

# **Archeological Evidence for Christianity Originating as a Flavian Secrecy Cult (Article 13)**

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## **Abstract**

This paper briefly overviews the archeological evidence supporting the premise that prior to Constantine, early Christianity may have followed the popular 'secrecy cult' model for the Empire's religions, in which hypothesized secret initiations involved the revelation of hidden knowledge that is alluded to in the Gospel story – with the caveat that the existence of these secret initiations, were themselves a secret.

It also helps show why the 'Flavian Secrecy Cult Origin' model acts as a unifying theory, bringing together and validating seemingly incompatible views from Joe Atwill, Vaillant, Roman Piso, Mythicist Scholars, and more.

This archeological in this paper evidence supports the thesis that Emperor Vespasian's government used existing Pauline literature as a convenient blank canvas to construct Jesus' Gospel story onto. In this Gospel story, the observed parallels between Jesus and Vespasian's son Titus were concealed, to be revealed – in secret – by the temple priests, to drive followers to see Titus as the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of God. The purpose was to drive Jews and Legionaries to worship the Flavian Emperors, so that their loyalty would prevent the recent Jewish and Civil wars reigniting, and thereby prevent the Flavians being toppled and killed.

# Archeological Evidence for Christianity Originating as a Flavian Secrecy Cult

During the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD, at the birth of Christianity, for example around the time of Emperor Titus’ reign, the ‘secrecy cult’ was a standard model for organized religion. Secrecy cults of the time included Mithraism, Isis, Eleusnan and Cybele, in which followers would swear oaths to protect secret information, in some cases on pain of death. If these names are unfamiliar, it may be because most of them were eradicated during Emperor Constantine’s reign.

Christianity has a strange similarity, in that it is a mystery religion. Jesus talks in parable, restricting the true meanings to his inner circle, and tells them that these mysteries must be kept secret. To quote it directly, here is Jesus’ message to his disciples:

***To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given... Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand... many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it... – Matthew 13:11-17***

The Gospel of Mark even defines Jesus’ identity as a secret known only to his father. It also says the Holy Spirit must not be blasphemed whilst Jesus can be, yet does not reveal the identity or gender of that Holy Spirit. Jesus promises his imminent 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, but at an unknown time. Revelation demands the reader ‘calculate the number of the Beast’ without saying how to go about it or who the ‘man’ is that it relates to. The consistent theme is to promise revelations of hidden knowledge.

So, prior to Constantine introducing his version of Christianity and the eradication of the secrecy cults, is it possible that early faith in Jesus might have involved secret initiations that revealed that hidden knowledge, the existence of which were also secret.


How can we hope to know whether secret initiations existed, if their existence was also a secret? If writing down such sacred information was punishable by death, it will never be found in any book, nor on any carving, inscription or coin. And if Constantine had eradicated the secrecy cults, there might be no trace at all, perhaps not even in the Vatican.

There’s always someone who breaks the rules though. We might speculate that some brave individual would have dared to allude to it in private writings they hid on their person. But wouldn’t such secret writings have rotted away within a few centuries and be lost? Generally yes, but it turns out that exactly one such secretly stored personal attestation has survived...

## The Frankfurt Silver Inscription

In May of 2024 a tiny inscription, written on delicate silver foil was finally deciphered with the help of 3D x-ray scanning technology<sup>1</sup>. For 1700 years this fragile silver foil had lain hidden within a small silver amulet in a grave near what is now Frankfurt. The design, material, writing style, and inclusion in the burial, suggest it was highly revered.

Dating from roughly 240 AD this silver scroll is the only distinctively Christian pre-Constantine artifact that offers a window into potentially secret theological views held by an ordinary follower of Jesus. In this respect it is unprecedented. Its invocation of divine protection is shown below in English and Latin, along with an image of the necklace pendant that it was concealed within:

English	Original Latin	Image of the inscription and of the amulet
In the name of <b>sacred Titus</b> . <b>Holy, holy, holy!</b> In the name of Jesus Christ, son of God! <b>The Lord</b> of the world [save from adversity]. <b>The God</b> grants well-being and <b>admission</b> . This means of salvation protects [...etc.]	(IN NOMI?)NE SANCTI TITĪ AGIOS AGIOS AGIOS IN NOMINE IHXPI FILII DEI [...etc.]	 Hagios397Martin (adapted) - CC-BY-SA

As shown above, the inscription refers to “SANCTI TITĪ” (Sacred Titus) “AGIOS AGIOS AGIOS” (the masculine of Agion, meaning “Holy”), *before* mentioning Jesus. In contrast, notice that Jesus isn’t lauded as sacred, nor indeed as holy. The incantation goes on to acknowledge Jesus as the one worshipped by the world, yet doesn’t say that the *wearer’s* worship is primarily on Jesus.

