

# Free research paper on the divinity of jesus

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## **Introduction**

The main four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John provide four views of the divinity of Jesus. Through the interpretations of Bible scholars, these gospels reveal specific and intentional narratives of the story of Jesus and do so with different underpinnings to substantiate the view of the divinity of Jesus for the purpose of the writer. It is only through the historical sense of the biblical scholar interpretations does any sense of these main gospels handling of the divinity of Jesus have any understanding based upon scripture.

The scholarly handling of biblical scripture of the New Testament not only provides substance to understanding the mindset of the different sects of the early Christians who were both Jew and Gentile, but also gives a look at the way the political rumblings among the early Christians came about. Of the four main gospels and researching their handling of the divinity of Jesus and how it differed from Paul's it is Mark's narrative that leaves the reader or listener with much food for thought as outlined in the section on Mark in this paper. In seeking a better understanding of the sacrifice capping the teachings and example of Jesus, the revelations of this search remain haunting and significant with a different look at the gospels as never before.

## **Matthew**

Goenaga interprets there are five references in the book of Matthew where the Matthew "alludes" to the divinity of Jesus. Matthews's first reference to the divinity of Jesus appears when compared to the Old Testament Hebrew and the use of the word "Lord." Mathew alludes to this in discussing how

John the Baptist arranges or prepares for the coming of the LORD. Since all reference to the Lord in the old Hebrew YHWH meant the formal name for God, Goenaga offers this is what Matthew is calling the divine Jesus - Lord. According to Goenaga's research of the scripture of Matthew and that he discovered alongside the wilderness prophecy the reference to Jesus, Immanuel - or God with us - this is a reference to the divinity of Jesus as the arrival of God the divine because he is the same one the way is prepared as the Son of God. (2010)

Goenaga further argues how Matthew repeats his alluding to Jesus the divine as he describes in the biblical text how upon the death of Jesus he called John the Baptist "Elijah" thus aligning with Malachi -- prophesizing God would send the Hebrews a prophet named Elijah in preparation of the Day of the LORD who is coming (Mal 4: 5). (2010)

Goenaga then interprets his research of Matthew and the rather obtuse manner the disciple continues alluding to the divinity of Jesus while describing the how Jesus works - like the works of YHWH - as a transfiguration and appearance of God (Theophanous). (2010)

As an interpretive handling of the Book of Matthew, Goenaga further explores the disciple's alluding to the divinity of Jesus reasoning the fact Jesus was charged as a blasphemer -- which Goenaga insists adds strength to the insinuation by Matthew Jesus belongs only to God and that Immanuel Jesus is God coming to earth - to the people. Further of Goenaga's study of the Matthew text aligns with the genealogy of the messiah of King David whose coming meant the establishment and rule of an eternal kingdom (Mttw 1: 1-17). Matthew's concluding remarks at the point of the resurrection

of Jesus with the affirmation of the authority of Jesus in both heaven and on the earth, which Goenaga points out matches the Davidic king OT scriptures. (2010)

Goenaga's investigation of the Matthew scripture, while never directly saying Jesus the Divine, nonetheless throughout comes back to the main point of Immanuel Jesus. With Matthew, according to Goenaga, it is in this repeated reference to Jesus with the Immanuel aspect and the literal meaning of Immanuel God is with us that presses the argument. Goenaga offers this as the most solid evidence of Matthew's doctrine of the divinity of Jesus.

Matthew's texts also include the final command Jesus gives his disciples with his declaration he is with them until the end of time. Thus, the Book of Matthew begins with the messianic genealogy of King David and the promise of the messiah, the Immanuel Jesus as God is with us, and then Jesus himself acknowledging his descent from the lineage of King David as proof of the messianic prophecy come true. Goenaga's research provides sound basis for the manner the narrative aspect of the Book of Matthew refers obtusely to the divinity of Jesus because of the handling of how ' God is with us' in naming Immanuel Jesus repeatedly in the text. (2010)

## **Mark**

Reading the gospel of Mark provides no clear or direct assignment of divinity to Jesus. Rather, the overwhelming feeling is about him as a man born of man. In providing meaning for this approach of Mark in the scripture, the fact the Book of Mark is the first of the gospels written and the one serving as a matrix for the other gospels following has significance according to White and Koester. They explain Mark is himself an enigma who most likely is a

follower of Peter with an understanding of the life of Jesus through the decades of oral stories of the birth, the miracles he performed, his doctrine/message, his crucifixion, and resurrection. Mark's narrative according to White and Koester is clearly about the passion - the death of Jesus. (1998)

In narrating the days and events leading to the crucifixion of Jesus, Mark writes about the "intention" of the life of Jesus. In other words, the events of Jesus' life leading to his death are center to the gospel of Mark. In telling the story of Jesus "the man" in this manner. The feeling of the gospel of Mark comes across that Mark views Jesus as an enigmatic figure -- making Jesus into a mysterious figure to the point Jesus intentionally blocks any understanding among his disciples as well as the people who he is. (White & Koesler, 1998)

Further explanation of the gospel of Mark by White and Koester reveals Jesus telling those who witness his doing miracles to keep the deeds a secret. Jesus gathers the disciples in clandestine places away from the eyes of the people to teach them so no one can see or hear what he imparts to these chosen few and further makes Jesus come across as secretive. White and Koester interpret Mark's reason in portraying Jesus this manner because he wants to provide believers another concept of Jesus' image as a means of correcting an existing view of Jesus among the Christians -- to correct a misunderstanding "who" he is. (1998)

