



Jesus: God, Myth or Lunatic?

Birches III Community Group

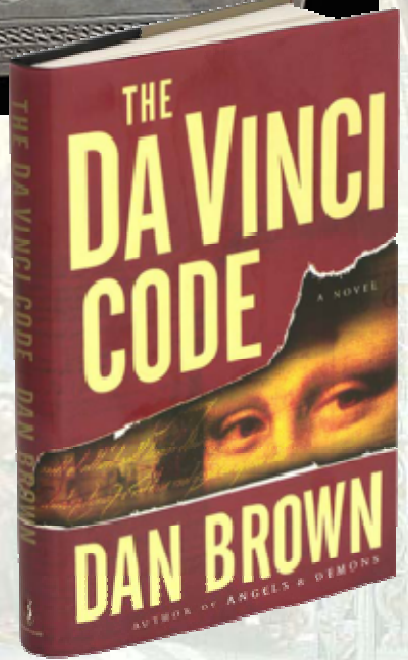
By

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God, Myth or Lunatic?

- Credentials of the Messiah
- Prophecy Fulfillment
- Christ's Hypostatic
- Historical Facts
- Fictional Arguments..
- Jesus' claims



The Credentials of the Messiah

Genesis 3:15

Messiah will defeat Satan

Genesis 49:10

Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah

Deut. :15-18

God will raise up a prophet

Isaiah 7:14

Messiah to be born of a virgin

Isaiah 9:5

Messiah is God

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Suffering servant – Perfect atonement for sins

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Messiah brings a new covenant

Micah 5:1

Messiah to be born in Bethlehem

Zechariah 9:9

Messiah will come lowly riding on a donkey

Zechariah 12:10

Messiah will be pierced and Jerusalem will mourn

Psalms 22

Messiah will suffer

Daniel 9:24-27

Messiah will come & die before the destruction of Jerusalem

Prophecy Fulfillment

The **Gospel of Matthew** quotes the Old Testament saying “**He is coming**” and then he says “**he is here**”:

- **Isa 7:14** So, the Lord Himself shall give you a sign. Behold, the virgin will conceive and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel.
- **Mat 1:22** Now all this happened so that might be **fulfilled** that *which* was spoken of the LORD by the prophet, saying,
Mat 1:23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive in *her* womb, and will bear a son. And they will call His name Emmanuel," which being interpreted is, God with us.
- **Hos 11:1** When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called My son out of Egypt.
- **Mat 2:15** And he was there until the death of Herod; so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the LORD through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called My Son."

The Pierced Messiah

• **Zec 12:10** And I will pour on the house of David, and on the people of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of prayers. *And they shall look on Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him*, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be bitter over Him, as the bitterness over the first-born.

• **Joh 19:32** Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who was crucified with Him.

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

Joh 19:34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side *with* a lance, and instantly there came out blood and water.

Joh 19:35 And he who saw bore record, and his record is true. And he knows that he speaks true, so that you might believe.

Joh 19:36 For these things were done so that the *Scripture might be fulfilled*, "Not a bone of Him shall be broken (**Psalm 34:20**)."

Joh 19:37 And again another Scripture says, "*They shall look upon Him whom they pierced.*"

The Suffering Messiah

- **Psa 22:1** *To the Chief Musician, on the deer of the dawn. A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why have You forsaken me,*
- **Mar 15:34** And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? (which being translated is, My God, My God, why did You forsake Me?)
- **Psa 22:17** I can count all My bones; they look *and* stare at Me.
Psa 22:18 They divide My garments among them and cast lots for My clothing.
- **Mat 27:35** And they crucified Him, dividing His garments, casting a lot; so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "They parted My garments among them, and they cast a lot for My clothing."

