

**(MATTHEW 26:57-75)
MESSIAH ON A MISSION
(PART 57)**



“THE IDENTITY OF JESUS ON TRIAL”

“Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness...” (1 Timothy 3:16)

Early heresy, which faced the church in the first four centuries of the church, was all about the Godhead - every early heresy was an error about the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- **Trinitarianism** - misunderstands the “Mystery” as three separate, distinct persons, who are together comprising the one God.
- **Sabellianism** - said that He didn’t exist as a person but was simply a mode in which God sometimes revealed Himself.
- **Docetism** - from the Greek verb dokeō, which means “to appear to be,” said He wasn’t human, He was only an apparition.
- **Monophysitism** - claims He is two natures that remain separated and are never united.
- **Adoptionism** - Jesus was a man who, because He was such a good man, either at His conception or at His baptism, God adopted Him and He became God.
- **Apollinarianism** - said He was neither a real man nor God, but He was a being taken over by the eternal Logos.
- **Arianism** - from Arias, who said He is a created being, created by God, not God but created by God.

The Religious Trial of Jesus:

- 1. Annas (John 18:13)**
- 2. Caiaphas (Matthew 26:57; John 18:24; John 11:50) An illegal night trial**
- 3. Sanhedrin (The Jewish Supreme Court.)**

The Civil Trials of Jesus:

- 1. Pilate**
- 2. Herod**
- 3. back to Pilate – six different trials.**

“Woe to the house of Annas.

Woe to their serpent’s hiss.

They are high priests.

Their sons are keepers of the treasury,

Their sons-in-law are guardians of the temple,

and their servants beat the people with staves.”

(Talmud, Pesahim 57a)

“Are you the Christ, the Son of God?” (Matthew 26:63)

“Some scholars assert that in the Synoptic Gospels (Jesus) does not claim to be the Messiah or God. Such an assertion requires explaining away the plain sense of these verses. Here, in response to the direct question...(Jesus) does not hesitate; moreover, he uses the very word “Adonai” used to identify himself to Moses at the burning bush, when he said, “I AM who I AM” (Exodus 3:14).”

(Stern, David H., Jewish New Testament Commentary, (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1989) Mark 14:61-62.)

Jesus' Central Truth Claim: "I AM"

You shall see me "coming in the clouds." Jesus, upon the second inquiry of the council, answers with the emphatic (HEBREW) אֲנִי — (GREEK) ἐγώ εἰμί — I AM! "The high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:61-62).

This phrase comes from the extreme “human end” of His identity spectrum.

*Of all the possible names and titles that could be applied to Jesus, none could more definitely identify Him as “man” as this. Identifying Nazareth, His city of residence, reinforces this human focus. In answering them, Christ replies, “**I AM!**” This phrase is a stark and extreme identifier of the one true God and comes from the extreme “divine end” of Christ’s identity spectrum. The intent is unmistakable and can hardly be coincidental. Christ’s answer is immediately followed by all the soldiers being suddenly and violently shaken and falling to the ground. Clearly, the divine Jesus is responding to the soldier’s call for “Jesus of Nazareth.”*

*(Wilson, Nathaniel J., *Apostolic Pentecostal Theology*, (Sacramento, CA: Insignia, 2016), 222)*

***Only God could claim that He will be “coming in the clouds.”
Only God could fulfill the events of scriptural prophecies
that Christ will rule over all nations (Psalms 2; 72:11; Rev.
11:15; 19:15-16). Only God will come with clouds of heaven
(Daniel 7:13) and be the King of kings and the Lord of lords
over all nations for ever and ever.***

(Walker, D. A. (2021, September). "I AM" ...Coming in the Clouds.
Together Magazine, (#52), 20-21.)

Footnote:

"I AM" ...Coming in the Clouds

This is the final installment of a three-part series of articles that I have written to discuss the Hebrew Roots of Jesus' truth claims in Mark 14:61-65. There are two reasons that these words are so important. The first is that there is a strong monotheistic assertion that Jesus makes in this passage that supports the doctrine that Jesus is the one God of the Old Testament who has come in the flesh. This usage of the "I AM" is steeped in the prerogatives of the God of Moses, who proclaimed the same title (Exodus 3:14) that Jesus uses for Himself (Mark 14:62). The second reason that these articles are meaningful is from an apologetics standpoint. "Some scholars assert that in the Synoptic Gospels (Jesus) does not claim to be the Messiah or God. Such an assertion requires explaining away the plain sense of these verses. Here, in response to the direct question... (Jesus) does not hesitate; moreover, he uses the very word "Adonai" used to identify himself to Moses at the burning bush when he said, "I AM who I AM" (Exodus 3:14)."¹

Footnote: (cont.)

"I AM" ...Coming in the Clouds

This article will focus on the part of the text “coming in the clouds.” Jesus, upon the second inquiry of the council, answers with the emphatic (HEBREW) אֲנִי — (GREEK) ἐγώ εἰμί — I AM! “The high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, *and coming in the clouds of heaven*” (Mark 14:61-62).

This is a reference to the prophecy of Daniel, which states that he saw in the vision that the “Son of man came with the clouds of heaven...And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Daniel 7:13-14). This is the Hebrew roots of the claim that Jesus was making. Christ will possess “dominion, and visible manifestations of “dominion, and glory” will accompany His return (cf. Rev. 6:15-17; 11:15-19; 16:17-21; 19:11-16).