To restate; **this is the only distinctly Christian artifact that reveals a follower’s secretly held beliefs prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> Century eradication of the secrecy cults, and it attests to worship of Titus as more holy, and more sacred, than Jesus Christ!**

<sup>1</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankfurt\\_silver\\_inscription](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankfurt_silver_inscription) - after years of work digitally unrolling the scroll, the inscription was publicly unveiled in December 2024, two months after the first edition of my book was published.

## But which Titus?

It was the Flavian ruler, **Emperor Titus** who performed the specific act that Jesus prophecies to reveal his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming; destroying Jerusalem. Jesus is also taken to have led the Essene movement, but as I show in my book, *all three* sources claiming firsthand knowledge of the Essene movement are associated with **Emperor Titus**. Jesus inspects a Denarius coin's inscription and says to 'render taxes to Caesar', but **Emperor Titus** was the Caesar who minted Denarius coins showing a symbol matching that of early Christianity.

The Frankfurt Silver Inscription declines to identify which Titus it refers to and does not technically use the word 'saint', yet most scholars wasted no time in assuming it relates to Saint Titus, the 'companion of Paul'. Only some remarked how strange it is to find a reference to a saint in a 3<sup>rd</sup> Century amulet, when sainthood only began to be formalized in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century AD!

Notice too, that the inscription declines to specify whether it refers to Titus or Jesus when it later talks later about the 'lord of the world', and also how it uses the mysteriously unspecific phrase '*the god*'.

One might argue it relates to 'Saint Titus' because around 240 AD, surely Flavian Emperor Titus would be long forgotten? But this is contradicted by the Flavian revival beginning in 290 AD, culminating in Emperor Constantine (first name Flavius by the way) styling his dynasty after the Flavian Emperors, and reincorporating Flavian era art and Flavian monuments, such as the Temple of Peace, which Titus' father built using the Judean gold acquired by Titus.

More to the point, Constantine, whilst busily transforming his version of Christianity into the Imperial religion, and allowing the secrecy cults to be eradicated, is recorded as requiring residents in Spello, north of Rome, to '**honor Constantine's divine ancestors, the Flavian dynasty, and worship them**'. Constantine claimed the Flavian emperors as his 'divine' lineage.

It is curious to see the same Emperor who legally instituted Christianity, promoting worship of Jesus and of Emperor Titus, less than a century after the Silver Frankfurt Inscription. This supports the idea that **this sole artifact giving us a window into truly secret Christian beliefs in the age of secrecy cults, points to Christians secretly worshipping Emperor Titus!**



4<sup>th</sup> Century bronze bust of Flavius Constantinus, the founder of Christianity as the Imperial religion.

In my book I show that Titus sought to be worshipped using the Greek word 'Agion' (as in 'Agion Pneuma' or Holy Spirit) and also as the judge granting admission to the afterlife, which lends potential significance to how the silver inscription says that '*the god grants admission*', and lauds Titus using 'Agios' (masculine of 'Agion'). In my book I also show that Titus sought to be worshipped using the word 'Ares' (Latinized as 'Arrius'), which lends potential significance to the bizarre historical claim that Constantine spent his entire reign attempting to eradicate a 'blasphemy of Arius' - apparently involving a claim that Jesus Christ wasn't eternal.

## Mythicism as a step in the right direction

There is not a single piece of archeological evidence for a Jesus Christ living in the first Century AD. He left no remains, no family, no monuments and no writings, and is only described writing in the sand. If Jesus performed miracles, raised the dead, and led an *Essene* movement, there is no record of it that was written during his supposed lifetime. The thousands of fragments of Jesus' cross turned out to be from various wrong centuries, just like the famous shroud. From faces on toast, to a succession of tombs claimed to be his, no claim withstands scrutiny, and of this demands explanation.

Mythicism - not to be confused with the secrecy cult Mithraism – tries to explain this absence of historical evidence by suggesting that Jesus' story is *essentially* an amalgamation of earlier myths and deities. There is no doubt that Jesus' story does evoke many such myths, from Mithra, Zeus, Samson, Hercules, Pharaoh worship, Paganism, and more.