• **Isa 53:4** Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

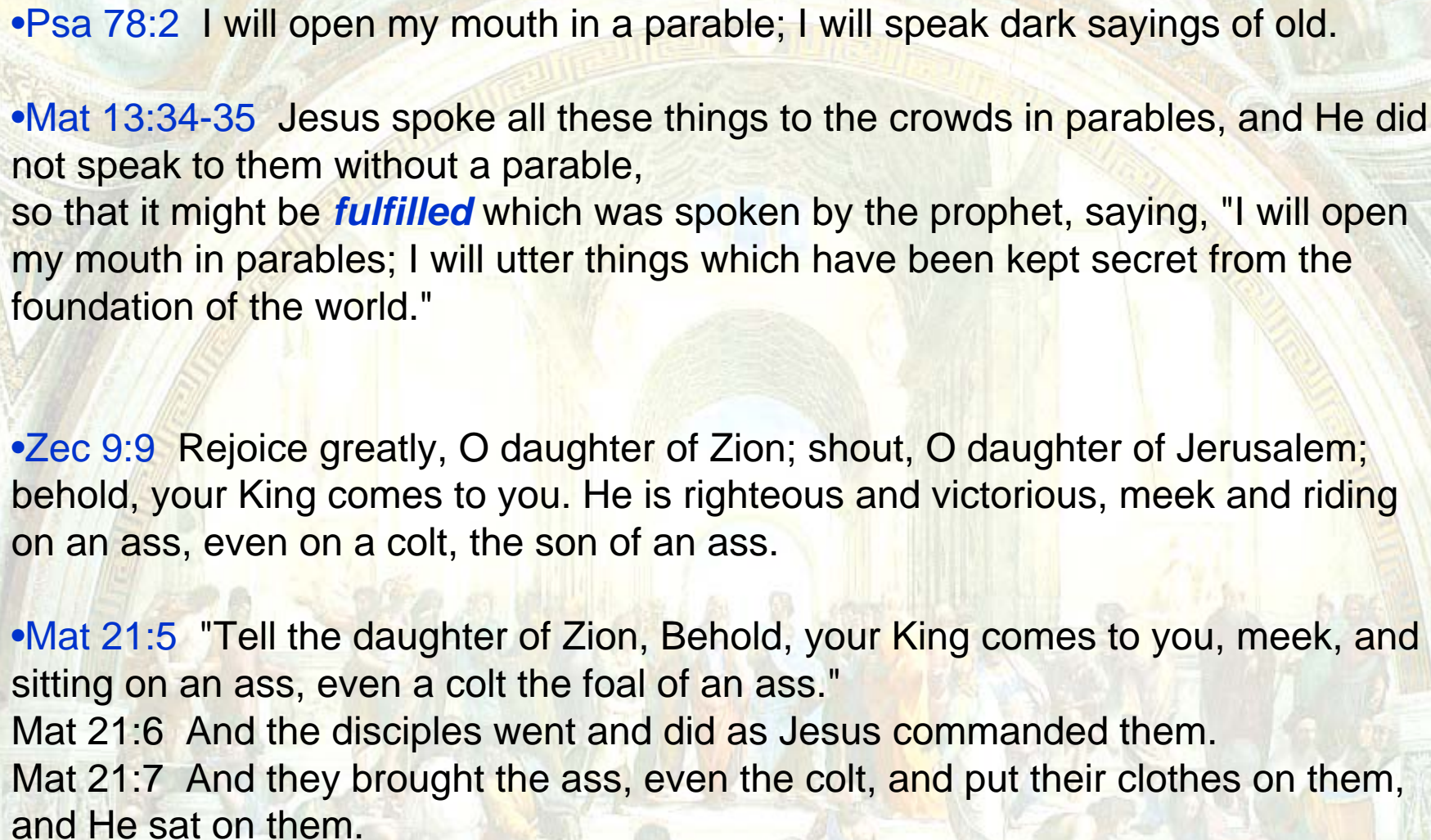
• **Mat 8:16-17** And evening coming on, they brought to Him many who had been possessed with demons. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick so that it might be **fulfilled** which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "He took *on Himself* our weaknesses and bore *our* sicknesses."

• **Mat 12:13-21** Then He said to the man, Stretch out your hand. And he stretched *it* out, and it was restored whole like the other. Then the Pharisees went out and held council against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

But when Jesus knew *it*, He withdrew Himself from there. And great crowds followed Him, and He healed them all. And He warned them that they not make Him known,

so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "Behold My Child whom I have chosen; My Beloved, in whom My soul is well pleased. I will put My Spirit on Him, and He shall declare judgment to the nations. He shall not strive, nor cry, nor shall any one hear His voice in the streets. He will not break a bruised reed, and He will not quench a smoking wick, until He sends out judgment to victory. And in His name the nations shall trust."

