

**A FATHER SCOTT PAMPHLET**

**THEY SAID**

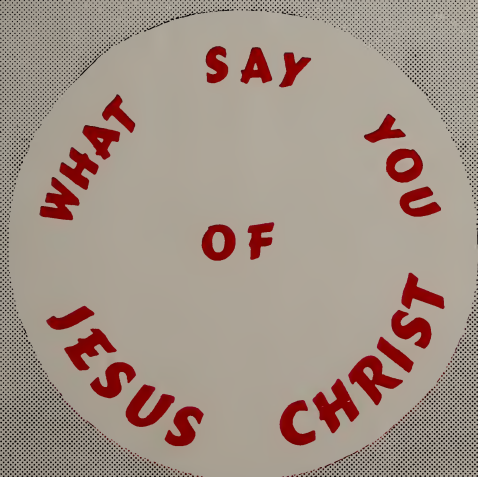
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**HE BLASPHEMED**

**HE SAID**

**HE WAS THE SON OF GOD**



**MARTIN**

**SCOTT, S. J.**

**THE AMERICA PRESS**

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# Q U I Z

(For study clubs and discussion groups)

1. Why is Christ an imposter if He is not God?
2. Did Christ truly claim to be God in the Divine sense?
3. Where do you find this claim made?
4. Why, exactly, was Christ crucified?
5. Why do Rationalists deny the Divinity of Christ?
6. Could not Christ have learned the doctrines He taught from the wise men of His time?
7. How does the character of Christ attest the truth of His Divine claim?
8. What evidence did Christ produce to confirm His Divine claims?
9. Just what is meant by a miracle?
10. Are miracles possible?
11. Why are miracles a Divine confirmation of what they indorse?
12. Explain what you mean by a prophecy in the technical sense of the word?
13. Name some notable prophecies made by Christ?
14. Why does prophecy substantiate a Divine claim?
15. Were Christ's prophecies merely clever calculations?
16. Why does the perpetual existence of the Church furnish evidence for the truth of Christ's claim?

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*Nihil Obstat:*

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D., *Censor Librorum.*

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✠ FRANCIS J. SPELLMAN, *Archbishop of New York.*

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THEY SAID HE BLASPHEMED  
HE SAID HE WAS THE SON OF GOD  
WHAT SAY YOU OF JESUS CHRIST?

Martin J. Scott, S.J.

I understand that you do not believe that Jesus Christ is God?

You understand right.

Do you realize that if Christ was not God He was the greatest impostor in the history of mankind?

Oh, not so fast, not so fast. Everyone who is not what is claimed for him is not an impostor.

True, but if a person claims for himself to be what he is not, and acts according to his claims, is such a one not an impostor?

It depends on how seriously he makes the claim, and whether or not he expected to be understood literally.

You admit, then, that if a person seriously claims to be what he is not, and moreover expects to be understood literally, he is an impostor if he is not what he claims to be?

I suppose so, if he is in his right mind.

Do you believe Christ was in His right mind when He declared under solemn oath that He was God?

I don't think He could have been.

Then you believe that Jesus Christ was not of sound mind?

Well, not exactly that.

Exactly what, then?

Oh, I'm not under cross-examination. I simply say that any human being who sets himself up to be the Creator of the world, must not be taken at his word. There must be some explanation or other, although I'm not able to give it. That's as far as I care to go in the matter.

But don't you see that if a person is under oath and declares himself to be what he is not, he is either a liar or a lunatic?

I know what you are going to say—that Jesus Christ was the most perfect Being this world has known and that the most perfect Being could not be either a liar or a lunatic. I've heard that before. Put in that way I can't give you a satisfactory answer. But I still don't believe that Christ really meant people to believe He was God in the true sense.

Well, you are candid, anyway. But I should think that in an important matter like this, you would, as a reasonable person, be able to give a rational explanation for your belief.

That matter is too deep for me. I'm not a theologian, or philosopher but just an average man. Perhaps if I had sufficient learning I could give a better account of myself.