Of these myths, we also find particular links to the *secrecy cult*, Mithraism. This Roman secrecy cult was popular between Jesus' time up until Emperor Constantine, and involved secret initiations up through a hierarchy. Even from what little is known about their beliefs, there are remarkable similarities to Christianity, such as personal salvation by the deity, baptism, holy communion, a divinity that evokes a sun-god (E.g. Jesus' face appearing like the sun, or him coming in a cloud). I highlight the link with Mithraism here because it will turn out to be important later.

Despite being interesting, the Mythicist observation that Jesus' story evokes numerous deities doesn't explain who created Jesus' story, what their objectives were, why they combined those specific myths, or why each of Jesus' parables were written and what their meanings are—many of which even Christians admit to being mysteries.

Why, for example, does Jesus not only tell Jews to accept oppression and pay taxes to Rome but also tells Roman soldiers to accept low pay? Why does he predict a second coming of his that is so terribly important? Why does the New Testament direct believers to see God as a trio, including a Holy Ghost character whose name is not stated?

## The Flavian-origin hypothesis, as a further step forward

One increasingly popular theory relates to the Flavian Emperor Vespasian and his sons Titus and Domitian, who succeeded him in ruling the Roman Empire. The idea that the Roman government was responsible for Jesus' story is well-established and has been known for centuries. However, specifically linking Jesus' story to the Flavian Emperors is a slightly more specific theory, with its greatest proponent being Joe Atwill, the author of 'Caesar's Messiah'.

But first, a little background: The first two Flavian Emperors were Vespasian and Titus, who may have acted and ruled at times as a father-son duo. Prior to gaining the throne of the Empire in 69 AD, they led three Legions into Judea and crushed its bid for independence from the Roman Empire. By their own account, they killed just over a million Jews—half a percent of the entire world's population—immediately prior to gaining the throne of the Empire and ending the near-simultaneous civil war in Rome. This marked the start of the Flavian Roman era. If it helps illustrate that this dominated the politics during the time Jesus' Gospel story was written, these two men personally directed the killing of a *greater proportion* of the world's population than were *directly* killed in World War I and II combined.

The Flavian-origin hypothesis suggests that the Gospel story of Jesus was created after Vespasian and Titus gained the throne, on their orders. This has greater explanatory power than Mythicism, enabling us to see why the New Testament would teach Jews to pay taxes to Rome and – considering these Emperors had difficulty paying the Legions well enough to retain their loyalty – why Luke describes Jesus telling Roman soldiers to be content with low pay.

The Flavian-origin hypothesis took the stage thanks to Joe Atwill's first book 'Caesar's Messiah', where he showed that Jesus' story acts as a subtle yet detailed parable of the military campaign of Emperor Titus, as set out in the official record, 'Jewish War.' Atwill showed that throughout their three-year campaigns in Judea, Jesus and Titus visited the same locations and performed a wide variety of conceptually linked actions, indeed in largely the same order.

To give a prime example: On the shore of Lake Galilee, where Jesus predicted that in the future he would make his men become catchers or 'fishers' of men, Titus is recorded arriving three decades later and duly making his men become catchers, and in effect fishers of men (literally spearing their enemies who were swimming for their lives) in that very same lake—Lake Galilee. Later, Jesus is described plunging John into the water of the river Jordan, which mirrors how Titus drove his key enemy, John, into the water of that same river, the Jordan. And so on. These parallels continue with an incredible wealth of additional detail, but written subtly enough to avoid attention.

With the publication of this evidence, and indeed more in Joe Atwill's second book, the Flavian-origin explanation graduated from a hypothesis that had been around for decades to a well-evidenced theory.

But as impressive as Joe's evidence was, it still left questions: Why would a Flavian Emperor create a religion about a Messiah whose story mirrored his own military victories? Surely this created a grave risk that people might notice it, thereby undermining the religion he was creating? Or if he planned to reveal it for some vanity-related reason, why did this never happen? And why would an Emperor like Titus associate his victories so intimately with the Jewish people and religion that he clearly had such hatred for—the very people he had spent three years massacring, going as far as destroying Jerusalem's holy temple where they believed their god to physically reside?

## New evidence from Vaillant and Fahy

As I mentioned earlier, Jesus' story has him inspecting the *inscription* on a **denarius coin**, and say you should “**Render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's**”, and later wearing a *crown of leaves (thorns)*.

