**The Resurrection of Jesus**

**An Outline**

**Q: Is it logical to believe that Jesus was raided from the dead?**

**Q: Why is this important?**

 **1. If Jesus was in fact raised from the dead, this validates all his claims. If not…..**

 **2. It explains a lot**

 **The changed character of the apostles**

 **The zeal and growth of the early church.**

 **3. It proves that there is life after death! Acts 17:30 Therefore… all people everywhere to repent… he has set a day… he has provided proof of this to everyone by raising Him from the dead.**

 **4. If not, then Christianity is foolishness. Either the basic claims of Christianity are true or they are not. If Jesus was not raised, the entire thing falls apart. 1 Cor. 15:13f If there is no resurrection…**

**If Jesus was resurrected then a response is required.**

**If not, then “eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.”**

**The background UNDENIABLE FACTS:**

**1. Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem under the orders of Pontius Pilalte.**

 **-Josephus**

**About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man. For he was one who wrought surprising feats and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing amongst us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love him did not give up their affection for him. The prophets of God had prophesied these and countless other marvelous things about him. And the tribe of Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared.**

***Antiquities*  18:3:3**

 **-Tacitus**

**To squelch the rumor [that he had started the Great fire in Rome], Nero created scapegoats and subjected to the most refined tortures those whom the common people called ‘Christians,’ [a group] hated for their abominable crimes. Their name comes from Christ, who, during the reign of Tiberius, had been executed by the procurator Pontius Pilate.**

***Annals* 15.44**

 **-Talmud “On the eve of the Passover, they hanged**

 **Yeshu”**

**Thallus**

* **We know of Thallus only from a third century Christian historian named Julius Africanus who wrote a three-volume treatise of world history in the 50s AD. In discussion the darkness at the time of the resurrection of Jesus, Julius Africanus mentions that in the 3rd book of Thallus’ history, he mentions the darkness and calls it an eclipse of the sun. Africanus believes that Thallus is wrong. Whether or not this source proves the darkness at the time of Jesus’ crucifixion is dubious, but it does seem to support the idea that even non-Christians were aware of the resurrection as early as the 50s AD—at about the time the first book of the NT was written. It also supports the claim, not necessarily of the darkness having occurred, but of the darkness having been claimed and believed by the Christians. Because we do not have Thallus’ history and because we have a Christian interpreting rather than quoting it, this is rather dubious support to Christian claims.**

**2. The resurrection was publicly proclaimed, beginning in Jerusalem,**

 **immediately after the fact. (Acts 2:24)**

 **-Every piece of evidence proves that the resurrection has been at**

 **the heart of Christian teaching from the first sermon. Why do**

 **Christians meet on Sunday?**

**3. The tomb was empty on the third day. This is a fact. If the tomb had**

 **not been empty, then the resurrection would not have been**

 **proclaimed.**

**Here is the question: What is the most reasonable explanation of the facts?**

**Remember, the conclusion that the resurrection happened requires strong evidence. David Hume: “Extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof.”**

**Alternative theories:**

**Q: Who in the first centuries had the greatest stake in disproving the resurrection of Jesus? The Jews. What theory did they use?**

**I The Stolen Body Theory**

**The reason the tomb was empty is that his body was stolen from the tomb.**

**Q: Who would have stolen the body?**

**Q: Could they have stolen the body?**

**Q: Did they, in fact, steal the body?**

**Matthew 27:62-66 A large boulder, a Roman guard. The Jews did not want anyone stealing this body!!!!**

**Would the Jews have stolen the body? They could have afforded the bribe. Why? What motive?**

**Even if they did, they would immediately have produced the body once the church claimed the resurrection.**

**Would the Christians have stolen the body? Definitely not! They were in hiding. The were defeated, discouraged, depressed, fearful of further reprisals.**

**Could they have? Defeat a cohort of Roman soldiers?**

**Would this battle go unnoticed? Where are the bodies of the Christians?**

**Besides, the disciples clearly believed in the resurrection. Many died for this belief.**

**Would the Romans have stolen the body? Why? Cause a riot/insurrection? Nonsense!**

**The biggest reason to reject this theory:**

**500 eyewitnesses!!!!! Jesus was alive after he was laid in the tomb.**

**1 Cor. 15:3-7.**

**Paul: if you do not believe it, just ask one of them. Most of them are alive.**

**These were very high quality witnesses. All would have died for Jesus. It is absolutely inconceivable that they were deceived.**

**Compare to the original witnesses to the golden tablets for the book of Mormon…**

**This theory is absolutely insupportable.**

**II The Swoon Theory.**

**Yes, they Crucified Jesus and yes, he was laid in the tomb (after all the tomb was sealed by a Roman guard), but Jesus had not really died. Later on in the cave he revived, broke free of his bandages, dusted himself off, rolled away the giant stone and fought his way through a cohort of Roman guards.**

**“The Passover Plot.”**

**Think about Jesus’ physical situation. By Sun AM,**

**No food or water over 48 hours**

**Beaten almost to death**

**Crucified**

**When a person dies on the cross they hang limp. Suffocation occurs within 2-3 minutes. End of story.**

**The Romans were experts in killing. Could they have been mistaken?**

**He was almost nude. His body was cold and becoming stiff.**

**The real problem: John 19:31-35.**

**Note, a flow of blood and water. The blood serum had separated from the platelets. Happens soon after death.**

**Jesus was definitely dead before being stabbed. (John would not have known this fact that the blood separates)**

**Next, wrapped tightly in many layers of cloth strips from head to foot.**

**Almost killed**

**Then killed**

**Then given a fatal wound after being killed.**

**III The mass hallucination theory.**

**First the women who went to the tomb, then Peter and John, then the apostles, including doubting Thomas (Luke 24:36-43), then over 500 eyewitnesses at the same time had a mass hallucination that Jesus was alive.**

**Problems.**

1. **This is impossible.**
2. **Besides, the tomb was empty. This does not remove this problem.**
3. **Hallucinations do not eat fish. (John 21:13)**

**This theory cannot be taken seriously!!!**

**Bottom line, there is no other explanation of the facts. Jesus was resurrected from the dead.**

**Besides, the Resurrection was prophesied!**

**Jonah 1:7 Jonah was raised from the dead on the third day. (Matthew 11:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights….)**

**Genesis 22:1-12 Abraham received Isaac back from the dead on the third day. (Hebrews 11:17-19)**

**Implications:**

* **You, too, will rise from the dead. John 11:25-26**
* **Feast of Firstfruits. Lev 23:9-14**
* **Jesus is the firstfruit from among the dead. His resurrection is a promise of ours. Colossians “the first fruit from the dead.”**
* **Romans 6:2-7 If we have been united with him in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.**

**1 Cor 15:23 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also comes through a man. For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruits; afterward, at his coming, the people of Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom of God the father, when He abolishes all rule and all authority and power.**

* **Repent! Acts 17:30-31**
* **Our doubts become much less significant.**
	+ **What about…. Jesus was raised from the dead!**

**Conclusion:**

**John 11:1-53**

* **Jesus is the resurrection and the life.**
* **Jesus will raise those who put their faith in him.**
	+ **Hundreds present**
	+ **The smell of death was strong**
	+ **Lazarus came out**
	+ **Look at the responses. There are only two rational responses to Jesus the miracle-worker.**

**What is a reasonable response to the resurrection:**

**John 11:45-48 Either;**

**Put your faith in Jesus or**

**Radically reject him and all he stood for.**

**Challenge: Let us have reasonable resurrection faith!**