(Isaiah 42:1-4)

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- **Psa 78:2** I will open my mouth in a parable; I will speak dark sayings of old.
 - **Mat 13:34-35** Jesus spoke all these things to the crowds in parables, and He did not speak to them without a parable, so that it might be **fulfilled** which was spoken by the prophet, saying, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."
 - **Zec 9:9** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, your King comes to you. He is righteous and victorious, meek and riding on an ass, even on a colt, the son of an ass.
 - **Mat 21:5** "Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your King comes to you, meek, and sitting on an ass, even a colt the foal of an ass."
Mat 21:6 And the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them.
Mat 21:7 And they brought the ass, even the colt, and put their clothes on them, and He sat on them.

Christ's Hypostatic and the Trinity



John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Understanding the Two Natures of Christ

- Was Jesus 50% Man and 50% God?
- Was He 100% God and 0% Man?
- Was He 100% God and 100% Man?



• 1 Tim. 2:5

"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

• 1 John 5:20

*²⁰ We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true--even in **his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.***

Understanding Christ's Hypostatic

As God...

- He is worshiped (Matt. 2:2,11; 14:33).
- He was called God (John 20:28; Heb. 1:8)
- He was called Son of God (Mark 1:1)
- He is prayed to (Acts 7:59).
- He is sinless (1 Pet. 2:22; Heb. 4:15).
- He knows all things (John 21:17).
- He gives eternal life (John 10:28).
- All the fullness of deity dwells in Him (Col. 2:9).

As Man...

- He worshiped the Father (John 17).
- He was called man (Mark 15:39; John 19:5).
- He was called Son of Man (John 9:35-37)
- He prayed to the Father (John 17).
- He was tempted (Matt. 4:1).
- He grew in wisdom (Luke 2:52).
- He died (Rom 5:8).
- He has a body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:39).



The Trinity

- The doctrine of the trinity is not truth form natural theology, but of revelation
- The Athanasian Creed:
“***We worship one God in the trinity, and the trinity in unity; we distinguish among the persons, but we do not divide the substance***”
- This doctrine is not in conflict with the unity of God

- Classic text: Matt. 3:16,17

As soon as **Jesus** was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the **Spirit of God** descending like a dove and lighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "**This is my Son**, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

The Trinity

Father

Psalm 90:2
1 Kings 8:27
1 Jn. 3:20
Gen. 17:1
James 1:17

The Son

Micah 5:2
Matt. 28:20
Jn. 16:30; 21:17
Matt. 28:18
Heb. 1:13; 13:8

Jn. 1:1,14; col.2:9
Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:15-17
Jn. 2:19; 10:17
Col. 1:27
Heb. 2:11
Jn. 1:3; 5:21
Rev. 2:23

Holy Spirit

Rom. 8:11
Psalm 139:7-10
Cor. 2:10-11
Luke 1:35
Rev 19:10

Acts 5:3-4
Job 33:4, 26:13
Rom. 8:11
Jn. 14:17
1 Pet. 1:2
2 Cor. 3:6,8
1 Cor. 2:10

Eternal
Omnipresent
Omniscient
Omnipotent
Immutable

Called God
Creator
Resurrects
Indwells
Sanctifies
Life Giver
**Searches/
heart**

DT 6:4 **Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one**

The Father

Lord
Creator
Eternal
Omnipotent
Omniscient
Immutable

Creator (Mt. Ge. 1:2)
Eternal (He. 9:14)
Omniscient (1 Cor. 2:10)
Omnipotent (Lk. 1:35)
Omnipresent (Psal. 139:7-10)

Eternal (Jn. 17:5,24)
Omnipresent (Mt. 28:20)
Omniscient (Jn. 16:30)
Omnipotent (Jn. 5:19)
Immutable (He. 1:12; 13:8)
Forgive sins (Mt. 9:2,6)
Creator (He. 1:10-12)

God

The Holy Spirit

The Son

Dealing with misconceptions, about the Deity Of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ



Historical Facts

- Jesus lived His public life in the land of Palestine under the Roman rule of Tiberius (ad 14-37).

