

Jesus and the Divine Council

John 10.30-42

When Jesus said, “I and the Father are one,” the Jews picked up stones to stone Him. They accused Him of claiming to be God – blasphemy! Jesus replied by quoting an obscure line from Psalm 82. What did it mean? The Jews knew – it pointed to the ‘divine council’ of God, and Jesus’ identity.

Setting

- Jesus: “I and the Father are one;” Jews try to stone Him (30-31)
- Jews accuse Jesus of blasphemy, claiming to be God (32-33)
- Jesus quotes from Psalm 82.6 to blunt their accusation (34-36)
- Jesus says miracles show His relationship to the Father (37-38)
- Jews try to seize Jesus, but He escapes to the Jordan (39-42)

- Understanding Psalm 82: God and His ‘divine council’
 - *Common view: The “gods” are just human judges*
 - *Better view: The “gods” are celestial beings*
Deut. 32.8-9; Job 1.6; 2.1; 38.4-7; Ps. 89.5-7; Dan. 10.13; 1 Cor. 10.19-20

- Why Jesus Quoted Psalm 82
 - *He identified Himself as belonging to the divine realm*
 - *He identifies Himself as uniquely one with the Father*

- Question for all times: Why do people refuse to believe in Jesus?
 - *It’s not because of His works; they confirm His deity!*
 - *It’s because of His words; they expose our sin!*

1. Before we get to the tough part, let’s get the ‘big picture’ of what’s going on in John 10.30-42. Jesus never made His claim to being the Son of God a secret – His words and His works (miracles) showed it, and many believed in Him as the Messiah. What does He say in the first half of John 10 (verses 1-21) that points to His deity? After the Jews ask Him to tell them plainly if He is the Christ (24), what in His response (25-30) reflects His deity? What did Jesus say when they picked up stones to stone Him (32)? What do they give as their reason for stoning Him (33)? Leaving aside Jesus’ citing Psalm 82.6 (34-36), what does He point to as evidence for His deity in 38-39? Did Jesus words satisfy the Jews? Where did Jesus go (40-42)?

2. Jesus quotes one line from Psalm 82 in John 10.34, but the Pharisees who were hounding Him knew the Scriptures inside-out. They knew this entire psalm, and Jesus knew that, too! Some Bible translations of Ps. 82 are poor. Verse 1 should read something like: *God has taken His place in the divine council; He judges among the gods.* What “assembly” or “council” is this? Who is God judging? (Read the Scripture references on the study sheet for help on this.) In verse 6, God tells those He is judging, “You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High.” We know this is not talking about humans, because God says that they “will die like men” (v7). Who are they?

3. Now let’s put it all together. Ps. 82 talks about God judging “gods” (divine beings) who have power over people on earth, and have been unjust. In John 10.34, Jesus quotes this psalm after Jews accuse Him of blasphemy for claiming to be God; He points to the divine realm all Jews knew about, and says that if they accept these divine beings (and they do), then why won’t they accept Him as a divine being as well? Jesus is trying to get them to see Him as more than just human, because if they do, they’re halfway to accepting who He really is (see v38b)! Notice in v39 that they don’t even try to argue with Jesus – they just try to seize Him. These Jews are like many today who have no reason to reject Jesus – everything about Him affirms His deity, but they angrily refuse to believe in Him. Do you know someone like this? Pray for them right now.

