

The Jesus Forgery: Josephus Untangled



The following article **has not** been edited for the Sacred Name and is excerpted from:

[*Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ Unveiled*](#)

by Acharya S

When addressing the mythical nature of Jesus Christ, one issue repeatedly raised is the purported "evidence" of his existence to be found in the writings of [Flavius Josephus](#), the famed [Jewish](#) general and historian who lived from about **37 to 100 CE**. In Josephus's [Antiquities of the Jews](#) appears the notorious passage regarding Christ called the "[Testimonium Flavianum](#)"¹ (hereafter sometimes referred to as "**TF**"):

"Now, there was about this time, [Jesus](#), a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works,--a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians², so named from him, are not extinct at this day." (Whitson, 379)

¹ [Antiquities of the Jews, Book 18, Chapter 3, Paragraph 3](#)

3. Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, (9) those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; (10) as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the **tribe** of Christians, **so named from him**, are not extinct at this day.

² [Act 11:26 \(KJV\)](#) And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were **called Christians first in Antioch**. [this was +/- 47 CE]

Josephus was about 10 years old at this time.

This surprisingly brief and simplistic passage constitutes the "best proof" of Jesus' existence in the entire ancient non-Christian library comprising the works of dozens of historians, writers, philosophers, politicians and others who never mentioned the great sage and wonderworker [Jesus Christ](#), even though they lived contemporaneously with or shortly after the Christian savior's purported advent.

A False Witness

Despite the best wishes of sincere believers and the erroneous claims of **truculent apologists**, the **Testimonium Flavianum** has been demonstrated continually over the centuries to be a **forgery**, likely interpolated by [Catholic Church](#) historian **Eusebius** in the **fourth century**. So thorough and universal has been this debunking that very few scholars of repute continued to cite the passage after the turn of the 19th century. Indeed, the **TF** was rarely mentioned, **except to note that it was a forgery**, and numerous books by a variety of authorities over a period of **200** or so years basically took it for granted that the Testimonium Flavianum in its entirety was spurious, an interpolation and a forgery. As Dr. [Gordon Stein](#) relates:

"...the vast majority of scholars since the early **1800s** have said that this quotation **is not by Josephus**, but rather is a later Christian insertion in his works. In other words, it is a **forgery**, rejected by scholars."

So well understood was **this fact of forgery** that these numerous authorities did not spend their precious time and space rehashing the arguments against the **TF's** authenticity. Nevertheless, in the past few decades **apologists of questionable integrity and credibility** have glommed onto the **TF**, because this short and dubious passage represents *the most "concrete"* secular, non-biblical reference to a man who purportedly shook up the world. In spite of the past debunking, the debate is currently confined to those who think the **TF** was original to Josephus but was Christianized, and those who credulously and self-servingly accept it as "genuine" in its entirety.

To repeat, this passage was so completely dissected by scholars of high repute and standing--**the majority of them pious Christians**--that it was for decades understood by subsequent scholars as having been proved *in toto* a forgery, such that these succeeding scholars did not even mention it, unless to acknowledge it as false. (In addition to being repetitious, numerous quotes will be presented here, because a strong show of rational consensus is desperately needed when it comes to **matters of blind, unscientific and irrational faith**.) The scholars who so conclusively proved the **TF** a forgery made their mark at the **end of the 18th century** and into the **20th**, when a sudden reversal was implemented, with popular opinion hemming and hawing its way back first to the "**partial interpolation theory**" and in recent times, among the **third-rate apologists**, to the notion that the whole **TF** is "genuine." As [Earl Doherty](#) says, in "**Josephus Unbound**":

"Now, it is a curious fact that older generations of scholars had no trouble dismissing this entire passage as a Christian construction. Charles Guignebert, for example, in his *Jesus* (1956, p.17), calls it '**a pure Christian forgery**.' Before him, **Lardner, Harnack and Schurer**, along with others, declared it **entirely spurious**. Today, most serious scholars have decided the passage is a mix: original parts rubbing shoulders with later Christian additions."

