivity. The general era certainly was correct. **DAN 2:44; 9:24-25.**
- H. According to multitudes of witnesses, Jesus had preached glad tidings, just as Isaiah had said that Messiah would do. **LUK 4:17-18; 8:1 c/w ISA 61:1.**
- I. Also, in tracing Jesus' itinerary, many had observed that he had come out of Galilee, which they considered to be a mark against him (**JOH 7:52**). But then again... **ISA 9:1-2 c/w MAT 4:12-16.**
- J. Jesus endeared himself to many of the people by numerous miracles, a fact undisputed by even the elders. **JOH 11:47.**
1. Moses had said that there would arise a miracle-working prophet like himself someday to Whom everyone would be accountable. **DEU 18:17-19.**
 2. Other prophets had arisen and worked some miracles, but nothing like Jesus had done. He had healed many, cast out devils, raised the dead, made the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, and even opened the eyes of one born blind (**JOH 9:32**). Truly, Jesus' miracle-working power did seem to be even greater than Moses' miracles, and Jesus' were all of a *positive* nature.
 3. What's more, these were the very kind of miracles that Isaiah had said Messiah would do when He came and Jesus maintained that they confirmed He was Christ. **ISA 35:3-6 c/w MAT 11:3-6.**
 4. Added to that, Jesus argued that these miracles would force the issue of accountability to him, just as Moses had predicted. **JOH 15:24-25.**
- K. Then there was the time when multitudes saw Jesus ride into Jerusalem on an ass. **MAT 21:1-9.**
1. A prophet had said that Israel's coming King would do this. **ZEC 9:9.**
 2. However, it could be that this Jesus was trying to force this prophecy's fulfillment to dupe the people.
 3. There certainly does, though, seem to be a lot of coincidences between Jesus' circumstances and the words of the prophets about Messiah.

- IV. The implications of Jesus being Messiah are staggering. You decide what you need is someone to guide you in sorting this out, a good policy (**ACT 8:31**). You look up Apollos and tell him of your findings and your doubts. You wonder aloud how some of these things concerning Jesus could be just coincidences and some things may have been staged to look as if they were prophetic fulfillments. Apollos sits you down and *reasons with you out of the Scripture*.
- A. He asks you if Jesus would have likely staged His sufferings to con the people.
 - B. He asks you if his detractors would knowingly have done anything to validate Jesus' claim to being Messiah, the Son of God.
 - C. You have to admit that those things would be unreasonable and then Apollos points out some interesting facts, which are acknowledged both by Jesus' supporters and detractors: things for which there was no shortage of witnesses.
 1. He reminds you how that Jesus was betrayed by one of his own company, just as the prophets had said.

