

Evidence that Jesus Christ is the Son of God

For people who don't believe in Jesus, below is a list of some of most compelling reasons that we can think of to give credence to the claim that Jesus is truly the Son of God:

Reason 1.

The prophets foretold the life of Jesus:

The Old Testament has dozens of prophecies about a Messiah. All of these prophecies were written hundreds of years before Jesus was born. Christians believe that Jesus is the fulfillment of these prophecies. And no other person in history could make the same claim. In Isaiah 42:1-9, for example, the prophet speaks of a servant of God who would be an inspiration to Gentiles (non-Jews) and bring justice to the world. Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of this promise. The teachings of Jesus now govern the lives of as many as 2 billion people worldwide. Christianity is the world's largest religion. Jesus has been more of an inspiration to more people than any other person in history.

Reason 2.

The fulfillment of Jesus' prophecies (Part 1) Jesus said His words would spread worldwide, and that His words would never be forgotten:

As quoted in Luke 21:33, Jesus said that regardless of what happens in the world, His words will never be forgotten. Here we are 2000 years later and the words of Jesus are all around us. There are 2 billion Christians in the world and the Bible is most widely published, most widely circulated book in the history of the world. Of course, we still have the recorded sayings of other people who lived in ancient times. But, their words are not as well-known as the words of Jesus. Of all the people who have ever lived, can you think of a single person who could have made this claim more convincingly than Jesus - that his words would never be forgotten?

As quoted in Matthew 24:14, Jesus said that His teachings (the Gospel) would be preached throughout the world before the End Times arrived. This prophecy has been fulfilled. The lessons of Jesus have been taught to people in every country in the world. And this feat was accomplished before the worldwide availability of radio, television or the Internet. Can any other religious figure make this same claim? Jesus made that claim. And that claim has been fulfilled.

Reason 3.

The fulfillment of Jesus' prophecies (Part 2) Jesus prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple:

In Matthew 24:1-2, Jesus says the Temple would be destroyed. In fact, He said that not one stone would be left standing on top of another. This was fulfilled about 40 years later, in the year 70, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and killed an estimated 1.1 million Jews. During the destruction, fire was set to the Temple. The fire caused the gold leaf on the Temple ceiling to melt. The melting gold flowed down the walls, settling into crevices. The Romans later pried apart the stones to remove the gold. This fulfilled Jesus Christ's prophecy that not one stone would be left standing on top of another.

In Luke 21:24, Jesus says that the Jews soon would be forced out of Jerusalem and that the city would be destroyed. He said Jerusalem would be trampled upon by the Gentiles (non-Jews), meaning the Gentiles would take control over Jerusalem. And, that is precisely what happened. The Romans destroyed Jerusalem in the year 70, and again in the year 132. During the two destructions, the Romans killed a total of about 1.6 million Jews. And more than 100,000 Jews were forced into slavery and exile. For the next few centuries, Jews were not allowed to live in Jerusalem. And the Jews did not

regain control of Jerusalem until the Six Day War in 1967. (Some scholars contend that the Jews still do not have full control over Jerusalem).

A non-believer could claim that there is no way to be certain that Jesus' prophecies were written down before or after the destruction of Jerusalem. But, if these prophecies had been faked, and written sometime after the destruction of Jerusalem, then why didn't ancient non-Christians reveal this to us? What evidence is there to support a claim that Jesus' prophecies were faked? And, how would one explain away Jesus' long-term prophecies, such as His prophecy that His teachings would spread to all nations, or that His words would never be forgotten? Surely these particular prophecies could not have been faked or written after the events had already happened. So, on what basis must we assume that His other prophecies were faked?

Reason 4.

The fulfillment of Jesus' own prophecies (Part 3) Jesus prophesied His own death and resurrection:

According to the New Testament of the Bible, Jesus prophesied His own death and resurrection. Of course, a non-believer could argue that there is no way to physical evidence to prove that Jesus was resurrected. But, if He wasn't resurrected, then why did people who lived during the time of Jesus continue to believe that He is a true prophet? Certainly, there have been many false prophets throughout history, but would any of them have been taken seriously if they had falsely prophesied their own resurrection? It is our belief that Jesus was resurrected, and that is why His followers continued to believe in Him.

Reason 5.

The fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies *after* the crucifixion and death of Jesus:

The Old Testament tells us that the Jews were chosen to record the words of God and share the words of God with people worldwide. Recording and sharing the word of God was a very difficult and important job. And so, it must have been important that God discipline His chosen people if they made mistakes. That, I believe, is why the Jews have been punished so greatly, and rewarded so greatly, at different times in history. As explained in the Old Testament, there were times when many Jews of ancient Israel had turned away from God and worshipped the false gods of their Gentile neighbors.

Many Old Testament prophets had warned the people that they would face these punishments if they turned away from God:

1. Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed.
(See Micah 3:11-12)
2. The Jews would be forced out of Israel.
(See Deuteronomy 4:25-30, 28:36-37)
3. The Jews would be scattered worldwide.
(See Deuteronomy 4:25-30, 28:36-37)
4. The Jews would endure persecution worldwide.
(See Leviticus 26:33)
5. Enemies would move into the Jewish homeland.
(See Leviticus 26:31-32)
6. But the Jews would never be completely destroyed.
(See Zechariah 8:13, and implied in Deuteronomy 4:25-30)
7. The people who persecuted the Jews would be punished.
(See Genesis 12:2-3 and Jeremiah 30:11)
8. And the Jews would return to Israel.
(See Jeremiah 32:37-41, Deuteronomy 4:25-30)
9. And Israel would be restored.
(See Deuteronomy 30:3-5, Isaiah 35:1-2, Amos 9:11-13)

All of these things happened. In fact, they happened **twice**, once after many people had turned away from God, and once after Jesus had been rejected by many people as God's anointed Messiah.

The first time that this cycle of exile, persecution and restoration began was more than 2500 years ago. At that time, as explained by writers of the Old Testament, many people had turned away from God and began to worship the false gods of pagan Gentiles. As punishment, the people were exiled and scattered to many countries by the invading Assyrians and Babylonians. And, as the prophets had promised beforehand, the Jews later returned to their homeland and rebuilt Jerusalem and the Temple, which had been destroyed by the Babylonians.

The second time that this cycle of exile, persecution and restoration began was about 2000 years ago, after Jesus was rejected as the Messiah by many people in Jerusalem. Shortly after the rejection, the Romans crucified Jesus. Then, about 40 years later, the Romans suppressed a Jewish uprising for independence and killed 1.1 million Jews and forced others into exile and slavery. The Romans also destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. Only recently, during the past 100 years or so, have the Jews returned in large numbers to their ancient homeland to re-establish the sovereign nation of Israel. So why did this cycle of exile, persecution and restoration - the punishments for disobeying God - begin the second time? We believe the reason is clear - because many people turned away from God by rejecting Jesus as the Son of God.

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