16 years after Joe Atwill first published his book – James Vaillant and C.W. Fahy published their discoveries, including a Denarius coin that bears the same symbol used by early Christians – the anchor-and dolphin. This **denarius coin** was minted by **Emperor Titus**. And whilst it is not very surprising, I note it also mentions the word 'Caesar' and shows him wearing a crown of leaves.

Whilst some roman coins had anchors, and some had dolphins, the Christian anchor and dolphin symbol appears on no roman coin whatsoever until Emperor Titus had them minted.



Titus' denarius coin: Left: Titus' face and name as "Imp(erial) Titvs Caes(ar) Vespasian Avg(ustus)". Right: The anchor wrapped dolphin. Permission of wildwinds.com, ex Roma Numismatics, Auction XX, Oct. 2020.



Example of early Christian 'dolphin-wrapped anchor' (4<sup>th</sup> Century AD).

Notice the anchor presents the letter "T", potentially evoking 'Titus'.

Credit: User:Dyolf77 CC-BY-

## Modern Christianity's Origins as the Initial Philosophy of the Flavian's Multi-Layered Religion

My research involved a four-year effort to catalog the Gospels' parallels with Jewish War, identified numerous parallels that Joe Atwill had not included in his book. Many of these parallels seem to convey politically charged messages.

Amazingly, Luke and the Roman Government's Jewish War *mutually* parody each other, which can only be achieved if one person had editorial control over both stories. Incredibly perhaps, these parallels are arranged in a clearly meaningful pattern. In my book I show mathematically that this pattern – how, when plotted, the locations of the parallels form lines spelling out Latin letters – was intentional and is too detailed to result from 'finding patterns in noise.'

These discoveries, which I will back up with concrete evidence in my book, led me to an explanation for the origin of the Gospels: First, the Jews and Roman Legions were going to be led to accept Jesus, but then it would be revealed that Jesus' story mirrors that of Titus via numerous well-hidden metaphors, helping lead those converts to accept Titus as the second coming and become Flavian Emperor worshippers. However, as a last step, the evidence that the Flavian government wrote Jesus' story would then be revealed to them, causing the fully hooked Flavian worshippers to lose faith in Jesus as anything but a parable of Titus, and thus become **pure** emperor worshippers.

However, there were some difficulties with my initial thesis:

- Firstly – no such grand, public revelations ever occurred. We might excuse the first two Flavian Emperors for their unexpected deaths, but the third one reigned a further fifteen years. In any event, to *publicly* reveal either of these grand 'revelations' would immediately prevent them recruiting new followers to Jesus.
- Most of the *surviving* parallels highlight Titus as the individual to be worshipped, yet he only reigned for two years. It was his father Vespasian who had the strongest motive, and the time to implement such a plan.
- At least some of the Pauline literature (epistles of Paul, which sit alongside the Gospels to form the New Testament), were written before Flavian's gained the throne. I say 'some' since scholars have argued that a few of them were written after Paul's death by someone claiming to be him, an example being the "Letter to Titus".

It was only later that I identified a scenario that fits these observations, and which is the subject of my book.

## Christianity's Origin as a Flavian Secrecy Cult

There is no debate that the Flavian, especially Emperor Vespasian, needed to prevent Judea revolting again, and needed the loyalty of the Roman Legions. Both were critical for political stability, retaining the throne, and avoiding the grim death suffered by their four recent predecessors. I propose they used religious propaganda to achieve that.

I suggest they created and promoted a story about a peace-loving prophet, whose story could later be revealed to initiates – under strict oaths of secrecy – to *mirror* the story of the Emperor's victories in Judea, **to lead them to see him as the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, and thus worship him as god.**

The earlier Pauline letters describing Jesus Christ offered a convenient 'blank slate' to write this story onto, since those letters offer almost no detail about Jesus' life. The fact they don't even say what century Jesus lived in was similarly convenient, because the Flavians could backdate Jesus' story by a generation, making it nigh impossible to refute.

