

## The Nature of Yeshua in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts

nations, the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:32-33) occurs at the beginning of the Eternal State, is not just detected in how those blessed will “take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world” (Matthew 25:34, NIV)—but how after the criteria for entry are provided (Matthew 25:35-40, 42-45), it will be stated by the Lord, “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels’...These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matthew 25:41, 46).

Advocates of a high Christology of Yeshua the Messiah, being integrated into the Divine Identity, do rightly need to emphasize that the Son’s reign is not at all independent of the Father. It is emphasized here, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father...” (Matthew 25:34). Yeshua the Son, being integrated into the Divine Identity, is interconnected with the activities of the Father, and this surely involves the future Millennial Kingdom and subsequent Eternal State (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:28).

### **Mark 14:53-65; Matthew 26:57-68; Luke 22:63-71** **“Yeshua is Condemned of Blasphemy by the Sanhedrin”**

“They led Yeshua away to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together. Peter had followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers and warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Yeshua to put Him to death, and they were not finding any. For many were giving false testimony against Him, but their testimony was not consistent. Some stood up and *began* to give false testimony against Him, saying, ‘We heard Him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.’” Not even in this respect was their testimony consistent. The high priest stood up *and came forward* and questioned Yeshua, saying, ‘Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?’ But He kept silent and did not answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, ‘Are You the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed *One*?’ And Yeshua said, ‘I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN’ [Psalm 110:1; Daniel 7:13]. Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, ‘What further need do we have of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?’ And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. Some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, ‘Prophecy!’ And the officers received Him with slaps *in the face*” (Mark 14:53-65).

“Those who had seized Yeshua led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. But Peter was following Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and sat down with the officers to see the outcome. Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Yeshua, so that they might put Him to death. They did not find *any*, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, and said, ‘This man stated, “I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days.”’ The high priest stood up and said to Him, ‘Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?’ But Yeshua kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, ‘I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Messiah, the Son of God.’ Yeshua said to him, ‘You have said it *yourself*; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER [Psalm 110:1], and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN’ [Daniel 7:13]. Then the high priest tore his robes and said, ‘He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; what do you think?’ They answered, ‘He deserves death!’ Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him, and said, ‘Prophecy to us, You Messiah; who is the one who hit You?’” (Matthew 26:57-68).

“Now the men who were holding Yeshua in custody were mocking Him and beating Him, and they blindfolded Him and were asking Him, saying, ‘Prophecy, who is the one who hit You?’ And they were saying many other things against Him, blaspheming. When it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying, ‘If You are the Messiah, tell us.’ But He said to them, ‘If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I ask a question, you will not answer. But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE POWER OF GOD [Psalm 110:1].’ And they all said, ‘Are You the Son of God, then?’ And He said to them, ‘Yes, I am.’ Then they said, ‘What further need do we have of testimony? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth’” (Luke 22:63-71).

Yeshua’s trial before the Sanhedrin, resulting in both a guilty verdict and Yeshua being condemned to be executed, bears great importance for evaluating whether Yeshua is the eternal, uncreated Son of God, integrated into the Divine Identity, or is just a created supernatural agent of God. The same basic account appears in all three Synoptic Gospels of Yeshua being led before the Sanhedrin court (Mark 14:53; Matthew 26:57; Luke 22:66), the issuance of false testimony against Yeshua (Mark 14:55-59; Matthew 26:59-61), a challenge issued to Yeshua to defend Himself (Mark 14:60; Matthew 26:62), and the explicit question from the high priest about whether or not Yeshua is the Messiah (Mark 14:61; Matthew 26:63; Luke 22:67). The response issued by Yeshua to the Sanhedrin, notably merited Him with a charge of blasphemy and a death sentence (Mark 14:62-64; Matthew 26:64-66; Luke 22:68-71). Was Yeshua simply charged with blasphemy and a death sentence (cf. Leviticus 24:10-16) because He claimed to be the Messiah, and as such was considered to be a dangerous, reforming figure like one of the Prophets of Ancient Israel? Or, were some more significant statements issued by Yeshua—going far beyond Him being just a person demanding spiritual change from the Jewish community?