But Jesus Christ did not speak to theologians or philosophers, but to common people with common sense, just like you.

On what occasion did He seriously say that He was God in the true sense?

Now we are getting somewhere. If you bear with me about three minutes I'll put the matter in a nutshell.\* Suppose we put the question, why was Christ crucified? All Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, pagans, in short, all human beings that know anything about Christ, will answer that He was crucified because He asserted that He was the Son of God, a Divine Person, the Redeemer of the world. Among the Jews such a declaration was blasphemy and punishable by death. At the trial on this charge, the High Priest as president of the supreme court of justice asked Christ in the name of the most High God, to say whether he was the Messiah, the Son of God. (Saint Matthew, xxvi, 63) Let us note: (1) The court is a competent one and recognized by Christ Himself. (2) The question is put very exactly. Christ had expressly maintained (Saint John, iii, 1-6) that He was the only begotten Son of God, and in His discourses had laid claim to all the attributes of God. (3) The question is put with all

\*Confer: *Who and What is Christ?* Roh. *Passim*.

the solemnity of an oath. (4) It was the most important question which could be put on earth. We must all agree that Christ's answer must be the whole truth, without any equivocation. And what answer did He give?

A simple, plain, "I am." (Saint Mark, xiv, 62; Saint Matthew, xxvi, 64; Saint Luke, xxii, 70) Moreover to confirm and emphasize His answer He declared to His judges that He would come in the glory of His Father to execute upon all men that judgment which belongs to God alone.

On receiving this answer, the presiding judge declared to his fellow-judges that it would be superfluous to hear other witnesses for, said he: "We have heard the blasphemy out of His own mouth. What think ye?" And they all replied: "He is guilty of death." (Saint Matthew, xxvi, 65, 66; Saint Mark, xiv, 64)

Did Christ on that solemn occasion speak the truth on a most solemn matter? If He spoke the truth, He is what He claimed to be, and we must worship Him as God, and Christianity is Divine truth. If, on the other hand, Christ did not speak the truth he either deliberately lied or else imagined that He was God. But even the opponents of Christ's Divinity do not believe that He was capable of falsehood or that He was a victim of delusion.

Why then do some learned men reject Christ's Divine claims?

Those men reject whatever is supernatural. Now, since Christ claimed to be a supernatural being, that is, a person more than natural, namely, God, they affirm that Christ could not have really meant what He said when He declared that He was God. Hence, in one way or another they attempt to explain away His solemn declaration that He was God in the true sense. They say that He made use of the popular errors of the time concerning the Messiah, in order to impress the people with His mission, which was to reform and benefit mankind.

Would that not make Him a deceiver and impostor?

It certainly would. It would mean that Christianity was based on deception and that its founder was a fraud.

But you said that Rationalists regarded Christ as one of the world's most virtuous and admirable persons. Is it not a contradiction to assert that such a person was a fraud?

My dear sir, of course it is a contradiction. But you certainly don't expect error to be consistent.

But you said that Rationalists were learned persons. You don't expect those whose very name indicates reason to be flagrantly unreasonable.

Very true. You forget, however, that error is always unreasonable. Rationalists are committed to the error that the supernatural is impossible, and in

trying to maintain their false position naturally fall into contradictions, the worst form of unreasonableness.

It would be like persons who believed that conversation across the Atlantic was an impossibility, and would then deny that broadcasting between New York and London was possible, despite the fact. Such persons would be bound to fall into inconsistencies and contradictions if they persisted in holding to their belief.

Still I can't understand how Rationalists could be so illogical.

Which means that you do not understand how erring a person can be when the wish is father to the thought. Wishful thinking leads more people into error than almost anything else. Rationalists having persuaded themselves that the supernatural is impossible are not open to conviction. Evidence means nothing to them unless it confirms their beliefs. Christ was not charged with unethical teaching, He was not nailed to the cross on account of His morality, but solely because He asserted that He was the Son of God. When Pilate demanded of the Jews what crime Jesus was charged with, they cried out that He was guilty of blasphemy because He affirmed that He was the Son of God. (Saint John, xix, 7) Christ declared under solemn oath that He was the Son of God, and in order to make it clear that He meant that He was God in the true sense, He added that He will come in the glory of



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His Father to execute upon all men that judgment which belongs to God alone.