The process would be as follows:

- Level 1. Jesus as a prophet:** A new recruit would be drawn in by the amazing story of the miracle-worker Jesus and led to become a follower, seeing him as a prophet and peace-loving Messiah—a fully human prophet. This is an entirely coherent way of interpreting the Gospel story and is akin to the position held by Jehovah's Witnesses.
- Level 2. Jesus as divine:** Those deemed ready would be promoted to a more senior rank of the cult and then shown various information within the Gospels pointing to Jesus actually being divine. For good measure, they would be persuaded that by sacrificing himself at Passover, this divine 'lamb' of God dispenses with the need for God's mandatory Jewish lamb sacrifice ritual Passover. This is more or less the position held in modern Christianity.
- Level 3. Conversion of Jesus-worshippers to become Dual Jesus/Flavian-worshippers:** Those adequately hooked on Jesus as God would be sworn to secrecy and shown that Jesus' story is intensely parallel to that of Titus' victories as described in the official account; Jewish War. They would also be shown that the parallels contain hidden messages, all pointing to the idea that Titus is divine. They would also be reminded that Jesus prophesied his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming to be revealed by actions – namely

the destruction of Jerusalem – which were the work of that very same Emperor, Titus. Those converts would come to see Titus as the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus and thus as God.

**Level 4. Conversion to pure Flavian worship:** Those deemed sufficiently hooked on Flavian Emperor worship would be promoted to the top rank of the cult. After further oaths of secrecy, they would be shown how it can be proven that Jesus' story has the same origin as Jewish War (i.e., the evidence I will describe in my book). They would be told that this combined literary work was an act of divine genius by Emperor Titus himself, which was justified by the need to convert the masses, and that Titus himself was the author of the Gospels. Since these recruits were already seeing Titus and his father as the supreme deity, with Jesus merely a prophetic forerunner, this would not undermine their faith in the Flavian Emperors, and rather the opposite; it would be seen as further evidence of Titus' supreme divinity.

#### **Multiple stages to the creation of the Jewish War vs Luke parallels:**

Whilst the surviving evidence mostly aims to laud Titus, I will explain in my book why the earlier version that Jewish War claims existed (supposedly in the 'paternal' tongue), was most likely half as long, and aimed to laud his father.

#### **My thesis as a unifying framework, offering unsurpassed explanatory power**

Joe Atwill was instrumental in showing that Jesus' story mirrors that of Emperor Titus' victories via his first book 'Caesar's Messiah'. He seemed reluctant to tie himself to a specific explanation of why this was done, other than that it must have been intended to be disclosed at some stage. This absence of motive left room for attack by critics.

Indeed a quick look at the literature reveals as many explanations for Jesus' story as there are biblical scholars:

- Joe Atwill sees **the Gospels borrowing from Jewish War**, or rather parodying it, in order to laud Emperor **Titus**, with John aiming to laud his successor and brother, Emperor **Domitian**.
- James Vaillant sees it as a holistically Flavian project, involving the first of the three Flavians; their father Emperor **Vespasian**. Vaillant emphasizes Imperial motives in promoting acceptance of Roman authority, and **draws parallels between early Christianity and the Imperial Cult – the official Roman cult**.
- Roman Piso argues that during the Flavian Dynasty, a Roman Royal was responsible for the Gospels named, who is referred to using coded language as **Arrius Piso** in various literature, who also was sometimes referred to as Titus.
- Many scholars take the "opposite" view to Joe Atwill, arguing that **Jewish Wars borrows from the Gospel story**.
- A minority have argued that both Jewish War and the Gospels aim to evoke earlier stories.
- Some scholars try to dispense with the problem, by arguing that every copy of Jewish War and Slavonic Josephus has been edited, with **references to Jesus 'added'** into locations that jar badly with the textual narrative.
- Meanwhile Mythicist scholars emphasize the **parallels between Jesus and Mithras**, and other deities.

My thesis provides a **unifying framework**, which shows that all these apparently contradictory viewpoints are correct:

I will show in my book that the surviving documents do laud Titus and Domitian, but that the project began with Vespasian, that Emperor Titus sought to be referred to as Ares Piso Titus (shortened to APTVS, with Ares Piso possibly signifying a divine lineage), and that both Luke and Jewish War parody *each other*, whilst also both evoking the earlier story of Moses' Passover ritual.

I will show in my book that the author did rudely 'insert' references to Jesus in locations that jar with the narrative of Jewish War, albeit that this was done right at the outset, rather than centuries later (in order to create the APTVS pattern that I will come to shortly). I also show that this Flavian project was related to the Roman cult, and was styled on the secrecy cults such as Mithras, and that Vespasian had a motive to make Jesus evoke other early deities – namely to help draw in the followers of those faiths.