- JOH 13:18 c/w PSA 41:9; MAT 26:14-15; 27:3-10 c/w ZEC 11:12-13.**
2. When he was arraigned before the Sanhedrin, Herod and Pilate, he held his peace, just as Messiah should do. If he was working a con, wouldn't this have been the time to admit it? **MAT 26:63; 27:12-14; LUK 23:9; JOH 19:9 c/w ISA 53:7.**
 3. It was a matter of public record that when Jesus was arraigned before Pilate, Pilate could find no fault in him worthy of death. Here again the Scriptures were fulfilled. **JOH 19:6 c/w ISA 53:9; PSA 35:19.**
 4. Likewise, hard-hearted men who certainly weren't trying to validate Jesus' righteousness unwittingly fulfilled Scripture by spitting on him and he took it boldly. **MAT 26:67; 27:30 c/w ISA 50:6.**
 5. They smote Jesus as Micah had spoken about Israel's judge. **MAT 27:30; MIC 5:1.**
 6. In the same fashion, his enemies scourged him, laying many stripes upon his back. **JOH 19:1 c/w ISA 50:6; 53:5.**
 7. Roman soldiers, ignorant of the Scriptures and hardly trying to confirm Jesus as Messiah, nevertheless fulfilled a prophecy of Him when they nailed Him to the cross. **MAT 27:35 c/w PSA 22:16.**
 8. They offered him the miserable comfort of vinegar to drink, just as David had prophesied. **MAT 27:34; JOH 19:28-29 c/w PSA 69:21.**
 9. They divided Jesus' garments to gamble for them, just as King David had prophesied. **MAT 27:35-36 c/w PSA 22:17-18.**
 10. Then there was the curious coincidence of Jesus being crucified along with a pair of common thieves, just as Isaiah had prophesied. **MAR 15:27-28 c/w ISA 53:12.**
 11. And what about the letter fulfillment of the words of mockery that were uttered at the foot of his cross? **MAT 27:39-43 c/w PSA 22:7-8.**
 12. Amazingly, in the midst of all this when you would have thought he would be cursing his oppressors, instead he prayed for their forgiveness, fulfilling another prophesy. **LUK 23:34 c/w ISA 53:12.**
 13. In his dying agonies, he cried out that God had forsaken him, a letter fulfillment of David's prophecy. **MAT 27:46 c/w PSA 22:1.**
 14. Likewise at the end, he committed his spirit to God, as David had said (**LUK 23:46-48 c/w PSA 31:5**). If he was a deceiver, was he that desperate to keep up the appearance of the con in doing things like this to force a prophetic fulfillment? What good was it going to do him when he would be dead?
 15. When the Roman soldiers came to hasten the death of the three men by breaking their legs, they found Jesus already dead.
 - a. A soldier pierced his side while others looked on, unwittingly fulfilling a prophecy of something that Zechariah had said would happen to God Himself! **JOH 19:34, 37 c/w ZEC 12:10.**
 - b. Strange how that the soldiers should not have to break any of Jesus' bones, exactly like David had said about some righteous person. **JOH 19:33, 36 c/w PSA 34:19-20.**
 - c. Then something comes to your memory that the rabbis often said at Passover when they read Moses' law: that the sacrificial lamb must not have broken bones. **EXO 12:46.**
 - d. Here all these things were happening at Passover to someone whom John the Baptist had called "...the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (**JOH 1:29**). The coincidences are too many!
 16. The possibility that the Passover lamb was a figure of a greater truth floods your mind with other possibilities.

- a. In your recent studies, you read that God used *similitudes* by the ministries of the prophets (**HOS 12:10**) and you know that a similitude is a likeness of something or someone.
 - b. You also recall how that Moses' tabernacle, etc., was not God's reality but only a pattern of God's reality. **EXO 25:9, 40.**
 - c. Maybe all those repetitive sacrifices under the law were exactly what Paul had said they were: ineffectual in taking away sin by the very fact that they had to be repeated. **HEB 10:1-4.**
 - d. This would tie in with what David had said about the kind of sacrifice that God was really looking for: a righteous man. **HEB 10:5-9 c/w PSA 40:6-8.**
16. Finally, a wealthy fellow gave his tomb to Jesus in fulfillment of one last prophecy of Isaiah. **MAT 27:57-60 c/w ISA 53:9.**

- V. By now, your head is reeling. The evidence is overwhelming. You are embarrassed as to how ignorant you really were about what God had said through His prophets about the true nature of Messiah and His mission. Messiah was meant to suffer humiliation, which is so contrary to what you had expected. **ACT 26:22-23.**
- A. You realize that you, your fellow Jews and your own leaders have, through indifference to and ignorance of the Scriptures, killed your own Messiah exactly as Saul of Tarsus had been declaring. **ACT 13:27.**
 - B. You are ashamed and your guilt presses upon your heart like a lead weight. What now?
 - C. Then you remember something else Paul had said. God had raised Jesus from the dead after three days and nights like Jesus had said about Himself. **ACT 13:29-30; MAT 12:40; 27:63.**
 - D. Paul had gone on to say that there were manifold undeniable evidences of and witnesses to His resurrection, including himself. **ACT 13:31; 1:3 c/w 1CO 15:3-7.**
 - E. Paul also had declared that Jesus' resurrection was the fulfillment of the promises God made to the fathers and because of this, Jesus is now reigning on David's throne as Judge of all. **ACT 13:32-37; 17:31.**
 - F. You are finally grasping the precarious state of your soul. You feel the pressure of conviction and accountability for your actions. But then you remember something else Paul said: there is forgiveness for them that put their trust in Him. **ACT 13:38-39.**
- VI. Things have happened so fast for you. Suddenly, you know you stand guilty before God. You turn to Apollos and ask, "What shall I do?" Apollos responds that he can do no better than to give you the same hope-filled instruction to which multitudes in the same position as you responded at the preaching of the apostle Peter:

(Acts 2:38-39) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

- VII. What the Jew in this scenario was told applies to any who are shocked out of their ignorance to gospel truth that they have overlooked or denied, though it was in Scripture all along.