

Does the Talmud speak of Jesus' crucifixion?

Proof: The Talmud mentions Yeshu who was hanged on the eve of Passover.¹

[In contradiction to this] it was taught: On the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Any one who can say anything in his favour, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.' But since nothing was brought forward in his favour he was hanged on the eve of the Passover! — 'Ulla retorted: Do you suppose that he was one for whom a defence could be made? Was he not a Mesith [enticer], concerning whom Scripture says, Neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him? With Yeshu however it was different, for he was connected with the government [or royalty, i.e., influential]. (Sanhedrin 43a)²

Refutation: There are many items that can be brought up against this text from the Talmud Bavli that show that this passage is not even talking about Jesus.

The Yeshu mentioned in the Talmud was a student of Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Perachiah who lived in the first century BCE. Thus, the Yeshu in this passage of the Talmud cannot be Jesus who lived in the first century CE.³

Yeshu from the Talmud was hanged on the eve of Passover. However, Jesus was crucified on the day of Passover.

Now on the first [day of the Feast] of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" ... When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. ... And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His [own] clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified. (Matthew 26:17, 27:1, 31)⁴

Yeshu was executed by the Jewish court and not by the Romans. Thus again proving that the Yeshu from the Talmud Bavli is not Jesus.

Yeshu was charged with apostasy and sorcery yet Jesus was charged with blasphemy.¹⁴

Yeshu is shown to have connections to the political elite – usually in the case of apostasy such as this the trial and sentence is carried out immediately. However, we see from the Christian scripture that Jesus did not have any connections to the political elite and was in fact a danger to them.

¹Slick, Matthew. "Non-Biblical Accounts of New Testament Events and/or People." *carm.org*. Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry, n.d. [<http://carm.org/non-biblical-accounts-new-testament-events-andor-people>]

²Epstein, I. *Soncino Babylonian Talmud*. London: Soncino Press, 1949.

[<http://halakhah.com/pdf/nezikin/Sanhedrin.pdf>]

³ Student, Gil. "The Jesus Narrative in the Talmud." *faithweb.com*. The Real Truth About the Talmud, 2000. [<http://talmud.faitweb.com/articles/jesusnarr.html>]

⁴ Thomas Nelson, Inc. *New King James Version*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 1982. [<http://www.blueletterbible.org>]

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