In Yeshua’s response to the question as to whether or not He is the Messiah, the Tanach passages of Psalm 110:1<sup>174</sup> and/or Daniel 7:13<sup>175</sup> (discussed previously) are invoked (Mark 14:62<sup>176</sup>; Matthew 26:64<sup>177</sup>; Luke 22:69<sup>178</sup>). Associating these Tanach passages with Himself, in answering in the affirmative (Mark 14:62a; Matthew 26:64a; Luke 22:70), merited Yeshua a charge of blasphemy and a death sentence. **What does this communicate about the nature of Yeshua?** Commentators on each of the Synoptic Gospels have certainly provided some significant observations and interjections to be weighed, as we consider whether or not Yeshua is to be genuinely regarded as integrated into the Divine Identity.

In the record of the **Gospel of Mark**, we see the question posed by the high priest to Yeshua: “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One<sup>179</sup>?” (Mark 14:61, TNIV). While claiming to be the *Mashiach* (מָשִׁיחַ) or Messiah would bring with it a huge weight and burden of proof, and would understandably bring a figure like Yeshua before the Jewish court—that

<sup>174</sup> “A Psalm of David. The LORD says to my Lord: ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’” (Psalm 110:1).

<sup>175</sup> “I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven one like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him” (Daniel 7:13).

<sup>176</sup> Erwin Nestle and Kurt Aland, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece, Nestle-Aland 27th Edition* (New York: American Bible Society, 1993), 141; Kurt Aland, et. al., *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/United Bible Societies, 1998), 182; Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece, 28th Revised Edition* (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: Stuttgart, 2012), 167.

<sup>177</sup> Nestle and Aland, *GNT*, 79; Aland, *GNT*, 106; Aland, Karavidopoulos, Martini, Metzger, *GNT*, 93.

<sup>178</sup> Nestle and Aland, *GNT*, 237; Aland, *GNT*, pp 299-300; Aland, Karavidopoulos, Martini, Metzger, *GNT*, 280.

<sup>179</sup> Grk. *su ei ho Christos ho huios tou eulogētou* (ὁ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ).

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Yeshua could be sentenced to death solely because He claimed to be the Messiah, when He had committed no act of insurrection or violence against the Jewish religious authorities or Roman state, seems to be extreme. Yet, given the fact that Yeshua was accused of planning to tear down the Temple, such a charge could merit a death sentence, as the Prophet Jeremiah was threatened with a death sentence for announcing a calamity to befall the First Temple (Jeremiah 26:1-19). But as Mark 14:59 records, “But even on this point their testimony did not agree” (NRSV), as the witnesses brought to speak against Yeshua were recognized to obviously be false witnesses (Mark 14:56).

The key question issued by the high priest to Yeshua did not regard His actions or potential actions, but instead His self-identity. As the CJB/CJSB renders Mark 14:61, “Are you the *Mashiach*, *Ben-HaM’vorakh*<sup>180</sup>?” Yeshua’s response, as witnessed in the Greek source text of Mark 14:62, is *egō eimi* (ἐγὼ εἰμι) or “I am,” with probable connections with Exodus 3:14 and God’s self-description of “I AM WHO I AM.” Yeshua then proceeds to quote from Daniel 7:13 and Psalm 110:1, subsequently being accused of blasphemy and condemned to death by the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:63-64).