The earlier scholarship that proved the entire **TF** to be fraudulent was determined by intense scrutiny by some of the most erudite, and mainly Christian, writers of the time, in a number of countries, their works written in a variety of languages, but particularly German, French and

English. Their general conclusions, as elucidated by Christian authority Dr. Lardner, and related here by the author of *Christian Mythology Unveiled* (c. 1842), include the following reasons for doubting the authenticity of the **TF** as a whole:

"**Mattathias**, the father of **Josephus**, must have been a witness to the miracles which are said to have been performed by Jesus, and **Josephus** was born within two years after the crucifixion, yet in all the works he says nothing whatever about the life or death of **Jesus Christ**; as for the interpolated passage it is now **universally acknowledged** to be a **forgery**. The arguments of the 'Christian Ajax,' even Lardner himself, against it are these: **'It was never quoted by any of our Christian ancestors before Eusebius**. It disturbs the narrative. The language is quite Christian. **It is not quoted by Chrysostom, though he often refers to Josephus, and could not have omitted quoting it had it been then in the text. It is not quoted by Photius [9th century], though he has three articles concerning Josephus; and this author expressly states that this historian [Josephus BB] has not taken the least notice of Christ**. Neither **Justin Martyr**, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew; nor Clemens Alexandrinus, who made so many extracts from ancient authors; nor Origen against Celsus, have **ever mentioned** this testimony. But, on the contrary, in **chapter 25th** of the first book of that work, **Origen openly affirms that Josephus, who had mentioned John the Baptist, did not acknowledge Christ**. That this passage is a false fabrication is admitted by Ittigius, Blondel, Le Clerc, Vandale, Bishop Warburton, and Tanaquil Faber.'" (CMU, 47)

Hence, by the 1840's, when the **anonymous author** of *Christian Mythology Unveiled* wrote, the **Testimonium Flavianum** was already "**universally acknowledged** to be a **forgery**."

The pertinent remarks by the highly significant Church father Origen (c. 185-c.254) appear in his *Contra Celsus*, Book I, Chapter XLVII:

"For in the **18th book** of his *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus bears witness to **John** as having been a **Baptist**, and as promising purification to those who underwent the rite. Now this writer, although **not believing in Jesus as the Christ**, in seeking after the cause of the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple, whereas he ought to have said that the conspiracy against Jesus was the cause of these calamities befalling the people, since they put to death Christ, who was a prophet, says nevertheless--being, although against his will, not far from the truth--that **these disasters happened** to the Jews as a **punishment for the death of James the Just**, who was a **brother of Jesus (called Christ)**--the Jews having put him to death, although he was a man most distinguished for his justice" (Emphasis added)

Here, **in Origen's words**, is the **assertion** that **Josephus**, who discusses more than a dozen **Jesuses**, **did not consider any of them to be "the Christ."** This fact proves that the same phrase in the **TF** is spurious. Furthermore, Origen does not even intimate the presence of the rest of the **TF**. Concerning Origen and the **TF**, **Arthur Drews** relates in *Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus*:

"In the edition of Origen published by the Benedictines it is said that there was no mention of Jesus at all in Josephus before the time of Eusebius [c. 300 ce]. Moreover, in the sixteenth century Vossius had a manuscript of the text of Josephus in which there was not a word about Jesus. It seems, therefore, that the passage must have been an interpolation, whether it was subsequently modified or not." (Drews, 9; **emph. added**)

According to the author of *Christian Mythology Unveiled* ("CMU"), this Vossius mentioned by a number of writers as **having possessed a copy of Josephus's Antiquities lacking the TF** is "I. Vossius," whose works appeared in Latin. Unfortunately, none of these writers includes a citation as to where exactly the assertion may be found in Vossius's works. Moreover, the Vossius in question seems to be Gerardus, rather than his son, Isaac, who **was born in the seventeenth century**.

Church Fathers Ignorant of Josephus Passage

In any event, as G. A. Wells points out in *The Jesus Myth*, not only do several Church fathers from the second, third and early fourth centuries have no apparent knowledge of the **TF**, but even after Eusebius suddenly "found" it in the first half of the fourth century, several other fathers into the fifth **"often cite Josephus, but not this passage."** (Wells, *JM*, 202) In the 5th century, Church **father Jerome (c. 347-c.419)** cited the **TF** once, with **obvious disinterest, as if he knew it was fraudulent**. In addition to his reference to the **TF**, in his **Letter XXII**. to Eustochium, Jerome made the following audacious claim:

"Josephus, himself a Jewish writer, asserts that at the Lord's crucifixion there broke from the temple voices of heavenly powers, saying: 'Let us depart hence.'"