Christianity has undoubtedly produced many great and admirable Saints; but even the greatest among them are but feeble copies of Christ. Of all men in the history of the world, He alone could with truth and humility point to Himself as a model to all mankind. He alone could say, even to His enemies, "which of you shall convince me of sin?" (Saint John, viii, 46) If God should walk on earth in human form, could He manifest Himself to us more fitly than in Christ? The Rationalist, David Strauss, although denying the Divinity of Jesus, says of Him: "Yet the first place remains reserved for Him in the temple of genius and humanity as the unattainable ideal of moral greatness which can never be excelled." Yet it is the solemn testimony of this ideal of moral greatness that Rationalists reject or try to explain away.

I must admit, after what you have said, that Christ's character is a guarantee for the truth of His Divine claims. He had nothing to gain by His testimony, rather He had everything to lose, for He knew that it would cost Him His life. No one of sound mind lies in order to incur contempt, torture and death. And certainly Jesus was of sound mind.

Jesus was not only of sound mind but His moral teaching has been placed above the teachings of all sages for sublimity, benevolence, purity and holiness.

Everyone admits that if mankind observed the Gospel morality, nothing would be wanting to perfect human nature and human happiness. In point of fact, one of the principal reasons for the opposition to Jesus is the high standard of conduct which His religion proclaims. Considering the tendency of human nature to follow inclination rather than reason, it is not surprising that He and His teaching have met with perpetual opposition. If we followed the wishes of our foolish hearts, we would all rather be pagans than Christians. We are inclined to see and approve the better things, yet too often follow the worse. Nevertheless, Christ has succeeded in binding men so fast to His doctrine that millions have freely shed their blood for it, and countless millions of the world's best persons have worshiped the Crucified as God, for His sake have combatted all their passions heroically as long as they lived, and died consoled and happy through their hope in Him.

That is a wonderful tribute to the character and teaching of Jesus. I wonder if those who oppose Him ever ask themselves what accounts for His sublime character and teaching?

There is but one explanation, namely, that He was truly what He claimed to be. For Jesus had no teacher on earth. In His own country He could have heard only Pharisees and Sadducees, who were mostly opposed to Him. He did not visit foreign schools. He was known to His countrymen as the Son of a carpenter of Nazareth, a despised corner

of His native land. Whence then His character and teachings? There is but one answer, which He Himself gave: "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." (Saint John, vii, 16) This truth is sublimely expressed in the opening words of the Gospel of Saint John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made by Him. . . . He was in the world and the world was made by Him. . . . He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, He gave them power to be made the sons of God." (Saint John, i, 1-12)

Why is it that, in the face of such testimony, there are those who reject the claims of Christ?

As I told you before, persons who have erroneous ideas are ordinarily so wedded to them that they are not open to conviction, no matter how strong the evidence may be in support of a claim that is opposed to their views. The character of Christ should in itself be sufficient grounds for accepting His claims. His character is, however, only one of the proofs for the truth of His claims. He fully realized that He was making the most astounding claims ever heard on this earth. Accordingly He was not content with merely declaring them nor resting their truth on the reliability of His character but said: "If you do not believe Me, believe the works which I do, they give testimony of Me." (Saint John, x, 25)