Yeshua was asked by the high priest, “Are You the Messiah?” Would this have merited a charge of blasphemy and a death sentence, or perhaps a less-extreme penalty such as imprisonment or some kind of censure? Cole makes the astute observations, “As with a modern Moslem, for Jesus to claim to be the Messiah, the Anointed, God’s Prophet, would be no blasphemy, although it could be hotly contradicted and a sign would be demanded. But to claim to be *the Son of the Blessed* would be to them intolerable blasphemy, and, for such a blasphemy, He could be condemned to death by the Sanhedrin.”<sup>181</sup>

Seemingly, Yeshua could have just said “I am” before the Sanhedrin, and not be accused of blasphemy. Yeshua would have been regarded as a fool, an idiot, a false prophet, and a madman—but might not have been condemned to death. Instead, in Mark 14:62, the combination of the “I am” formula derived from Exodus 3:14, with allusions to Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13, resulted in Yeshua being accused of blasphemy against the God of Israel and deserving of execution. This is an indication, for the Sanhedrin, that they recognized that Yeshua was declaring Himself to be the Divine Son of Man of Daniel 7:13, who would receive an everlasting Kingdom, and the second Lord of Psalm 110:1, who rules alongside of the LORD or YHWH proper. **The Sanhedrin recognized that Yeshua considered Himself to be God, otherwise they would not have considered Him a blasphemer.**

A selection of commentators on the Gospel of Mark recognize that the combination of Yeshua declaring “I am,” along with His Tanach quotations, merited blasphemy and the death sentence, and are to be taken as statements of His Divinity:

- C.E.B. Cranfield: “The High Priest probably has in mind Jesus’ claim that they will see the Son of Man ἐκ δεξιῶν καθήμενον τῆς δυνάμεως [*ek dexiōn kathēmenon tēs dunameōs*; ‘sitting at the right hand of Power’]; possibly also if the direct ἐγὼ εἰμι [*egō eimi*] should be read, his claim to be the Son of the Blessed. A claim to be the Messiah was, of course, not in itself liable to be regarded as blasphemy.”<sup>182</sup>
- R. Alan Cole: “It may be significant that Jesus replies with the very Name of God, *I am* (Ex. 3:14), thus putting Himself on an equality with God, which we know to have been a long-standing grievance on their part (2:7).”<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Delitzsch Heb. NT *hu ha Mashiach ben-ha m’vorakh* (הוּא הַמָּשִׁיחַ בֶּן־הַמְּבֹרָךְ).

<sup>181</sup> Cole, *Mark*, 306.

<sup>182</sup> Cranfield, *Mark*, 445.

<sup>183</sup> Cole, *Mark*, 306.

- Larry W. Hurtado: “**I am** is probably to be taken as both a directly affirmative answer to the question of the high priest and as an allusion to the self-designation of God familiar to readers of the Greek OT...Mark’s readers can see that Jesus’ answer is on a deeper level an affirmation of his divine status!...The whole description of the future exaltation of the Son of Man echoes Dan. 7:13-14 (where ‘one like a son of man’ is given rule by God) and Ps. 110:1 (where one described as ‘my lord’ is given a seat of authority at the right hand of God). These same OT passages are alluded to in the earlier passages in Mark where the future glory of Jesus is hinted (8:38; 13:26; 12:35-37...)”<sup>184</sup>
- James R. Edwards: “According to Mark, Jesus openly affirms the high priest’s question, “‘I am!’” (God’s Son). In v. 62 Jesus immediately interprets his affirmation with reference to the Son of Man in Dan 7:13 and Ps 110:1. The Son of Man here is a fully divine and exalted figure, ‘sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One’ (Gk. ‘right hand of [God’s] power’; see also *Did.* 16:8). Thus Jesus both affirms his divine Sonship before the high priest and portrays himself as the fulfiller of the eschatological mission of the Son of Man, an affirmation that sets him unambiguously in God’s place. Though Jesus is dishonored by the high priest, he will be honored by God; and in place of his present vilification, God will vindicate the Son.”<sup>185</sup>

The response of Yeshua in Mark 14:62, “**I AM!** And you will see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of the heaven. Psa. 110:1; Dan. 7:13” (LITV), is not the sort of statement to be made by any mere supernatural agent, created by God. Those who hold to a high Christology have to factor Yeshua’s usage of “**I am**” (*egō eimi*), Yeshua’s self-identification along the lines of being the Lord of Psalm 110:1 and the Divine Son of Man of Daniel 7:13, and most especially Him being condemned to death for presumed blasphemy against the One God of Israel. Yeshua should have only been condemned to jail or denounced as a madman, if the Sanhedrin considered His claims of self-identity to be the words of a misguided and deranged, mortal human being.