Footnote: (cont.)

"I AM" ...Coming in the Clouds

The Son of man is given “dominion, and glory, and a kingdom (Dan. 7:14).” This kingdom would be a worldwide kingdom involving “all people, nations, and languages” ...Conservative scholars agree that the Son of man is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ...The description of Him as worthy of ruling all nations is obviously in keeping with many passages in the Bible referring to the millennial rule of Jesus Christ, for instance, Psalm 2:6-9 and Isaiah 11. The expression that He is attended by “clouds of heaven” implies His deity (1 Thess. 4:17).²

Only God could claim that He will be “coming in the clouds.” Only God could fulfill the events of scriptural prophecies that Christ will rule over all nations (Psalms 2; 72:11; Rev. 11:15; 19:15-16). Only God will come with clouds of heaven and be the King of kings and the Lord of lords over all nations for ever and ever. While Jesus was every bit a man and possessed all the natural elements of humanity, it is also a great truth that “God was in Christ” (2 Cor. 5:19). When asked if He was something or someone, He would answer in the affirmative while loading the answer with the maximum weight of all prophetic, messianic, and eschatological expectations and significance that He could. On multiple occasions in the New Testament, Jesus would answer like this. Consider this example in the eighteenth chapter of the Gospel of John. When Jesus asked soldiers whom they sought when they came to apprehend Him, they responded, “Jesus of Nazareth” (John 18:7).

Footnote: (cont.)

"I AM" ...Coming in the Clouds

This phrase comes from the extreme “human end” of His identity spectrum. Of all the possible names and titles that could apply to Jesus, none could more definitely identify Him as “man” like this. Identifying Nazareth, His city of residence, reinforces this human focus. In answering them, Christ replies, **“I AM!”** This phrase is a stark and extreme identifier of the one true God and comes from the extreme “divine end” of Christ’s identity spectrum. The intent is unmistakable and can hardly be coincidental. Christ’s answer follows immediately when all the soldiers are suddenly and violently shaken and falling to the ground. Clearly, the divine Jesus is responding to the soldier’s call for “Jesus of Nazareth.”³

Jesus was the ultimate economist when it came to words; never did a superfluous saying fall from His lips. Speaking this way, He obviously means to declare the hidden things of the ages to us. His “coming in the clouds” was every other prophetic “coming in the clouds.” What is that saying about Him? It declares that Jesus Christ is God and that as God, He assumes the prerogatives of God. The mention of clouds is often associated with the revelation of “Adonai” (cf. Ex. 13:21-22; 19:9,16; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Is. 19:1; Jer. 4:13; Eze. 10:4; Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mk. 13:26). A connection is obvious in the “coming in the clouds” motif as it carries both messianic and eschatological significance. The message of Mark 14:62 is plain in what He is saying, i.e., “I am the one true God (I created the world), I am the Messiah (I established the Kingdom), and I am coming back in the clouds.”

Footnote: (cont.)

"I AM" ...Coming in the Clouds

We see the import of this text as it relates to Jesus and His deity (cf. Dan. 7:13; Mark 14:61-62), but there is more to be noted, primarily that “ye shall see” Him “coming in the clouds.” At Jesus’ ascension, they watched as the clouds carried Him away (Acts 1:9), the angel then moved the emphasis from what they were looking at (the ascension) to what they should now be looking for (the rapture and Second Coming)—The return of the Lord “in the clouds.” When Luke says that A cloud took him, we concur with Dr. Treece, who says, “A *cloud took Him*. The verb *hupelaben* is literally “took under Him,” so He was on the cloud as He moved higher into the heavens. The cloud did not hover over Him but rather supported Him. This is a miracle of the same class as walking on water (Matt. 14:29).”⁴ The clouds not only miraculously assist in His departure, but they will also assist at His appearing. The catching away of the Church (rapture) will be facilitated by the “clouds” (1 Thess. 4:17). A parallel is evidenced by the statement in Rev. 1:7, “Behold, he cometh with clouds,” when all shall see Him. “*Look! He is coming with clouds*. Clouds received Him out of their sight (Acts 1:9), and it is declared in the same manner He will return (Acts 1:11). The entire verse is not necessarily referring to the moment of the rapture of the Church, but at least the first part probably is.”⁵ If we are to take Jesus at His word when He answers with the emphatic (HEBREW) אֲנִי — (GREEK) ἐγώ εἰμί — I AM, then we must not only see Him as He fulfills His messianic role, but we must actively love and look for His appearing. One could not reasonably claim to be patently Apostolic if one is not loving and looking for the imminent return of Christ (cf. Acts 1:11; Titus 2:11-13; 2 Tim. 4:8)

Footnote: (cont.)

"I AM" ...Coming in the Clouds

Endnotes

1. Stern, David H., *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1989) Mark 14:61-62.
2. Walvoord, John F., *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1971), 167.
3. Wilson, Nathaniel J., *Apostolic Pentecostal Theology*, (Sacramento, CA: Insignia, 2016), 222.
4. Treece, M.D., *The Literal Word: Acts I*, (Shippensburg, PA: Treasure House, 1998), 12.
5. Treece, M.D., *The Literal Word: Revelation*, (Shippensburg, PA: Treasure House, 1997), 13.

(Walker, Douglas. A., (2021, September). "I AM" ...Coming in the Clouds. *Together Magazine*, (#52), 20-21.)