My thesis also has greater explanatory power and any other that I know of. Two very brief examples are:

- It explains why the Gospels were created, as well as why they have the content that they do. Vespasian not only had the means and opportunity, but also a life-or-death motive. It wasn't just to make Jews pay taxes, but primarily to create loyalty to prevent the Jews and the Roman Legions from revolting against Flavian rule, ensuring their reign, so they could avoid the grim fate suffered by their four predecessors; their motive a life-or-death one.
- By showing that the goal was to drive faith in Titus prior to bringing faith in Jesus to an end (and leave them as pure Flavian Emperor worshippers), this not only explains why Jesus' story would parallel Titus', but why the author left us with proof that the Gospels were created by the Flavian Roman Government.

## SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE DESCRIBED IN MY BOOK

**1. Evidence that Jesus' Story Mirrors Titus':** I will show that Jesus' story mirrors that of Titus and Vespasian with incredible detail, albeit in metaphor, in the form of a parable or parody, and that these parallels occur largely in the same order in both documents.

This produces a 'diagonal line' of parallels involving Jesus when the locations of the conceptually matching sections of text are plotted in the two stories. Credit for this discovery is due to Joe Atwill.

**2. Hidden Meanings Revealed:** Most of these parallels point to the divinity of Titus and Vespasian, a Roman mythology relevant to Jesus, or painting the Jews as satanic and Jerusalem as Hades.

These parallels and riddles are the evidence that would be used to convince the recruits of the secrecy cult that Titus is the second coming of Jesus.

**3. Mutual Parodies:** Evidence that not only does Luke parody Jewish War, but Jewish War parodies Luke right back.

The way the two stories mutually parody each other's core narratives in intimate detail can be used to demonstrate that they must have been written together, thereby proving a Roman Flavian Government origin for Luke.

**4. APTVS Pattern:** Evidence that when the parallels are seen in entirety and their locations plotted, this presents a five-letter message (APTVS) that is meaningfully related to Luke, making it conclusive that the parallels are intentional.

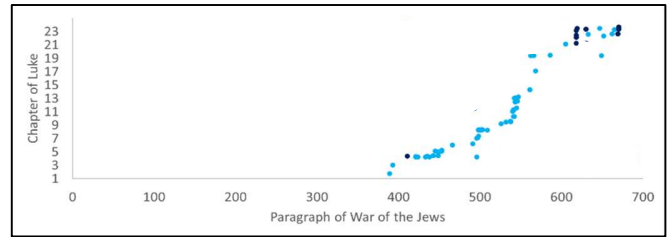
**5. Third Sequence of Parallels:** I will also demonstrate that there is a third sequence of parallels where both Luke and Jewish War parody Exodus, but with their locations arranged in both stories to match that APTVS pattern, which provides a second way to demonstrate that one author had editorial control of both documents, thereby demonstrating Flavian origin of Luke.

The mutual parodies, APTVS pattern, and third sequence are what would be used to convince the converts—once they were hooked on worshipping Titus—to see that Jesus is fiction, thus achieving the goal of converting them to pure Emperor worshippers.

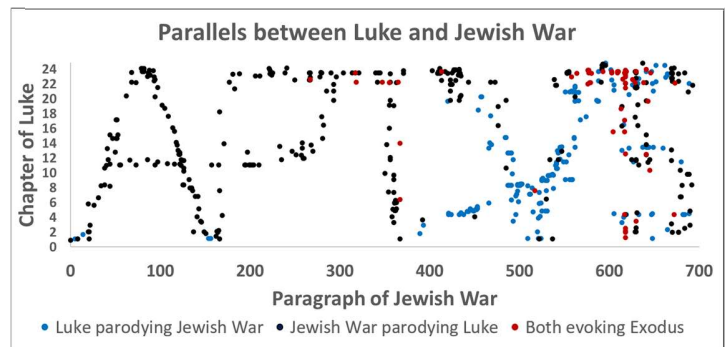
**6. Mathematical Proof:** I will then move on to demonstrate mathematically and definitively that the APTVS pattern is genuine, intentional, and cannot be a case of bias or 'finding patterns in noise'.

**7. Trinity Puzzle:** Finally, I will also show evidence (again building on work by Joe Atwill), that John and Acts include riddles pointing to god being a trio or triangle, and which were designed to lead to the conclusion that Domitian is the third godly Flavian (which is partly to do with the origin of the modern Holy Trinity concept).

All of these claims are backed up meticulously in my book, and my published articles (especially see my 9<sup>th</sup> article).



Locations of parallels between Jesus' 3-year Judean campaign in Luke, and Titus' 3-year Judean campaign set out in Jewish War that could be revealed to show the recruits that Jesus' second coming must be Emperor Titus himself.



The pattern that emerges when noteworthy parallels are plotted.