You see, He made allowance for their skepticism, for

He knew the exalted idea they had of God. He also realized that, although in appearance He was like the rest of men, He was, nevertheless, proclaiming that He was the Creator and Ruler of the world. Such claims demanded the most convincing confirmation. And He was prepared to give such sound proof that no one who was reasonable could logically reject His claims. Before we present this confirmation for the truth of His Divine claims, let us, before leaving the consideration of His character, reflect on the fact that it was the most perfect and unique that this world has known. The following outline of Christ's character is certainly proof that, although He was man, He was also more than man: "Because all high qualities are to be found in Jesus in their highest perfection, they all possess the most complete symmetry. Thus, we find in Him ardent zeal and inexhaustible patience; noble fervor and indulgent leniency; holy seriousness and sunny cheerfulness; an impulse to solitude and yet world publicity; majestic greatness and the deepest humility; inflexible determination and the sweetest of gentleness; powerful energy and quiet self-possession; the warmest love for sinners and invincible hatred of sin; compassionate sympathy and the strictest justice; irresistible attractiveness and fearless frankness; incorruptible truthfulness and extreme forbearance; mildness and force; resignation and resistance; adamant strength and motherly tenderness; indefatigable outward activity and inward contemplation. In everything—in thinking, in willing, in speaking, in precept and practice, in doing and in suffering, in

life and in death, He is equally great and perfect. In Him combine in wonderful harmony all the higher and lower powers of His soul; His feeling; His sentiments and understanding and will; idealism and realism; an intense sense of reality as regards the things of this world, and a ceaseless striving to promote the Kingdom of Heaven.”\*

*Of no other person* who has dwelt on this earth can anything approaching the perfection of Christ be predicated. In Him every virtue was personified in its highest perfection. Some persons excel in one virtue, others in other virtues. Christ excelled in all. With men, generally, every virtue has its characteristic weakness. The gentle are apt to be weak, the strong arrogant, the learned pretentious. But in Christ every virtue shone without the shadow of defect. No wonder that even those who do not accept His claims, are a unit in affirming Him to be the perfection of manhood. The wonder is that admiring Him as they do, they reject His testimony.

Let us now consider the evidence Jesus presented in confirmation of His solemn declaration that He was the Messiah, the Eternal Word made Flesh, the Incarnate Son of God.

As far as I am concerned no other evidence is necessary. To me it is clear that Christ is either God or a bad man, and I know He is not a bad man. However, as I want to be well informed on the subject, I am glad to have you proceed with

\*Confer: *Christ and the Critics*, Felder-Stoddard, Vol. II, p. 211.

the proofs which He Himself offered in corroboration of His sacred word.

The proofs which Jesus presented for the truth of His Divine claims were facts which were possible to Divine power only.

Now, since Divine power cannot be exercised to confirm what is false, it is clear that the deeds which manifested Divine power and which were wrought in confirmation of the claims of Jesus were Divine approval of those claims.

In brief: Jesus made Divine claims; Divine claims require Divine evidence to confirm them; and Jesus furnished that Divine evidence by deeds which were possible to Divine power only.

What were the Divine deeds which Jesus wrought in confirmation of His claims?

They fall under two chief heads, miracles and prophecies. We shall consider both. Let me begin by saying that these Divine deeds are recorded in the truest book in the world, the Gospels. In a previous conversation we devoted our consideration exclusively to the historical value of the Gospels, and showed that, of all the records in the annals of mankind, the most genuine and authentic is the book which records the life and teaching of Jesus.\*

You say that miracles and prophecies are the deeds

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\*Confer: *The Gospels*. The Scott Series of Pamphlets, No. III.

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of Jesus which confirm His Divine claims. But I understand that Rationalists deny the possibility of both of these evidences on the ground that they imply the supernatural.

Yes, they do reject the evidence of miracles and prophecies, and they are obliged by their position to reject them, for otherwise they would have no ground to stand on. But because a person denies the possibility of conversation from London to New York does not prove that we do not hear the voice of the radio speaker on the other side of the Atlantic. If man can devise a way of making the human voice to be heard thousands of miles away, certainly the Maker of man can do things which to human experience and understanding seem impossible.

But I understand that scientists hold that since the laws of the universe are fixed, any interference with them would be naturally impossible.

Yes, interference with nature's laws is *naturally* impossible, but not *supernaturally* impossible. The Creator of the universe is certainly Master of it, not its servant. God Who made the world and its laws also has control of it.