There are four Roman historical sources for his reign:

- Tacitus (55-117), Suetonius (70-160), Velleius Paterculus (a contemporary), and Dio Cassius (3rd century).

- There are two Jewish historical resources that describe events of this period: Josephus (37-100?), writing in Greek, and the Rabbinical Writings (written in Hebrew after 200, but much of which would have been in oral form prior to that time).

Josephus Jewish Antiquities (c.93 C.E.)

(later interpolations in brackets)

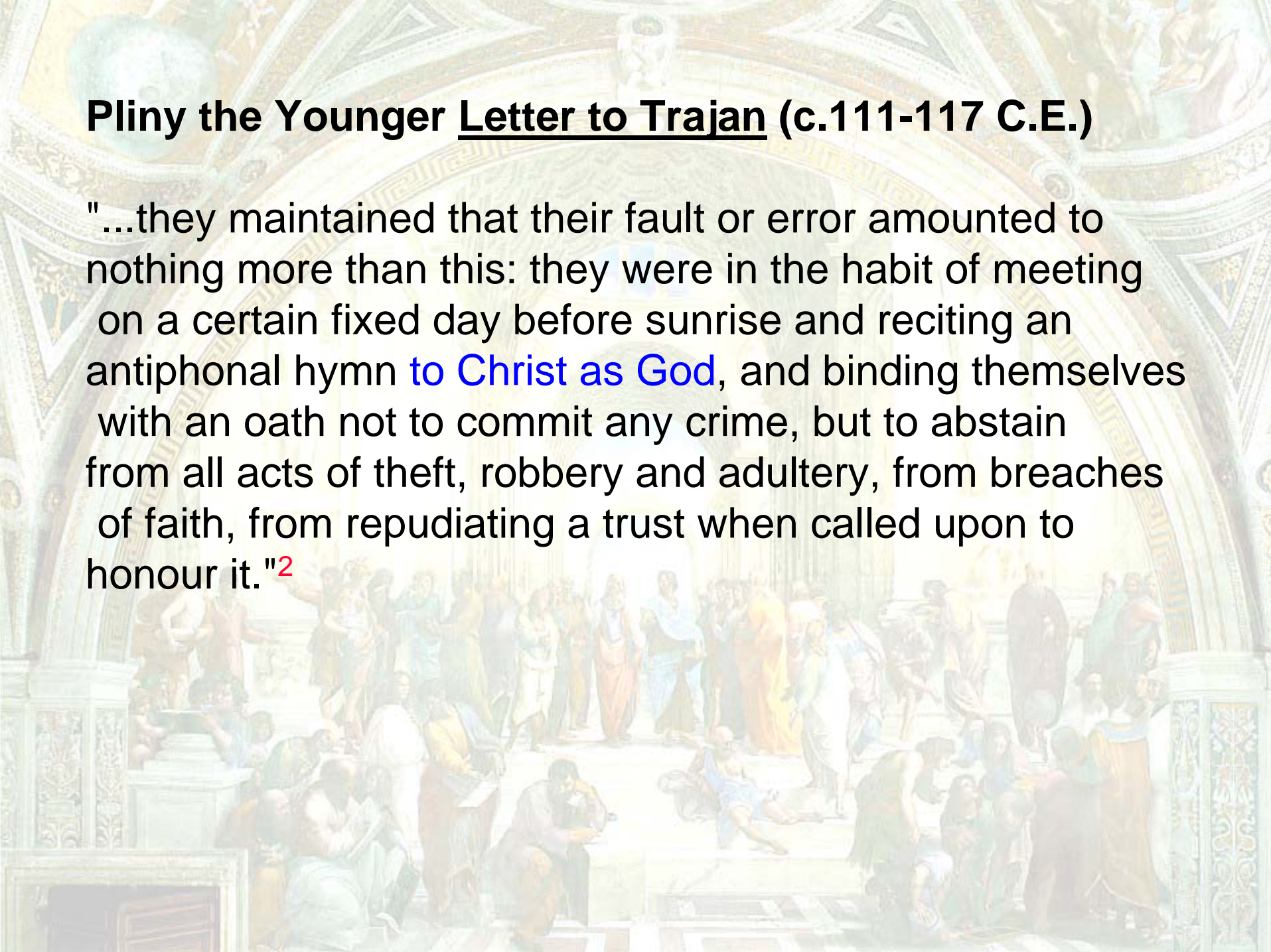
"Now, there was about this time **Jesus, a wise man** [if it be lawful to call him a man], for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure.