Either Jerome fabricated this alleged Josephus quote, or he possessed a unique copy of the Jewish historian's works, in which this assertion had earlier been interpolated. In any case, Jerome's claim constitutes "pious fraud," one of many committed by Christian proponents over the centuries, a rampant practice, in fact, that must be kept in mind when considering the authenticity of the TF. [Jerome is the likely author of the "they pierced my hands and feet" mistranslation in Psalms, as well as the "a virgin" mistranslation in Isaiah 7:14. BB]

Following is a list of important Christian authorities who studied and/or mentioned Josephus but not the Jesus passage:

- Justin Martyr (c. 100-c. 165), who obviously pored over Josephus's works, **makes no mention of the TF**.
- Theophilus (d. 180), Bishop of Antioch--**no mention of the TF**.
- Irenaeus (c. 120/140-c. 200/203), saint and compiler of the [New Testament](#), **has not a word about the TF**.
- Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-211/215), influential [Greek](#) theologian and prolific Christian writer, head of the Alexandrian school, **says nothing about the TF**.
- **Origen (c. 185-c. 254), no mention of the TF and specifically states that Josephus did not believe Jesus was "the Christ."**
- Hippolytus (c. 170-c. 235), saint and martyr, **nothing about the TF**.
- The author of the ancient Syriac text, "History of Armenia," refers to Josephus **but not the TF**.
- [Minucius Felix](#) (d. c. 250), lawyer and Christian convert--**no mention of the TF**.
- Anatolius (230-c. 270/280)--**no mention of TF**.
- Chrysostom (c. 347-407), saint and Syrian prelate, **not a word about the TF**.

- Methodius, saint of the 9th century--even at this late date **there were apparently copies of Josephus without the TF**, as Methodius **makes no mention of it**.
- Photius (c. 820-891), **Patriarch of Constantinople, not a word about the TF**, again indicating copies of Josephus devoid of the passage, or, perhaps, a rejection of it because it was understood to be fraudulent.

Arguments Against Authenticity Further Elucidated

When the evidence is scientifically examined, it becomes clear that the entire Josephus passage regarding Jesus was forged, likely by Church historian **Eusebius**, during the fourth century. In "**Who on Earth was Jesus Christ?**" [David Taylor](#) details the reasons why the **TF in toto** must be deemed a forgery, most of which arguments, again, were put forth by Dr. Lardner:

- "It was **not quoted** or referred to by any **Christian apologists** prior to **Eusebius, c. 316 ad**.
- "Nowhere else in his voluminous works does Josephus use the word 'Christ,' except in the passage **which refers to James 'the brother of Jesus who was called Christ'** (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 20, Chapter 9, Paragraph 1), which is **also** considered to be a forgery.³
- "Since Josephus was not a Christian but an [orthodox Jew](#), it is **impossible** that he should have believed or written that Jesus was the Christ or used the words **'if it be lawful to call him a man,'** which imply the Christian belief in Jesus' divinity.
- "The extraordinary character of the things related in the passage--of a man who is apparently more than a man, and who rose from the grave after being dead for three days--demanded a more extensive treatment by Josephus, which would undoubtedly have been forthcoming **if he had been its author**.
- "**The passage interrupts the narrative**, which would flow more naturally if the passage were left out entirely.

³ *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 20, Chapter 9, Paragraph 1

1. AND now Caesar, upon hearing the death of Festus, sent Albinus into Judea, as procurator. But the king deprived Joseph of the high priesthood, and bestowed the succession to that dignity on the son of Ananus, who was also himself called Ananus. Now the report goes that this eldest Ananus proved a most fortunate man; for he had five sons who had all performed the office of a high priest to God, and who had himself enjoyed that dignity a long time formerly, which had never happened to any other of our high priests. But this younger Ananus, who, as we have told you already, took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, [\(23\)](#) who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed; when, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority]. Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrim of judges, and brought before them **the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James**, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned: but as for those who seemed the most equitable of the citizens, and such as were the most uneasy at the breach of the laws, they disliked what was done; they also sent to the king [Agrippa], desiring him to send to Ananus that he should act so no more, for that what he had already done was not to be justified; nay, some of them went also to meet Albinus, as he was upon his journey from Alexandria, and informed him that it was not lawful for Ananus to assemble a sanhedrim without his consent. [\(24\)](#) Whereupon Albinus complied with what they said, and wrote in anger to Ananus, and threatened that he would bring him to punishment for what he had done; on which king Agrippa took the high priesthood from him, when he had ruled but three months, and made Jesus, the son of Damneus, high priest.