But we have gone into this matter thoroughly when we treated of the Gospels specifically in a former session.\* At present, it is sufficient to know that the Gospels are genuine and authentic, and that what is recorded in them is absolute fact. If you wish to know why, admitting this, some men remain un-

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\*Confer: *The Gospels*. The Scott Series of Pamphlets, No. III.

believers, you must know that consistency is not characteristic of error. So, realizing that the Gospels are genuine and authentic records of the life and teaching of Jesus, let us consider the evidence they present for Christ's Divine claims.

Before you proceed may I ask you to state just what is meant by a miracle?

That is the right way to begin. A miracle is a visible fact outside the ordinary causes of nature and possible to Divine power alone. It is because a miracle is possible to Divine power alone that it is evidence of Divine approval of the person or cause in whose behalf it is wrought.

Christ, realizing the stupendous nature of His claims, knew that He must do the works of God in order to be believed.

The Jews had the most sublime conception of God; yet here before them stood one like themselves, who solemnly affirmed that He was Almighty God. No wonder they were astonished and accused Him of blasphemy.

I am glad to see you state the case so frankly. It is, certainly, about the way the average man would regard the matter.

Christ, knowing the attitude of the Jews, made allowance for their state of mind, and accordingly said, in effect: I know that you are shocked because I declare that I am God; but if you do not believe me, believe the works which I do, which are possible to Divine



power alone. Divine power cannot be exercised to confirm a false claim, otherwise God would be approving falsehood.

He then proceeded to do what Divine power alone could effect. He gave sight to those born blind, cleansed the leper, gave hearing and speech to the deaf and dumb, made the crippled sound, multiplied the loaves and fishes, ruled the raging elements, and raised the dead to life. These things He did merely by His will power, or by a word only.

The Saints worked miracles, yet it was no proof that they were Divine; why then should miracles prove that Christ was Divine?

For this reason, or rather for two reasons: the first, because the miracles of the Saints were not wrought as evidence that they were Divine, but only to confirm the doctrine they preached; secondly, the miracles of the Saints were not wrought by their own power but by the power of God which they invoked by prayer. Christ's miracles were wrought definitely as evidence for the truth of His Divine claims, and they were also wrought by His own power and in His own name.

How do we know that Christ's miracles were wrought as definite evidence for His Divine claims?

For the simple reason that He distinctly declared that such was the main purpose of His miracles. For He openly said, after declaring that He was

God: "If you do not believe my words, then believe my works, for these give testimony of me." (Saint John, x, 38)

Moreover, just before His greatest miracle, the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead, He offered the marvelous deed He was about to perform as incontrovertible proof of the truth of His testimony. Raising His eyes to His Heavenly Father, He said: "That they may believe that Thou hast sent me." (Saint John, xi, 42) Then, with the same power by which in the beginning He made all things out of nothing, and gave life to all living beings, Christ said authoritatively and directly: "Lazarus come forth." At that Divine command, the mortal clay sprang to life, and the dead Lazarus came forth alive and sound. (Saint John, xi, 44)

That seems conclusive, if it actually happened.

If anyone will not acknowledge this and other miracles of Christ, will he explain to us how the world came to worship a crucified Jew as God, to set its hopes on Him alone, and to accept the religion of the Cross and live and die for it?

The establishment of Christianity without miracles would be a greater miracle than any recorded in the Gospels.

I have nothing more to say on that point. May I now ask you to show me how prophecy is a proof of Divine approval of a person or doctrine?

Prophecy is a miracle every bit as much as is the raising of the dead to life. You will agree with me,

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I am sure, if you understand the nature and significance of prophecy.

Prophecy means the foretelling of an event not naturally knowable. Prophecy is not calculation or any scientific system of forecasting the future. By calculation, an astronomer can foretell the time to a second of a future eclipse of the sun, or foretell a year ahead at what precise hour the sun will rise or set on any day.