He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. [He was the Messiah.] And when **Pilate**, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the **cross**, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him [for he appeared to them alive again at the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him].

And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this date.¹

Pliny the Younger Letter to Trajan (c.111-117 C.E.)

"...they maintained that their fault or error amounted to nothing more than this: they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before sunrise and reciting an antiphonal hymn **to Christ as God**, and binding themselves with an oath not to commit any crime, but to abstain from all acts of theft, robbery and adultery, from breaches of faith, from repudiating a trust when called upon to honour it."²





Tacitus Roman Annals (c.115-117 C.E.)

"They got their name from Christ, who was executed by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius.

That checked the pernicious superstition for a short time, but it broke out afresh--not only in Judea, where the plague first arose, but in Rome itself, where all the horrible and shameful things in the world collect and find a home."³

Sanhedrin 43a (200-500 C.E.)

"On the eve of the Passover Yeshu⁴ was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Any one who can say anything in his favor, let him come forward and plead on his behalf. But since nothing was brought forward in his favor he was hanged on the eve of Passover!'"⁵

¹Antiquities xviii. 33 (early second century) from F.F. Bruce, Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 37.

²Pliny, Epistles x.96, from Bruce, p.26.

³Tacitus, Annals xv, 44, from Bruce, p. 22.

⁴Talmudic designation of Jesus.

⁵"Sanhedrin," vol 3 of Nezikin, Babylonian Talmud, edited by Isidore Epstein, reprint (London: Soncino, 1938), 281.

Conspiracy Theories

- “Jesus Christ never claimed to be divine and was never worshipped as a deity until the council of Nicea in 325 A.D.”
DaVinci Code
- “Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene” DaVinci Code
- “Jesus’ coffin was found in Jerusalem” Cameron’s Discovery TV Documentary
- “According to Cameron and Jacobovic, the statistical improbability of these names belonging to another family that that of Jesus Christ is 600 to 1” Cameron’s Discovery TV Documentary
- Jesus’ body was stolen by the Disciples & The Swoon Theory

Jesus' Claims

- MK 8:29 *"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am? Peter answered, "You are the Christ. "*
- Instead of rebuking Peter, Jesus responds,
MT 16:17 *Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.*
- Did Jesus denied being the Messiah?
- At his trial before the Sanhedrin, Jesus' words on the subject of his messiahship are noteworthy:

● MK 14:60 Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?"

⁶¹ But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"

⁶² "***I am***," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

●The Samaritan woman at Jacob's well in Sychar:

The woman said, "*I know that Messiah*" (called Christ) "*is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.*"

Then Jesus declared, "***I who speak to you am he***"

(John 4:25-26).

I AM.....

- Perhaps the most provocative title, though not often thought of as such is recorded in John, it was reserved in the Old Testament for God (Exodus 3:6)
- "'I tell you the truth,' Jesus answered, 'before Abraham was born, **I AM!**'" (John 8:58).
- The fact that the crowds took up stones to stone him at that point is evidence that Jesus claimed the covenant name of God for himself.
- Mat.9:2 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

“Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene” DaVinci Code

•The author of the DaVinci Code uses the Gnostic Gospel of Philip verse 59 to support his assumption that Jesus was married to May Magdalene.