In the record of the **Gospel of Matthew**, the significant question is posed to Yeshua by the high priest named Caiaphas (Matthew 26:56), “**I demand in the name of the living God—tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God**” (Matthew 26:63, NLT). Yeshua’s response to the high priest, does merit Him an indictment of blasphemy and a sentence of death (Matthew 26:65-66), but the response of Matthew 26:64 is slightly different from that of Mark 14:62 preceding.

Caiaphas the high priest demanded of Yeshua, “**I put you under oath! By the living God, tell us if you are the *Mashiach*, the Son of God!**” (Matthew 26:63, CJB/CJSB). In his mandate, “**tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God**”<sup>186</sup> (NRSV), there is no indication that “**Son of God**” is viewed by Caiaphas as being anything other than a Messianic or regal title, likely derived from various Tanach passages (i.e., 2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 2:7). Hagner indicates, “**There is no need to suppose by this language that the high priest meant exactly what the early church meant by this phrase in its Christology. That the Messiah would be the Son of God, even uniquely so (though of course metaphysically distinct from God), was quite probably the high priest’s own understanding.**”<sup>187</sup>

<sup>184</sup> Hurtado, *Mark*, 254.

<sup>185</sup> Edwards, *Mark*, 447.

<sup>186</sup> Grk. *hēmīn eipēs ei su ei ho Christos ho huios tou Theou* (ἡμῖν εἶπες εἰ σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ).

<sup>187</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 799.

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When asked whether or not He was “the Messiah, the Son of God,” Yeshua’s response to Caiaphas was doubtlessly not what he anticipated. In the dialogue, however, where Mark 14:62 has said “I am” (*egō eimi*), Matthew 26:64 says, “You have said so” (RSV) or *su eipas* (σὺ εἶπας). Following this in the remainder of Matthew 26:64, quotations are issued from both Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13. Yeshua’s association of Himself with the Divine figure in these passages, merits Him the charge of blasphemy and the sentence of execution.

One of the most significant issues to be evaluated here, is that if the Gospel of Mark were composed before the Gospel of Matthew—with Mark one of the major source materials for Matthew—why did Matthew alter Yeshua’s statement of “I am” to the high priest? Surely Matthew did not disagree with Mark. But in altering “I am” to “You have said it *yourself*,” what was Matthew trying to emphasize? Commentators on the Gospel of Matthew, who hold to a high Christology of Yeshua being God, have had to offer a number of proposals regarding the difference between Mark 14:62 and Matthew 26:64. One of the features of both passages, which does not change, is the quotation that Yeshua offers from Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13. A reader of Matthew’s Gospel, encountering Yeshua’s trial before the Sanhedrin, would definitely have to reckon with what it meant for Him to have said, “you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 26:65, TLV). Carson interjects the useful observation,

“Unlike the unambiguous ‘I am’ in Mark 14:62, Matthew uses an expression, found also in 26:25, that many have taken to be purposefully ambiguous...Jesus is indeed the Messiah and so must answer affirmatively. But he is not quite the Messiah Caiaphas has in mind; so he must answer cautiously and with some explanation....That explanation comes in allusions to two passages—Psalm 110:1...and Daniel 7:13...Jesus is not to be primarily considered a political Messiah but as the one who, in receiving a kingdom, is exalted high above David and at the Mighty One’s right hand, the hand of honor and power (cf. 16:27; 23:39; 24:30-31; 26:29). This is Jesus’ climatic self-disclosure to the authorities and it combines revelation with threat.”<sup>188</sup>

