

## Who is this Jesus, anyway?

Controversies among the crowds,  
challenging comparisons to Jewish patriarchs,  
and the “I AM” sayings

### Crowd-Controversy Scenes

“Then the Jews disputed among themselves...” (5:52)

“a good man” / “a deceiver” (7:10-12)

But after his brothers had gone to the festival, then he also went, not publicly but as it were in secret. <sup>11</sup>The Jews were looking for him at the festival and saying, ‘Where is he?’ <sup>12</sup>And there was considerable complaining about him among the crowds. While some were saying, ‘He is a good man’, others were saying, ‘No, he is deceiving the crowd.’

“the messiah” / *not* the messiah (7:25-31)

Some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, ‘Isn’t this the man they are trying to kill?’ <sup>26</sup>And here he is, speaking openly, but they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Messiah? <sup>27</sup>Yet we know where this man is from; but when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from.’ ... <sup>31</sup>Yet many in the crowd believed in him and were saying, ‘When the Messiah comes, will he do more signs than this man has done?’

“the messiah” / “the prophet” / *not* the messiah (7:40-43)

When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, ‘This is really the prophet.’ <sup>41</sup>Others said, ‘This is the Messiah.’ But some asked, ‘Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he?’ <sup>42</sup>Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?’ <sup>43</sup>So there was a division in the crowd because of him. <sup>44</sup>Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

“believed in him” / “reported to the Pharisees” (11:45-46)

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. <sup>46</sup>But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done. ‘

“an angel” / “it was thunder” (12:28-29)

A voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified [my name], and I will glorify it again.’ The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’

“they did not believe in him” / “many believed in him” (12:37-42)

<sup>37</sup>Although he had performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in him...  
<sup>42</sup>Nevertheless many, even of the authorities, believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue.

## Ancestor-Comparison as Rhetorical Challenge

"Are you greater than our ancestor... (μη συ μειζων ει του πατρος ημων...)

<p><sup>12</sup>...Jacob, who drank from it, and his sons and his flocks [drank from it]?"</p> <p><sup>13</sup>Jesus answered and told her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, <sup>14</sup>but those who drink of the water that I will give him will not thirst, into the age; but the water which I will give him become a well of water within him, gushing up to eternal life.' (4:12-14)</p>	<p><sup>53</sup>...Abraham, who died? And the prophets died. Who do you claim to be?"</p> <p><sup>54a</sup>Jesus answered... <sup>56</sup>Your ancestor Abraham was glad that he would see my day, and he saw it and rejoiced.' <sup>57</sup>Then the Judeans said to him, 'You're not yet fifty years old, and you've seen Abraham?' <sup>58</sup>Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I am.' (8:53-54a, 56-58)</p>
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"Our ancestors" (οι πατερες ημων) as Rhetorical Challenge

<p>"Our ancestors (οι πατερες ημων) worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where one must worship is in Jerusalem."</p> <p>Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, that the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem. (4:20-21)</p>	<p>"What sign are you doing, that we may see and believe you? What work are you performing?"</p> <p><u>Our ancestors</u> (οι πατερες ημων) ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" (6:30-31)</p> <p>"I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.'" (6:48-50)</p>
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## The "I AM" Sayings

"I AM..." / Εγω ειμι...	Miraculous context (if any)
<i>no modifier</i> (6:20)	<i>Jesus walks on water</i>
...the bread of life (6:35)	<i>Jesus feeds crowd in the wilderness</i>
...the light of the world (8:12)	
...the door (10:9)	
...the good shepherd (10:11)	
...the resurrection and the life (11:25)	<i>Jesus raises a man from death</i>
...the way, the truth, and the life (14:6)	
...the true vine (15:1)	
<i>no modifier, x3</i> (18:5-8)	<i>Jesus knocks men down with his voice</i>