- "It is not quoted by **Chrysostom (c. 354-407 AD)** even though he often refers to Josephus in his voluminous writings.
- "It is **not quoted** by Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople (c. 858-886 ad) even though he wrote three articles concerning Josephus, **which strongly implies that his copy of Josephus' Antiquities did not contain the passage.**
- "Neither **Justin Martyr (110-165 AD)**, nor **Clement of Alexandria (153-217 ad)**, nor **Origen (c.185-254 AD)**, who all made extensive reference to ancient authors in their defense of Christianity, has mentioned this supposed testimony of Josephus.
- "**Origen**, in his treatise *Against Celsus*, Book 1, Chapter 47, **states categorically that Josephus did NOT believe that Jesus was the Christ.**
- "**This is the only reference to the Christians in [the works of Josephus](#). If it were genuine, we would have expected him to have given us a fuller account of them somewhere."**

When the earliest Greek texts are analyzed, it is obvious that the **Testimonium Flavianum interrupts the flow** of the primary material and that the **style of the language is different** from that of Josephus. There is other evidence that the **TF** never appeared in the original Josephus. As Wells says:

"As I noted in *The Jesus Legend*, there is an **ancient table of contents** in the Antiquities which omits all mention of the Testimonium. Feldman (in **Feldman and Hata, 1987, p. 57**) says that this table is already mentioned in the fifth- or sixth-century Latin version of the Antiquities, and he finds it 'hard to believe that such a remarkable passage would be omitted by anyone, let alone by a Christian summarizing the work.'" (Wells, JM, 201)

Also, Josephus goes into long detail about the lives of numerous personages of relatively little import, including several Jesuses. It is inconceivable that he would devote only a few sentences to someone even remotely resembling the character found in the New Testament. If the [gospel](#) tale constituted "history," Josephus's elders would certainly be aware of Jesus' purported assault on the temple, for example, and the historian, who was obviously interested in instances of **messianic agitation**, would surely have reported it, in detail. Moreover, the **TF** refers to Jesus as a "wise man"--this phrase is **used by Josephus** in regard to **only two other people**, out of hundreds, i.e., **the patriarchs Joseph and Solomon**. If **Josephus** had thought so highly of an historical **Jesus**, he surely would have written more extensively about him. Yet, he does not. Lest it be suggested that Josephus somehow could have been ignorant of the events in question, [the Catholic Encyclopedia](#) ("Flavius Josephus") says:

"... Josephus...was chosen by the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem to be commander-in-chief in Galilee. As such he established in every city throughout the country a council of judges, the members of which were recruited from those who shared his political views."

Indeed, **Josephus was a well-educated Jew** who lived in the precise area where the gospel tale was said to have taken place, as did his parents, the latter at the very time of Christ's alleged advent. It was Josephus's passion to study the Jewish people and their history; yet, other than the obviously bogus **TF**, and the brief "**James passage**" mentioned by **Taylor** above, it turns out that in his voluminous works Josephus discussed neither Christ nor Christianity. Nor does it make any sense that the **prolific Jewish writer** would not detail the Christian movement itself, were Christians extant at the time in any significant numbers.

The [Catholic Encyclopedia](#) (CE), which tries to hedge its bet about the Josephus passage, is nevertheless forced to admit: "The passage seems to suffer from repeated interpolations." In the same entry, CE also confirms that Josephus's writings were used extensively by the early Christian fathers, such as [Jerome](#), Ambrose and Chrysostom; nevertheless, as noted, except for [Jerome](#), they never mention the [TF](#).

Regarding the [TF](#), as well as the James passage, which possesses the phrase James, the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, Jewish writer ben Yehoshua makes some interesting assertions:

"Neither of these passages is found in the original version of the [Jewish Antiquities](#) which was preserved by the Jews. The first passage (XVII, 3, 3) was quoted by [Eusebius](#) writing in c. 320 C.E., so we can conclude that it was added in some time between the time Christians got hold of the [Jewish Antiquities](#) and c. 320 C.E. It is not known when the other passage (XX, 9, 1) was added... Neither passage is based on any reliable sources. It is fraudulent to claim that these passages were written by Josephus and that they provide evidence for Jesus. They were written by Christian redactors and were based purely on Christian belief."