The technique of plotting in 2D was only known in relation to star charts (courtesy of Hipparchus/Chaldeans 200 years earlier, which the Slavonic Josephus version of Jewish War refers to).



An illustration of the 'message written in the stars' effect that was probably the intended visual impression. The anomalous group between the T and V is here moved up to Luke 24 for reasons that will be explained later, and some background stars added for effect. This appears to be what John 1 is describing when it talks of the Logos as being literally God's name presented as an 'image' shining in darkness.

I discuss the meaning of 'APTVS' in my book, but in brief, it is the Latin word for 'apt' or 'fitting', chosen partly to reflect the description in Luke 9:62-10:21: "He who pushes the plough" (the Roman name for the constellation Ursa Major) without pause is apt to have his place in the kingdom of god (i.e. his name in the firmament)....behold your names are written in the heavens".

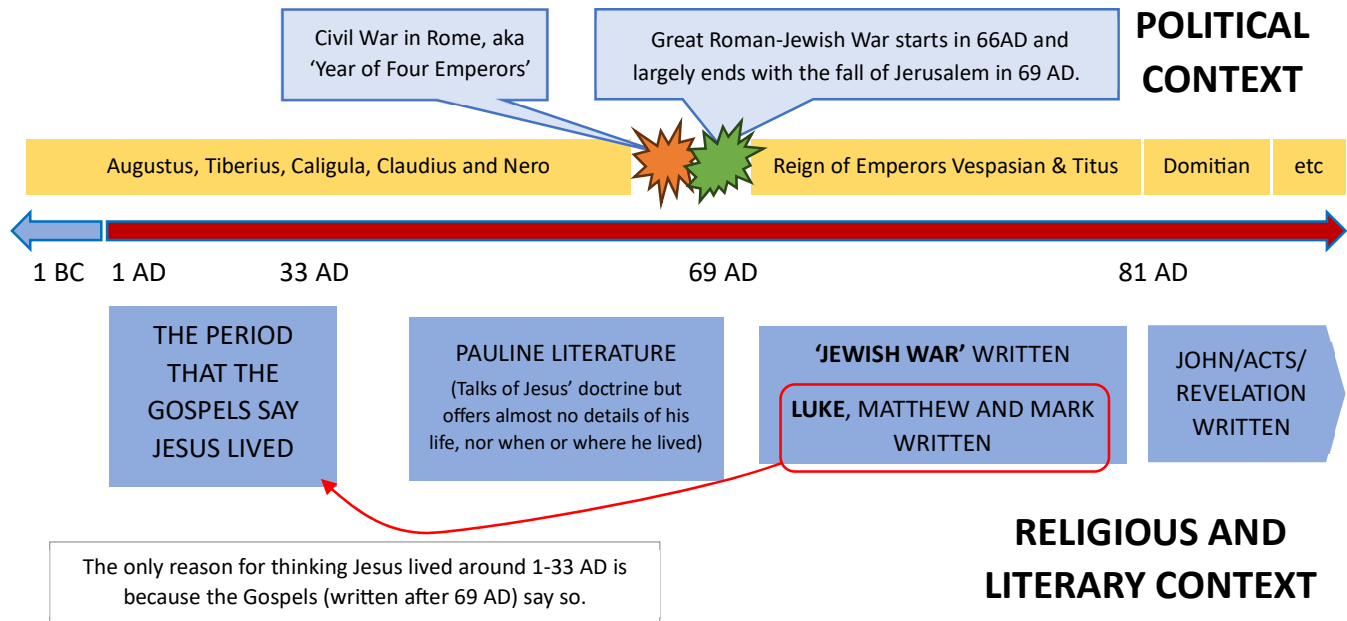
More specifically, and for reasons that will be explained later, APTVS was probably intended as the initials of a secret name that Titus intended to be later revealed as being entitled to, namely, **ARES** (or equally; Arrius or Arios, meaning the god Mars) **PISO** (signifying the famously powerful royal family) **TITVS**. (A capital 'V' is used since 'U' and indeed lower-case letters had yet to be invented).



## Summary of the historical timeline

In addition to their reign names, Vespasian and Titus confusingly had the same birth name; Titus Flavivus Vespasianus, whilst the younger son, Domitian was called Titus Flavivus Domitianus. I will refer to them simply as: Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian.

The diagram below shows the timeline. Most historians would agree with most of it, and should not find the rest of it too objectionable. For the Gospel of Luke, I exclude the minority view that it was written before the events in 69 AD that it refers to, which leaves us with the mainstream view that it was written during Vespasian and Titus's reign (69 – 81 AD).