Intentionally writing the gospel to provide a new meaning to the people is Mark's intention as it aligns with the Jewish revolt against the Romans. White and Koesler both decide this approach is aimed at giving reason for the

revolt and why the revolt failed with the destruction of Jerusalem all centered on the death of Jesus. Mark implies Jesus' ability performing miracles does not set him apart. Rather, Mark's gospel directly implies that Jesus is far "more" than a miracle worker. Mark is setting the stage for the Messiah aspect of Jesus. Mark's gospel makes it clear though the disciples relay to Jesus they know he is the Messiah, they really do not understand the scope of what this means. (1998)

The understanding of Jesus' role as the Messiah as far as Mark's gospel explains is about the divinity of the Messiah and that it is only made so through the death of Jesus -- not his miracles, not anything of this world except his birth for the sole purpose of his death. The gospel of Mark forces the issue of the death of Jesus making him the Messiah in a way never presented in Jewish tradition or through the teachings of Jesus. Mark's gospel shows that it is never clear to Jesus' followers who know he is the Messiah that it means he must die. In fact, until Jesus' death and resurrection the disciples completely miss this point of the Messiah mission of Jesus. (White & Koesler, 1998).

Mark's gospel underscores the divinity of Jesus with his death and resurrection dispelling his claim as the Messiah based upon the miracles he performed. The destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, the death of Jesus and his resurrection are the framework of the telling of the messianic secret not even his disciples understood. It is the experience of the passion that takes the Son of Man and the death and resurrection that makes him the Savior - the Messiah - the Son of God and defines his divinity according to the gospel of Mark. (White & Koesler, 1998)

## Luke

Remembering the gospel of Luke comes during a much later time during the history of Christianity of the Greek Hellenistic era and Roman rule with the gospel geared to the gentile Christian -- people unaware of the Hebrew OT renderings of the coming of a Messiah. According to Attridge, Hendrix, Koester, and White Luke's gospel depicts Jesus the teacher and a philosopher and not surprisingly -- a philosopher of the ilk of Socrates. : Luke makes Jesus' message full of ethical foundations full of reasoning. Unlike the passion of Jesus' death in the gospel of Mark, Luke has Jesus going to the cross inexorably and in a martyr-like manner. (1998)

Luke's gospel weaves a framework of political correctness for the times in his message to the gentile Christians according to Attridge et al. and in doing so telling of the trial of Jesus, Luke underscores the blamelessness of Pilate and assuring he is not any enemy of, or the bad person to Jesus during his trial. Luke's message also makes it clear Jesus' is neither rebel nor rebel rouser. Rather, the message Jesus imparts remains one of a teacher, sometimes-social critic and reformer as a positive influence on the Christians in the Greco-Roman dynasty. (Attridge et al, 1998)

The divinity of Jesus in the gospel of Luke comes across as the divine man according to the interpretation of Attridge et al. In this, Luke makes Jesus the man ordained with divine powers through his teachings and through the miracles, he perform. (1998) Thus, Mark's gospel directly and intentionally dispelling this as the divinity of Jesus in the first of the gospels, evidently does not have any impact on how Luke perceives the divinity of Jesus.

## **John**

White et al interpret this difference as an intentional symbolism of Jesus like the thousands of slaughtered lambs taking place at the time he is already dying on the cross. John makes anyone reading or listening to this portion of the gospel considers the role of Jesus as the Lamb of God. Symbolism comparing to the Jewish Passover lamb makes Jesus' crucifixion the sacrifice for the sins of humanity. The divinity of Jesus according to the gospel of John is his sacrifice symbolically as a sacrificial lamb. (1998)

As White et al further explain, the language John uses in his gospel remains antagonistic intentionally for turning Jewish ideas against them as signified by Jesus' reference to drinking wine as the blood of the lamb and its divine symbolism. The drinking of any kind of blood is an abomination in the eyes of Jewish tradition. Thus, John's gospel creates the symbolism of the divinity of Jesus and at the same time intentionally creates not only antagonism against Jews but separates them from the precepts of the Christian Jesus as divine (White et al, 1998).

The gospel of John with its political, anti Jewish cultural nuances provides another look at how the early Christians concluded the Jewish Messiah in Jesus held validity but nonetheless proved the validity of condemning the Jewish religion for ultimately rejecting Jesus as their Messiah. John's gospel remains the story of Jesus the divine symbol in the guise of a man who chooses to come from his father's home above to this unthankful but needful; world below/ John's view and presentation of the divinity of Jesus is this decision to come from above to the earth below intent upon fulfilling his purpose as the sacrificial lamb whose divine blood provides the means for



the salvation of any accepting this sacrifice and the gift it indeed symbolizes. (White et al, 1998)

## **Conclusion**

The main four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John provide four views of the divinity of Jesus. With each gospel, the divinity of Jesus as narrated remains the substance of a specific focus each writer of these gospels intended. In doing so, the essence of the divine Jesus juxtaposes the mind to a meeting with the spiritual underpinnings of Jesus' life and purpose. In contrasting, Mark and John's gospel of the crucifixion nowhere is this dichotomy of man and divine expressed so well. Mark's narrative of the passion of Jesus on his journey to becoming the risen Christ remains emotionally compelling in contrast to the divinity of Jesus in his decision to leave his father's house for the purpose of sacrificing his mortal life on the cross. It is John's narrative showing little passion of the anguish Jesus suffered but rather focusing on Jesus' resignation' in understanding as he speaks of the end of his journey as " finished.'

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