

The Implications of the Resurrection of Christ
Part One
The Resurrection as an Historical Event

Introduction

We have been working our way to this study for a few weeks. Here is what we have established so far.

1. The Bible is historically reliable.
2. The Old Testament proves itself to be the inspired word of God.
3. The New Testament documents passed the “Acid Test of Journalism” to be the most authenticated document of its time.
4. The New Testament is the most quoted document of its time. If all the Bibles in the world were destroyed, the New Testament could be reproduced from the quotes of the Apostolic Fathers.

Now we are ready to examine the implications of the resurrection of Jesus. The “acid test” has proved to us the probability, the credibility, and the authenticity of the gospel record. In other words, we can trust the New Testament as historical fact. Before we consider the implications of the resurrection of Christ, we need to establish the fact of the resurrection.

- I. The resurrection of Jesus is framed within the context of being historical fact.
 - A. The account is recorded within the “Eyewitness Window.”
 1. This was a period between AD 30 – AD 70.
 2. There was ample opportunity to verify the accounts, i.e., the “acid test.”
 - B. John writes as a matter of fact, not fictional. – John 20:1-8
- II. Four facts from John’s testimony.
 - A. The stone was rolled away.
 1. The stone was very large. – Mark 16:4
 2. The stone was secured by a Roman seal. – Matthew 27:62-66
 - a. A Roman seal was a crisscrossed rope attached to the outside walls of the tomb with a Roman seal in the middle.
 - b. A penalty of death was enforced for the crime of removing the seal.
 - B. The body was gone.
 1. Question: Was the body removed by someone or was it a supernatural event?
 2. Was it the disciples?

Luke 23:49 tells us that the disciples were afraid.

Matthew 27:64 says that the Jewish leaders made it impossible for the disciples.

Matthew 28:11-15 shows that the Romans soldiers witnessed the resurrection.
 3. Was it the Jews? If so, why? – Matthew 27:62-66
 - a. Jesus predicted his resurrection in three days. – John 2:19

- b. Jews felt the need to prevent a conspiracy.
 - 4. Was it the Romans? If so, why? – Matthew 27:62-66
 - a. Giving the impression that Jesus raised from the dead served no purpose for Pilate or for Rome.
 - b. Pilate washed his hands of the matter. – Matthew 27:24
- C. Grave were clothes lying neatly in place.
 - 1. Suspiciously arranged – John 20:5-7
 - a. Lying in place, undisturbed
 - b. The head wrap was folded and in a place by itself.
 - 2. Jesus buried according to the custom of the Jews. – John 11:43-44
 - 1. Bound in linen strips, spices, with a cloth over the face. – John 19:38-41
 - 2. 100 lbs. of spices were laid in the wrapping of the linen strips – John 19:39.
- D. The disciples entered the tomb. John believed, meaning he believed what Mary said.
 - 1. John writes as an eyewitness, not as Luke who interviewed eyewitnesses.
 - 2. John's testimony was based on evidence within the tomb.
 - 3. Resurrection was not their first thought. – John 20:9

III. Theories some have used to explain the empty tomb.

- A. Here is an interesting note. These theories are not an attempt to deny the following facts.
 - 1. Jesus of Nazareth lived in Palestine in the first century, was rejected by his people, and crucified by the Romans.
 - 2. The tomb in which Jesus was buried was unexpectedly found empty.
- B. "Swoon Theory" Was Jesus only unconscious and revived?
 - 1. Every testimony of both the apostles and Roman historians say he died.
 - 2. A crucified man would not have the strength to come out of the grave wrapping and move a "very large stone." Compare and read John 11:41-44.
 - 3. A Roman soldier pierced the side of Jesus making a mortal wound impossible to survive. – John 19:31-37
- C. Mass hallucination?
 - 1. The gospels record the disbelief of **all** the disciples.
 - 2. Doubts remained about his resurrection for the full forty days after.
 - Luke 24:36-43
 - John 20:27-28
 - Matthew 28:16
 - 3. Jesus appeared to 500 at one time. – 1 Corinthians 15:6

Conclusion

The fact of the resurrection is well established as an historical event. Next, we will see the implications.