But there is one thing which no human power can foretell, and that is what a man or a group of men will be doing at a future specified time. The reason for this is that man is the only being in the visible universe who is not governed by fixed laws. Matter, plants and animals are under unvarying laws, and once these laws are known by a person, he can predict many things concerning the things governed by them. But a man cannot foretell what he himself will be doing at any specified future time. Of course, he may and should plan for the future, but the best of plans may miscarry.

Only God knows definitely and certainly what free-will beings will do in the future. Hence, when a definite prophecy is made and fulfilled concerning what men will do at a specified future time, it means that it must be attributed to Divine power.

If, as you say, God knows what people will do before they act, does that not make it impossible for a man to act freely, for, if his future is definitely known, man has no choice?

Elsewhere we showed that this foreknowledge of God does not interfere with man's free will, because although God knows what man will do in the future, He knows that he will do it freely. Moreover, it was also shown that God would not be God if the future was not known to Him.\* Hence, when Christ definitely foretold things that could be known by Divine knowledge only, He was exercising a power possible to God alone, thus giving proof that He was what He claimed to be.

Jesus made many prophecies, but space allows us to mention only a few. Jesus definitely foretold the fact and manner of His Passion, Death and Resurrection; the destruction of Jerusalem; and the perpetuity of His Church. None of these events was naturally knowable, none of them was calculable. On the contrary, at the time they were predicted the very opposite seemed certain. Only five days before His crucifixion, Jesus was the most prominent and highly esteemed Person in Jerusalem. The people in thousands went out to meet Him as He entered the city. "A great multitude when they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem took branches from trees and went forth to meet Him and cried: Hosanna, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Saint John, xii, 13) This event is commemorated every year on Palm Sunday by Christians throughout the world. Who could have foreseen that only a few days later this same multitude would be crying out: "Crucify Him!" Yet Jesus distinctly foretold this event: "Behold we go up to

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\*Confer: *Have You a God?* The Scott Series of Pamphlets, No. I.

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Jerusalem and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified, and the third day He shall rise again." (Saint Matthew, xx, 18)

Several things about this prophecy are worthy of note. Jesus said that He would be delivered to the chief priests who would condemn Him to death, which they did. But they did not put Him to death. They delivered Him to the Gentiles, the Roman authorities, and Pilate ordered Him to be scourged, and afterwards, gave Him into the hands of the Roman soldiers, to be crucified. Now crucifixion was not the manner of executing the death sentence among the Jews, yet Jesus foretold this very kind of death.

Why do you say that crucifixion was not the manner of executing the death sentence among the Jews?

Because the Jewish death penalty was by stoning, as we see by the death of Stephen, the first martyr. (Acts vii, 57)

Moreover, the Jews did not punish by scourging, yet this method of punishment, altogether foreign to Jewish custom and law, Jesus also foretold. In connection with this crucifixion, something happened which never before or since occurred in a court of justice. Pilate, the judge, publicly declared the

accused innocent, yet condemned Him to death. This is absolutely unique in the annals of mankind. Pilate committed this act of injustice because the Jews threatened to accuse him of disloyalty to Caesar if he did not carry out their mandate.

Does that not make Pilate, rather than the Jews, the cause of Christ's death?

No, because Pilate acted against his own judgment and yielded only to intimidation. For this reason he declared he was innocent of the blood of Jesus, and the Jews replied: "His blood be upon us and upon our children." (Saint Matthew, xxvii, 25)

Jesus accordingly suffered a cruel death, and after being officially proclaimed dead, was buried. He had prophesied, however, that on the third day He would rise from the dead. It is from the Jews themselves that we have the proof for this prophecy, for they went to Pilate to ask for a guard over the tomb because, as they said, Jesus declared He would rise on the third day. As we know, He rose gloriously from the dead, as He foretold, and this event is commemorated throughout Christendom every year on Easter Sunday.

The Resurrection of Jesus from the dead was the main argument of the Apostles in preaching His Divinity and His religion.

Saint Augustine declared that the establishment of Christianity without the Resurrection would have been a greater miracle than the Resurrection itself.