59. The wisdom which (humans) call barren is herself the Mother of the Angels. And the Companion of the [*Christ*] is Mariam the Magdalene. The [*Lord Loved*] Mariam more than [] Disciples, [] kissed her often on her [*mouth*].¹

•Mr. Brown speculates that the word *companion* in Aramaic means “*spouse*”. Well, this text was not written in Aramaic but in Coptic:

Companion (36 59); Greek KOINWNOS (companion, partner; NB plural at Lk 5:10!); the feminine of this Greek word *never* means ‘wife’ (which would have to be GAMETH or perhaps GUNH, as in Mt 1:24); furthermore, contrary to the claim made in the popular novel *The Da Vinci Code* (2003)

•What about the Kiss? The Bible clearly states the practice among the Churches:

1Co 16:20 All the brothers greet you. Greet one another with a *holy kiss*.

Jesus' coffin was found in Jerusalem"

- If this true then Christianity is false. The Resurrection never took place...the Bible lies when it mentions that He was seen by 500 believers after the resurrection.
- In 1980, Six inscriptions were discovered with names similar to or the same as some of Jesus Christ's family and disciples: Jesua, son of Joseph, Mary, Mariamene e Mara, Mathew , Jofa, Judah son of Jesua.
- Cameron attempts to prove that *Mariamene e Mara* is *Mary of Magdalene*, and that she and Jesus had a son named "Judah son of Jesua".
- it should be noted that the names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph were extremely common in the first century. About 25% of the women in Jesus' day were named Mary. Joseph was also a common name. And about one in ten had the name, "Jesua". Dr. Evans indicates that approximately 100 tombs have been discovered in Jerusalem with the name "Jesus" and 200 with the name "Joseph." The name "Mary" is on far more.
- The statistical support for the entire "Jesus tomb" theory rises or falls on the question of Mary Magdalene. So did the name Mariamene e Mara mean Mary Magdalene, as Cameron and Jacobovici attempt to prove? Bauckham notes, *"The first use of 'Mariamene' for Magdalene dates to a scholar who was born in 185, suggesting that Magdalene wouldn't have been called that at her death."*

Questions for Cameron and Jacobovici

- Since the custom was to bury the dead in their home town, why would Mary and Joseph's family tomb be in Jerusalem instead of Nazareth?
- Why didn't Jesus' enemies, the Jewish leaders, expose the tomb? They searched unsuccessfully throughout Jerusalem for any evidence of Jesus' body, claiming that Jesus' disciples had stolen it. They hated Jesus enough to want him crucified, and would have been elated to discover his tomb, if it indeed existed.
- Why didn't contemporary Roman or Jewish historians write about the tomb? Not one single contemporary historian mentions the tomb in question.
- Why would Jesus' disciples endure torture for claiming he was resurrected, if they knew it was a hoax? New Testament scholar Darrell Bock asks, "why would Jesus' family or followers bury his bones in a family plot and then turn around and preach that he had been physically raised from the dead?"

Evidence from Changed Lives

- Who's to say what is true?
- To some people, the controversy over this event is proof that we cannot possibly know for sure what happened concerning an incident which occurred almost two millennia ago
- However, the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus goes far beyond the discussion of source documents and historical records.
- evidence is still being presented today as individuals are experiencing the changed life which is the result of that resurrection.

Resurrection Appearances

Event	Place	Day	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John	Acts	1 Cor
Empty tomb	Jerusalem	Sunday	28:1-8	16:1-8	24:1-12	20:1-10		
Mary Magdal.	Jerusalem	Sunday		16:9-11		20:11-18		
Other women	Jerusalem	Sunday	28:9-10					
2 Disciples	Emmaus	Sunday		16:12-13	24:13-32			
To Peter	Jerusalem	Sunday			24:34:00			15:05
10 Disciples	Jerusalem	Sunday			24:36-43	20:19-25		
11 disciples upper room	Jerusalem	Following Sunday		16:14		20:26-31		15:05
to 7 disciples fishing	Sea of Galilee	some time later				21:1-14		
to 11 disciples on a mountain	Galilee	some time later	28:16-20	16:15-18				
to more than 500	?	some time later						15:06
To James	?	some time later						15:07
To disciples in His ascen.	Mount of Olives	40 days after resu.			24:36-51		1:3-9	15:07
To Paul	Damascus	years later					9:1-19 22:3-16 26:9-18	9:01