[Yehoshua](#) claims that the 12th century historian [Gerald of Wales](#) related that a "Master Robert of the Priory of St. Frideswide at Oxford examined many Hebrew copies of Josephus and did not find the 'testimony about Christ,' except for two manuscripts where it appeared [to Robert, evidently] that the testimony had been present but scratched out." [Yehoshua](#) states that, since "scratching out" requires the removal of the top layers, the deleted areas in these mere two of the many copies likely did not provide any solid evidence that it was the [TF](#) that had been removed. Apologists will no doubt insist that these Hebrew texts are late copies and that Jewish authorities had the [TF](#) removed. This accusation of mutilating an author's work, of course, can easily be turned around on the Christians. Also, considering that [Vossius](#) purportedly possessed a copy of the [Antiquities](#) without the [TF](#), it is quite possible that there were "many Hebrew copies" likewise devoid of the passage.

High Criticism by Christian Authorities

The many reasons for concluding the Josephus passage to be a forgery have been expounded upon by numerous well-respected authorities, so much so that such individuals have been compelled by honesty and integrity to dismiss the [Testimonium in toto](#) as a forgery. In *The Christ*, [John Rensburg](#) relates the opinions of critics of the [TF](#) from the past couple of centuries, the majority of whom were Christian authorities, including and especially [Dr. Lardner](#), who said:

"A testimony so favorable to Jesus in the works of Josephus, who lived so soon after our Savior, who was so well acquainted with the transactions of his own country, who had received so many favors from Vespasian and Titus, would not be overlooked or neglected by any Christian apologist (Lardner's Works, vol. I, chap. iv)."

Yet, the [TF](#) was overlooked and neglected by early Christian writers. In other words, they never cited it because it didn't exist.

Another authority, [Bishop Warburton](#), called the [TF](#) a "rank forgery, and a very stupid one, too." [Rensburg](#) further related the words of the "Rev. Dr. Giles, of the Established Church of England," who stated:

"Those who are best acquainted with the character of Josephus, and the style of his writings, have no hesitation in condemning this passage as a forgery, interpolated in the text during the

third century by some pious Christian, who was scandalized that so famous a writer as Josephus should have taken no notice of the gospels, or of Christ, their subject...."

In addition, the **Rev. S. Baring-Gould** remarked:

"This passage is **first quoted by Eusebius** (fl. A.D. 315) in two places (Hist. Eccl., lib. I, c. xi; Demonst. Evang., lib. iii); but it was **unknown** to Justin Martyr (fl. A.D. 140), **Clement of Alexandria** (fl. A.D. 192), **Tertullian** (fl. A.D. 193), and **Origen** (fl. A.D. 230). Such a testimony would certainly have been produced by Justin in his apology or in his controversy with **Trypho the Jew**, had it existed in the copies of Josephus at his time. The silence of Origen is still more significant. Celsus, in his book **against** Christianity, introduces a Jew. Origen attacks the argument of Celsus and his Jew. He could not have failed to quote the words of Josephus, whose writings he knew, had the passage existed in the genuine text. He, indeed, **distinctly affirms that Josephus did not believe in Christ** (Contr. Cels. I)."

Remsburg also recounts:

"Cannon Farrar, who has written an ablest Christian [life of Christ](#) yet penned, repudiates it. He says: 'The single passage in which he [Josephus] alludes to him **is interpolated, if not wholly spurious**' (*Life of Christ*, Vol. I, p. 46).

"The following, from Dr. Farrar's pen, is to be found in the **Encyclopedia Britannica**: 'That Josephus wrote the whole passage as it now stands **no sane critic can believe.**'"

And so on, with similar opinions by Christian scholars such as Theodor Keim, Rev. Dr. Hooykaas and Dr. Alexander Campbell. By the time of Dr. Chalmers and others, the **TF** had been so discredited that these authorities understood it as a forgery *in toto* and did not even consider it for a moment as "evidence" of Jesus' existence and/or divinity. In fact, these subsequent defenders of the faith, knowing the **TF** to be a forgery, repeatedly commented on how disturbing it was that Josephus did not mention Jesus.