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You specified the destruction of Jerusalem as a prophecy of Christ. Was that event distinctly foretold by Him?

Most accurately, as His words make evident: "When Jesus drew near to Jerusalem, He wept over it saying, 'For the days shall come upon thee and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side and beat thee flat to the ground . . . and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone . . . and thy people shall be led away captives into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles. . . . Amen I say to you, this generation shall not pass away till all things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away.'" (Saint Luke, xix, 41-44 and xxi, 24-33)

That was certainly a very definite prediction. Did it actually come to pass?

It not only came to pass but is recorded by an opponent of the Christian religion, the Jewish historian Josephus.\* Within the lifetime of people then living, Jerusalem, which at the time of the prophecy was the strongest fortified city in the world, was besieged and laid waste by the Gentiles (Romans), the people were led into captivity and the city was a thing of the past. The siege and destruction as described by Josephus is an exact fulfilment of the prophecy of Jesus.

\*Confer: *Jewish Wars*. Books IV and VII.

Josephus tells us that no other city was as completely annihilated as Jerusalem. Eleven hundred thousand lost their lives during the siege, and ninety-seven thousand were led away as captives and dispersed among various nations. From that day to this, the Jews have had no country they could call their own.

I suppose that is the reason they have not had from that day a temple of sacrifice, a high priest, or a ruler.

Yes, their existence today, holding together as a people, but without a national home, is living evidence of the Divinity of Him Who definitely foretold their rejection and dispersion. There is nothing comparable to it in the history of mankind.

I agree with you. It is a phenomenal fact, something outside the ordinary course of nature. What makes it even more astounding, to me, is that as a people they are the most remarkable of mankind. They are outstanding in intelligence, ingenuity and many forms of genius. They are truly a dominant people, yet without dominion anywhere.

And now let me proceed to another prophecy of Christ, that of the perpetuity of the Church which He founded. If, at the time that this prophecy was made, it was put before a jury of sensible men, they would have declared that its fulfilment was an absolute impossibility. And from the natural point of view they would be right. The law of everything natural is to decay with age. When, therefore,



Christ declared that His Church would last forever, He was stating something which was contrary to all natural experience.

There is not in the entire world today an institution which existed at the time when this prophecy was made, except the Church which Christ said would last to the end of the world. When we consider that the Catholic Church is worldwide, that its members are subject to human frailty, that it embraces every kind and condition of mankind, and that it has been perpetually assailed by the vicious tendencies of the world; when we consider the weaknesses within and the assaults from without, its preservation is impossible of explanation except by supernatural power. When we consider, moreover, that today, after twenty centuries of opposition from the world, the flesh and the powers of evil, the Catholic Church is the most extensive, united, authoritative and vigorous institution in the world, it is abundantly evident that the Church of Christ is not merely natural but supernatural. And the Church is supernatural because her Founder is supernatural, as the fulfilment of this prophecy before our eyes attests. Jesus said: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore teach ye all nations . . . and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." (Saint Matthew, xxviii, 18-20) No merely human being could speak these words with effect.

But the consummation of the world may still be a far way off. How do we know that Christ's words will hold until the end?

The fact that the Church has already manifested supernatural life and guidance is guarantee that the prophecy of Christ fulfilled in the past will be fulfilled unto the end.

And now to conclude: Christ, by His character, by His miracles and by His prophecies, stands forth unique among mankind. He not only proclaimed that He was God, but confirmed His Divine claims by deeds possible to Divine power alone. In the history of the world, no claims have been so substantially corroborated as those of Christ. The High Priest said to Jesus: "I adjure thee by the living God that Thou tell us if Thou be the Christ the Son of God. And Jesus saith to him: 'I am.'" (Saint Matthew, xxvi, 63-64; Saint Mark, xiv, 62)

It is safe to say that if belief in Jesus did not imply living by His religion, no one who was logical and sincere, could fail to be convinced that He is truly what He claimed to be, the Eternal Son of God, true God and true Man.

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# AMERICA

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