

John 10:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

Analysis

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

(ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένον ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ὑμῶν ὅτι Ἐγὼ εἶπα· Θεοί ἐστε, apekrithe autois ho Iesous· Ouk estin gegrammenon en to nomo hymon hoti Ego eipa· Theoi este)—Jesus quotes Psalm 82:6, where God addresses human judges as 'gods' (עֲלֵהִים, elohim; θεοί, theoi) because they exercise God-delegated judicial authority. His argument moves from lesser to greater: if Scripture calls mere human judges 'gods' functionally, how much more can the one whom the Father sanctified and sent claim divine sonship?

This is *qal va-chomer* reasoning (light to heavy)—if lesser beings can be called 'gods' in a representative sense, the incarnate Word who is eternally God cannot be charged with blasphemy for claiming what He intrinsically is. Jesus isn't arguing He's merely a 'god' like judges, but defending the appropriateness of His deity claim based on Scripture's own usage.

Historical Context

Psalm 82 was well-known in Second Temple Judaism. Jesus's clever exegesis uses their own Scripture to demonstrate consistency: if the Bible uses 'god' language for human authorities, His claim to deity—backed by miraculous works—cannot be dismissed as blasphemy without Scripture contradicting itself. This rabbinical argumentation method was common in first-century debate.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's use of Scripture to defend His deity claims demonstrate that the Old Testament anticipated the Incarnation?
2. What's the difference between human judges called 'gods' functionally and Jesus who is God ontologically?
3. How should Christians use Jesus's example of Scriptural reasoning when defending the faith against objections?

Interlinear Text

ἀπεκρίθη	αὐτοῖς	ὁ	Ἰησοῦς	Οὐκ	ἔστιν	γεγραμμένον	ἐν
answered	them	G3588	Jesus	not	Is it	written	in
G611	G846		G2424	G3756	G2076	G1125	G1722
τῷ	νόμῳ	ὑμῶν	Ἐγὼ	εἶπα	Θεοί	ἐστε	
G3588	law	your	I	said	gods	Ye are	
	G3551	G5216	G1473	G2036	G2316	G2075	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 7:1 (References God): And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

Psalms 82:1 (References God): God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

Exodus 4:16 (References God): And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

Psalms 138:1 (References God): I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

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