In the modern apologist work [The Case for Christ](#), **Lee Strobel** relates a passage from a novel published in **1979** by Charles [Templeton](#), in which the author states, regarding Jesus, "There isn't a single word about him in secular history. Not a word. No mention of him by the Romans. **Not so much as a reference by Josephus.**" (**Strobel, 101**) Strobel then reports the response by Christian professor Edwin Yamauchi, who claimed that Templeton was mistaken and that there was a reference to Jesus by Josephus. Yamauchi's fatuous response ignores, purposefully or otherwise, the previous ironclad arguments about which Templeton was apparently educated, such that he made such a statement. In other words, **Templeton was evidently aware of the purported reference in Josephus but had understood by the arguments of the more erudite, earlier Christian authorities that it was a forgery**; hence, there is "not so much as a reference by Josephus." In this facile manner of merely ignoring or dismissing the earlier scholarship, **modern believers cling to the long-dismissed TF in order to convince themselves of the unbelievable.**

For a more modern criticism, in *The Jesus Puzzle* and his online article "**Josephus Unbound**," secularist and classicist Earl Doherty leaves no stone unturned in demolishing the **TF**, permitting no squirming room for future apologists, whose resort to the **TF** will show, as it has done in the past, how hopeless is their plight in establishing an "historical Jesus." Concerning the use of Josephus as "evidence" of Jesus' existence, Doherty remarks:

"in the absence of any other supporting evidence from the first century that in fact the Jesus of Nazareth portrayed in the Gospels clearly existed, Josephus becomes the slender thread by which such an assumption hangs. And the sound and fury and desperate maneuverings which surround the dissection of those **two, little passages** becomes a din of astonishing proportions. The obsessive focus on this **one uncertain record** is necessitated by the fact that **the rest of the evidence is so dismal, so contrary to the orthodox picture**. If almost everything outside Josephus points in a different direction, to the essential fiction of the Gospel picture and its central figure, how can Josephus be made to bear on his shoulders, through two passages whose **reliability has thus far remained unsettled**, the counterweight to all this other negative evidence?"

Other modern authors who criticize the **TF** include *The Jesus Mysteries* authors Freke and Gandy, who conclude:

"Unable to provide any historical evidence for Jesus, **later Christians forged the proof that they so badly needed** to shore up their Literalist interpretation of the gospels. **This, as we would see repeatedly, was a common practice.**" (Freke and Gandy, 137)

Despite the desperate din, a number of other modern writers remain in concurrence with the earlier scholarship and likewise consider the **TF in toto a fraud**.

The Culprit: Eusebius (c. 264-340)

In addition to acknowledging the spuriousness of the Josephus passage, many authorities quoted here agreed with the obvious: Church historian **Eusebius** was the forger of the entire Testimonium Flavianum. Various reasons have already been given for making such a conclusion. In "[Did Jesus Really Live?](#)" Marshall Gauvin remarks:

"Everything demonstrates the spurious character of the passage. **It is written in the style of Eusebius, and not in the style of Josephus.** Josephus was a voluminous writer. He wrote **extensively** about men of minor importance. **The brevity of this reference to Christ is, therefore, a strong argument for its falsity.** This passage interrupts the narrative. It has nothing to do with what precedes or what follows it; and its position clearly shows that the text of the historian has been separated by a later hand to give it room."

Regarding the absence of the **TF** in the writings of earlier Christian fathers and its sudden appearance with **Eusebius**, CMU says:

"it has been observed that the famous passage which we find in Josephus, about Jesus Christ, was never mentioned or alluded to in any way whatever by any of the fathers of the first, second, or third centuries; **nor until the time of Eusebius**, 'when it was **first quoted by himself** [sic].' The truth is, none of these fathers could quote or allude to a passage which did not exist in their times; but was to all points short of absolutely certain, **forged and interpolated by Eusebius**, as suggested by Gibbon and others. Even the redoubtable Lardner has pronounced this passage to **be a forgery.**" (CMU, 79-80)

Moreover, the word "**tribe**" in the **TF** is another clue that the passage **was forged by Eusebius, who is fond of the word**, while **Josephus** uses it only in terms of **ethnicity**, **never** when describing a **religious sect**. Kerry Shirts adds to this particular point:

