



## THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

### INTRODUCTION

All but four major world religions are based on mere philosophical propositions – they are philosophies (a study of the processes governing thought and conduct and of the principles that regulate the universe).

Of the four that are based on personalities rather than a philosophical system. Only Christianity claims an empty tomb for its founder.

#### ABRAHAM:

Recognized by the Jews as the founder of Judaism, Abraham died about 1900 B.C. No resurrection was ever claimed for him.

#### BUDDHA:

In the earliest account of his death, the “Mahaparinibhana Sutta”, we read that when Buddha died, it was “with that utter passing away in which nothing whatever remains behind.” There is no claim of a resurrection for Buddha.

#### MOHAMMED:

Mohammed died June 8, 632 A.D. at the age of 61 at Medina, where his tomb is visited annually by thousands of devout Mohammedans.

#### JESUS CHRIST:

Jesus repeatedly claimed that He would rise from the dead, although such a claim is not necessary to the founding of a world religion.

Matthew 12:38-40  
Matthew 16:21  
Matthew 17:9  
Matthew 16:22-23  
Matthew 20:18-19  
Matthew 26:32  
Matthew 27:62-66

DISCOVERING SERIES

Mark 9:9-10  
Luke 9:22  
John 10:17-18  
John 2:18:22

A man would have to be a lunatic to perpetrate the idea that he would rise from the dead, when it was unnecessary to his cause. Unless of course, he knew he had the ability to do so.

### **I. EVIDENCE NUMBER ONE - Jesus Was Dead**

- A. \_\_\_\_\_: The victim was stripped of his clothing, tied to a post and beaten. In this case by Roman soldiers. The instrument used was called a flagrum; a whip with several ends on it, with pieces of bone and metal tied to the ends.

Read Mark 15:15-20

- B. \_\_\_\_\_: After a sleepless night, in which He was given no food, endured the mockery of two trials, and had His back lacerated with the cruel Roman cat-o-nine tails, He was led out to execution by crucifixion.

Read Mark 15:22-29

- C. \_\_\_\_\_: As the soldiers came around to break the legs of the victims, in order to be sure they died before the Sabbath, they found Jesus already dead (Often a person who was crucified would live in agony on the cross for as much as three days). Robbed of their opportunity to inflict further pain on Jesus, they thrust a spear into His side. Blood and water mixed ran forth. Many medical authorities have cited this as evidence of a ruptured heart.

Read John 19:31-37

- D. \_\_\_\_\_: The centurion, an expert on death, watched Jesus die and because of the manner in which He died exclaimed, "*Truly this man was the Son of God!*" Pilate consulted this man as final evidence about whether Jesus was dead or not.

Read Mark 15:37-39

- E. \_\_\_\_\_: Burial was begun. Jesus' family and friends certainly believed He was dead.

Read Matthew 27:59-60

Read John 19:38-42

All of these scriptures add up to the fact that Jesus was certainly dead! Wrapped tightly with linen plus several pounds of spices, a man who had had no sleep or food for two days, as well as a scourging, the crown of thorns, the emotional stress of the trials and the mocking and the crucifixion itself, wouldn't be able to breathe even if there was some shred of life in Him! Jesus was dead.

Some have tried to promote what is called a "swoon theory" but evidence to the contrary is overwhelmingly against such an idea. Just as all men must, Jesus died and was buried. The question with which we are most interested is, "Did He stay dead?"

## II. EVIDENCE NUMBER TWO - The Sealed Tomb

- A. \_\_\_\_\_: A guard was chosen by the Romans at the request of the High Priest. A guard of soldiers usually consisted of from ten to thirty soldiers. The tomb was also marked with the Roman seal. For an unauthorized person to break the seal was punishable by death (If they could get past the guard).

Read Matthew 27:62-66

- B. \_\_\_\_\_: A stone described as "extremely large" was rolled into the door of the tomb to seal it. From our text we know that it was at least larger than three women could move. It would have been a monumental task for anyone to sneak past all the guards, remove the seal and move the stone without being detected. Really, an impossible job. Who would have done it? His followers had fled in terror. They had given it all up when Jesus was taken.