Indeed, the question is appropriately raised by Matthew 26:64, and Caiaphas the high priest responding with a claim of blasphemy made by Yeshua (Matthew 26:65), whether or not the Sanhedrin regarded the self-identification of Yeshua as being that of a created being by these statements. Hagner explains the reasoning behind a likely modification of Mark’s record in Matthew 26:64, as the statements made by Yeshua in this verse from the Tanach, highlight that it is insufficient for Him to just be regarded as someone who says “I am”; Yeshua is the figure depicted in Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13:

“Jesus offers an answer to the direct question of the high priest, and it is an answer of the greatest significance. Nowhere does Jesus reveal himself more than here. In Matthew’s account of Jesus’ response, given in the historical present tense for vividness, the words σὺ εἶπας, ‘you have said,’ rather than being strictly evasive (or negative), amount to an affirmative answer...but in a much less direct and emphatic way than Mark’s ἐγὼ εἶμι, ‘I am’ (Mark 14:62). In this alteration of Mark, Matthew probably intends to allow for qualification and to preserve the consistency of the indirectness of Jesus’ messianic claims, especially vis-à-vis his opponents, throughout his narrative. Matthew, whose Christology is generally more explicit than Mark’s, would not in principle have objected to Mark’s ἐγὼ εἶμι...Jesus’ affirmation of being the Messiah, the Son of God...may not yet in itself have been sufficient grounds for the high priest to regard him as blaspheming. But when Jesus adds to his answer the quoted material from Daniel 7:13 and the allusion to Ps 110:2, identifying himself as *that* triumphant figure—and thus more than the Messiah as a merely human agent—as the one who is ‘given dominion and glory and

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<sup>188</sup> Carson, in *EXP*, 8:555.

kingship' whom all will serve and whose kingdom will see no end (Dan 7:13-14), the one who sits at the right hand of God (Ps 110:1), the high priest reacts to what he regards as a horrifying blasphemy (cf. v 65)."<sup>189</sup>

In his Matthew commentary, Morris, who definitely holds to a high Christology of Yeshua being God, stresses that it is the description of self-identification provided—obviously from Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13—which merits the charge of blasphemy:

"With the *Son of man* Jesus uses his favorite name for himself with reference to his mission on earth. He says that he will be *sitting at the right hand of The Power*, that is, in the place of highest honor in the court of God. God is often said to be powerful, but it is not often that he is called simply *The Power*, as here (and in the equivalent in Mark). This was the kind of reverent periphrasis that was often used in order to avoid pronouncing the divine name, and it would thus be readily recognized by his hearers as meaning God. Jesus is clearly claiming a relationship to God such as is shared by no other. He adds, '*coming on the clouds of heaven*,' in which he looks forward to the consummation of the age and the place he will have in that great day. These last words were very important for Caiaphas. It was not blasphemy for anyone to claim to be the the Messiah (it might be mistaken, but it was not blasphemous), and there was a sense in which a man might be called a son of God (cf. 2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Chron. 22:10). But what Jesus had now said went far beyond that."<sup>190</sup>

The record of the **Gospel of Luke** is the shortest as it pertains to Yeshua's trial before the Sanhedrin. Yeshua is asked by the chief priests and scribes, "If you are the *Mashiach*, tell us"<sup>191</sup> (Luke 22:67, CJB). Yeshua's first statement in response to them is, "If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I ask a question, you will not answer (Luke 22:67b-68). Yeshua's second statement includes an adaptation of Psalm 110:1, and while employing the title "Son of Man" obviously originating from Daniel 7:13, no other quotation from Daniel 7 appears: "But from now on the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God" (Luke 22:69, RSV). Among the different proposals interjected for why Luke 22:69 lacks a reference to "you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64, RSV), is that Luke might be trying to deflect the idea that various members of the Sanhedrin court trying Yeshua would still be alive to witness His Second Coming (cf. Mark 13:23-27; Matthew 24:27-31; Luke 21:25-28).

