

## HAVE YOU HEARD? JESUS OF NAZARETH WAS NOT A MYTHOLOGICAL PERSON – PART 1

by David R. Kenney

There are those who assert that Jesus was mythological and reject the evidence of the Bible. These skeptics try to persuade others that Jesus and the New Testament is mere propaganda. However, there is evidence *outside* the Bible that proves that Jesus of Nazareth really lived.

Josephus, a Jewish historian during the century Jesus lived, wrote of the High Priest Ananias: “convened the court of the Sanhedrin, and brought before them the brother of Jesus the so-called Messiah, who was called James, and some other men, whom he accused of having broken the law, and handed them over to be stoned.” This is not the only reference Josephus makes about Jesus of Nazareth. There are also references to Jesus’ existence in the *Babylonian Talmud* as well. So the Jews, while some rejected Jesus as the Messiah, did not reject the fact of His existence.

Tacitus, Roman pagan historian who wrote *Annals* around 115 AD, made the following statement about Nero burning of the city of Rome: “To dispel the rumour, Nero substituted as culprits, and treated with the most extreme punishments, some people, popularly known as Christian, whose disgraceful activities were notorious. The originator of that name, Christus, had been executed when Tiberius was emperor by order of the procurator Pontius Pilate. But the deadly cult, though checked for a time, was now breaking out again not only in Judea, the birthplace of this evil, but even throughout Rome, where all the nasty and disgusting ideas from all over the world pour in and find a ready following.”

These are two examples from those antagonistic to Christianity which testify to the existence of Jesus. If these historians, who were not Christian, wrote about Jesus and did not deny his existence, then why should we?

Sources:

R. T. France, *The Evidence for Jesus*, Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1986.

Wayne Jackson, “The Historicity of Jesus,” <http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/26-the-historicity-of-jesus-christ>.

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