Read Mark 15:46

Read Mark 16:4

## III. EVIDENCE NUMBER THREE - The Witnesses of the Resurrection

List those to whom He appeared:

1. John 20:11-18; Mark 16:9

- 
2. Matthew 28:1-10

---

3. Luke 24:13-33

---

4. Luke 24:34

---

5. Mark 16:13-14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-20

---

6. John 20:24-29

---

7. John 21:1-11

---

8. Mathew 28:16-20

---

9. I Corinthians 15:3-9

---

#### **IV. EVIDENCE NUMBER FOUR - The Enemies of Christ Gave No Refutation of the Resurrection**

- A. \_\_\_\_\_: Within three days, reports of the resurrection began to spread through Jerusalem and the surrounding area. There is no record of any attempt to dispute these reports, except the ridiculous story of the soldiers. If the soldiers claimed that the body had been stolen while all of them slept they would have been a laughing stock. Any time a Roman soldier was caught sleeping on guard, he was killed immediately. The fact that they were able to tell about it would disprove their story.
- B. \_\_\_\_\_: Within fifty days, Peter was standing in the temple preaching the resurrection of Jesus to thousands (Acts 2:32). No one stood up and tried to refute his claims. All the Jews would have needed to do at this point, was produce the body of Jesus and Christianity would have been over.
- C. \_\_\_\_\_: The four gospels were written within the next thirty years or so, but no one wrote to refute them.

In contrast to this silence by the enemies of Jesus, Josephus, a Jewish historian writing to please the Romans, says this about Jesus: “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 many Jews and also many of the Greeks. This man was the Christ. And when Pilate condemned him to the cross, upon his impeachment by the principal men among us, those who had loved him from the first did not forsake him, for he appeared alive to them on the third day, the divine prophets having spoken these and thousands of other wonderful things about him. And even now the race of Christians, so named from Him has not died out.”

**V. EVIDENCE NUMBER FIVE - In Spite of Great Personal Hardship and Martyrdom, the Apostles Never Reneged on the Message of the Resurrection**

Simon Greenleaf (1783-1853) was the famous Royal Professor of Law at Harvard University, and succeeded Justice Joseph Story as the Dane Professor of Law in the same university upon Story’s death in 1846. In 1846, while still Professor of Law at Harvard, Greenleaf wrote a volume entitled “An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in the Courts of Justice”, (Baker Book House, 1965). The following are this brilliant jurist’s critical observations:

*“The great truths which the apostles declared, were, that Christ had risen from the dead, and that only through repentance from sin, and faith in him, could men hope for salvation. This doctrine they asserted with one voice, everywhere, not only under the greatest discouragements, but in the face of the most appalling errors that can be presented to the mind of man. Their master had recently perished as a malefactor, by the sentence of a public tribunal. His religion sought to overthrow the religions of the whole world. The laws of every country were against the teachings of His disciples. The interests and passions of all the rulers and great men in the world were against them. The fashion of the world was against them. Propagating this new faith, even in the most inoffensive and peaceful manner, they could expect nothing but contempt, opposition, reviling, bitter persecutions, stripes, imprisonments, torments, and cruel deaths. Yet this faith they zealously did propagate; and all these miseries they*

*endured undismayed, nay, rejoicing. As one after another was put to a miserable death, the survivors only prosecuted their work with increased vigor and resolution. The annals of military warfare afforded scarcely an example of the like heroic constancy, patience, and unflinching courage. They had every possible motive to review carefully the grounds of their faith, and evidences of the great facts and truths which they asserted; and these motives were pressed upon their attention with the most melancholy and terrific frequency. It was therefore impossible that they could have persisted in affirming the truths they have narrated, had not Jesus actually risen from the dead, and had they not known this fact as certainly as they knew any other fact...If then their testimony was not true, there was no possible motive for its fabrication.”*

**CONCLUSION:**

As G. B. Hardy (Countdown, Moody Press, 1970) has said, “Here is the complete record”:

\_\_\_\_\_ tomb is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ tomb is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ tomb is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ tomb is \_\_\_\_\_