The deliberations of the Sanhedrin court, as depicted by Luke, are rather short. They ask Yeshua, "Are you the Son of God, then?" It is then narrated, "And he said to them, 'You say that I am'" (Luke 22:70, RSV). What did the Sanhedrin intend by asking Yeshua if He was the "Son of God"? They probably considered this to be a Messianic or regal title, and not necessarily one of Divinity. While Yeshua answers in the affirmative to the question, the source text actually communicates, *humeis legete hoti egō eimi* (ὁμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι), "you are saying that I am" (Brown and Comfort).<sup>192</sup> If this were exclusively intended to be a statement answering in the affirmative, then the dialogue could simply have read with *hoti eimi*, lacking the pronoun *egō*. But the employment of the *egō eimi* "I am," echoing Exodus 3:14, and the immediate response of shock (Luke 22:71), with Yeshua subsequently being sent off to Pontius Pilate for an approval of execution (Luke 23:1-25), indicates that the Sanhedrin recognized

<sup>189</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, pp 799-800.

<sup>190</sup> Morris, *Matthew*, 685.

<sup>191</sup> Grk. *ei su ei ho Christos, eipon hēmin* (εἰ σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός, εἰπὼν ἡμῖν).

<sup>192</sup> Brown and Comfort, 305.

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Yeshua's answer to have been far more than a simple "yes." In his commentary on Luke, Morris concurs,

"They are asking whether Jesus claims a special relationship to God. His reference to the Son of man and to the place of God's right hand must have seemed to them a claim to a higher place than that which they understood the Messiah to occupy. For them a claim to be Messiah might be a mistake, but it was not blasphemy. But this was something different; it linked Jesus to deity."<sup>193</sup>

*Why was Yeshua the Messiah charged with blasphemy, and condemned to death by the Jewish Sanhedrin?* When asked by the Sanhedrin whether or not He was the Messiah, of all the Tanach passages or concepts Yeshua could have quoted or invoked, He made mention of Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13, and He spoke forth the affirmative "I am" formula issued by God to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3:14. Surely it was within the Sanhedrin's power to rule that Yeshua was mentally disturbed or unstable. Surely the Sanhedrin recognized the place of false witnesses, who were brought in by those who found Yeshua to be a threat to their position of power and influence in the Jewish community, and could have disregarded the case, or at least have fined Yeshua a heavy sum for wasting their time. Surely, there were a few sitting on the Sanhedrin, who might have considered that the Messiah would be a supernatural agent sent from God, and who might say things similar to God without actually being God.

But, a conviction for blasphemy was issued to Yeshua, because the Sanhedrin court recognized that in His statements of self-identity, Yeshua was declaring Himself to be not just supernatural with origins from another dimension, but the "I am," One who sat alongside the Father in Heaven, and who was integrated into the Divine Identity with a power and rule which would extend for eternity. Yeshua's statements of self-identity, in their estimation, required no mere censure or corporal punishment, but capital punishment.

### **Mark 15:16-20; Matthew 27:27-31; Luke 22:63-65** **"Roman Soldiers Mock Yeshua"**

"The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort. They dressed Him up in purple, and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him; and they began to acclaim Him, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him. After they had mocked Him, they took the purple robe off Him and put His *own* garments on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him" (Mark 15:16-20).

"Then the soldiers of the governor took Yeshua into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on Him, and took the reed and *began* to beat Him on the head. After they had mocked Him, they took the *scarlet* robe off Him and put His *own* garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him" (Matthew 27:27-31).

"Now the men who were holding Yeshua in custody were mocking Him and beating Him, and they blindfolded Him and were asking Him, saying, 'Prophesy, who is the one who hit You?' And they were saying many other things against Him, blaspheming" (Luke 22:63-65).

Prior to His crucifixion, Yeshua is turned over to various Roman soldiers, who in beating Him, also make it a point to mock Him as some kind of king. It should be easy to recognize that

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<sup>193</sup> Morris, *Luke*, 347.