"**Eusebius studied Josephus diligently**, and could thus masquerade as he, except when he used the word '**tribe**' to describe the Christians. All the literature from the [Ante-Nicene Fathers](#) show

they **never** used the word '**tribe**' or '**race**' with reference to the Christians, was [sic] either by the Fathers or when they quoted non-Christian writers. Tertullian, Pliny the Younger, Trajan, Rufinus--none use '**tribe**' to refer to Christians. **Eusebius is the first to start the practice.**"

In *Antiqua Mater: A Study of Christian Origins*, Edwin Johnson remarked that the fourth century was "the great age of literary forgery, the extent of which has yet to be exposed." He further commented that "not until the mass of inventions labelled '**Eusebius**' shall be exposed, can the pretended references to Christians in Pagan writers of the first three centuries be recognized for the forgeries they are." Indeed, Eusebius's character has been assailed repeatedly over the centuries, with him being called a "**luminous liar**" and "**unreliable.**" Like so many others, Drews likewise criticizes Eusebius, stating that various of the Church historian's references "**must be regarded with the greatest suspicion.**" As Drews relates, Swiss historian Jakob Burckhardt (1818-1897) declared **Eusebius** to be "**the first thoroughly dishonest historian of antiquity.**" (Drews, 32/fin) Eusebius's motives were to empower the [Catholic Church](#), and he did not fail to use "**falsifications, suppressions, and fictions**" to this end.

Conclusion: Josephus No Evidence of Jesus

Even if the Josephus passage were authentic, which we have essentially proved it not to be, it nevertheless would represent **not an eyewitness account** but rather a **tradition** passed along for at least six decades, long after the purported events. Hence, the **TF** would possess little if any value in establishing an "historical" Jesus. In any event, it is quite clear that the entire passage in Josephus regarding Christ, the **Testimonium Flavianum**, is spurious, false and a forgery. Regarding the **TF**, Remsburg summarizes:

"For nearly sixteen hundred years Christians have been citing this passage as a testimonial, not merely to the historical existence, but to the divine character of Jesus Christ. And yet a ranker forgery was never penned....

"**Its brevity disproves its authenticity.** Josephus' work is voluminous and exhaustive. It comprises twenty books. Whole pages are devoted to petty robbers and obscure seditious leaders. Nearly forty chapters are devoted to the life of a single king. Yet this remarkable being, the greatest product of his race, a being of whom the prophets foretold ten thousand wonderful things, a being greater than any earthly king, **is dismissed with a dozen lines....**"

The dismissal of the passage in Josephus regarding Jesus **is not based on "faith" or "belief" but on intense scientific scrutiny and reasoning.** Such investigation has been confirmed repeatedly by numerous scholars who *were mostly Christian*. The Testimonium Flavianum, Dr. Lardner concluded in none too forceful words, "**ought, therefore...to be discarded from any place among the evidences of Christianity.**" With such outstanding authority and so many scientific reasons, we can at last dispense with the pretentious charade of wondering if the infamous passage in the writings of Josephus called the Testimonium Flavianum is forged and who fabricated it.

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יהוה

The name of our Creator is made up of four, Hebrew **VOWELS**, **Y H W H** יהוה (source: Flavius Josephus - *Antiquities of the Jews*)

The letter ה (h) when used as a vowel, usually has the "ah," "ha," or the "huh" sound. The ה is the *definite* article, or *THE, SPECIFIC, to the EXCLUSION of ALL others*.

This is exemplified in showing the difference between the word "eretz," meaning land, and the words "ha Eretz," meaning *THE Land of Israel, to the exclusion of all others*.

In Hebrew, the letters י (y) and ו (v)(w) are used interchangeably, and when located in the first, second, or third position in a word, indicate the tense of the word, either past, future, or continuing.

Being placed in the first and third positions, the י and ו indicate that the name is **both past and future**, or, - *Eternal*.

The ה preceding **both** the י and the ו means that the name is specifically, to the exclusion of all others, **both past and future**, or **THE Eternal**.

Furthermore, being *singular*, and *being found twice*, the ה would also allow the addition of the word, **ONE**, as a descriptor.

The Name, **YHWH**, could then be logically rendered as **The Eternal ONE**, because **He** has eternal existence, **to the exclusion of all others**.

It is pronounced in one, long breath, like the wind, with the accent on the middle syllable. .

eeeeeeaaaaaa UUUUUU' waaaah