I show the political context above the timeline. The politics of the era was dominated by Vespasian who left his son Titus in Judea to defeat it, whilst he led his forces to Rome to emerge nearly simultaneously as the victor of the Roman Civil War, and ruler of the entire Empire, marking the beginning of the Flavian era – 69 to 96 AD.



## Conclusion

This paper is an excerpt from the beginning of my book, Christianity's Origin as a Flavian Secrecy Cult. I am making it freely available (like the rest of my articles), to enable readers to see that there is archeological evidence supporting my thesis, and that my document-based evidence does not exist in a vacuum.

I would however add this; when I published the first edition of my book in October 2024 I had not expected that there would be any archeological evidence of initiations into secret doctrines relating to Titus, since for his plan to be effective, the existence of such initiations also needed to be a secret.

If word had gotten out that the temples erected to promote following of Jesus, were essentially a front for a secrecy cult, then it would become harder to attract followers to the 'peaceful miracle worker' Jesus. And if word got out that the promised 'revelations' explaining Jesus' parables involved being shown evidence that Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> coming was the Emperor, it would suddenly be impossible to attract new followers to follow the peaceful Messiah. Clearly for the three Flavian Emperors, it was critical for this to remain a secret.

But also none of the later rulers would have wanted this information to get out. The Flavians' successors had no interest in helping the existing followers of Jesus to become worshippers of Titus, since that detracted to worship of themselves. If Christians actually were oppressed by the early Romans (a very common trope trotted out by historical authors who had no first-hand knowledge due to living in the wrong century, which is increasingly doubted by modern historians) it would have been during the period between the Flavian dynasty, and Constantine's Flavian revival.

We can also see that Constantine had a great need keep these initiations a secret. His primary goal seems to be to promote belief in a historical Jesus, since to this end he proclaimed that his own mother went to Jerusalem and retrieved the nails from Jesus' cross, and that the nails still had magical power over the elements.

Constantine's edict telling forcing to worship the Flavians as his as his ancestors, just a few years after the Council of Nicaea, would make sense if people were already worshipping Titus.

The sudden disappearance of most secrecy cults, notably Mithras, during Constantine's rule is also telling. If some of the Pauline literature was also used in Mithras (which seems to be the case, since the Mithras Liturgy repeats messages and motifs from certain Pauline epistles), or indeed was Mithraic literature in the first place, this in turn would explain why Constantine had to eradicate Mithras and all of the secrets it held.

Most likely Constantine also exterminated the Flavian's Secrecy Cult, since this would have been a huge threat to his plans. The scenario tallies with the idea that Constantine saw faith in a historical Jesus as the optimum way to convince the people to accept oppression and render their taxes to him as Caesar. I think it is a fair assumption that the Flavian Secrecy Cult was exterminated with even greater vigour than Mithras.

But more than these Emperors, it was the early Catholic Church that had the strongest need to keep the Flavian origin of the Gospels secret. These rulers depended on Christianity to control the Empire. If they had allowed anyone to know that Jesus' story parallels that of Titus, the entire religion would be at risk, and with it, their rule. This explains why the early Church only made the Bible available in a dead language, preventing anyone from reading it. So, if any documents survived in the Vatican relating to the relationship between Jesus and Titus, they would have been destroyed in these centuries, with knowledge of such matters restricted to a tiny number of privileged individuals.

My guess is that at some point during the following millennium, the number of people in the Vatican who knew about the connections between Jesus and Titus, dwindled to zero. The time this happened probably corresponds to when the Catholic Church ceased to be a paranoid organisation that restricted independent

writing, and only made the Bible available in Latin – i.e. the loss of this organisational memory is marked by the end of the dark ages of Europe.

So, to come full circle, it is not reasonable to expect archeological evidence would be found that supports the idea that pre-Constantine Christianity involved secret initiations into secret worship of Titus, whilst allowing the majority to worship Jesus. And that makes it all the more impressive that such archeological evidence has now been found.

It is also particularly validating that the key piece of evidence – the Frankfurt Silver Inscription – was publicly announced at a press conference two months *after* I published the first edition of my book.

For readers interested to read the evidence that proves the stories in Jewish War and Luke were co-written (and thus the Gospels originate from the Roman Flavian Government), please see either my 9<sup>th</sup> published article, or else my book: Christianity's Origin as a Flavian Secrecy Cult, available via Amazon as paperback.

