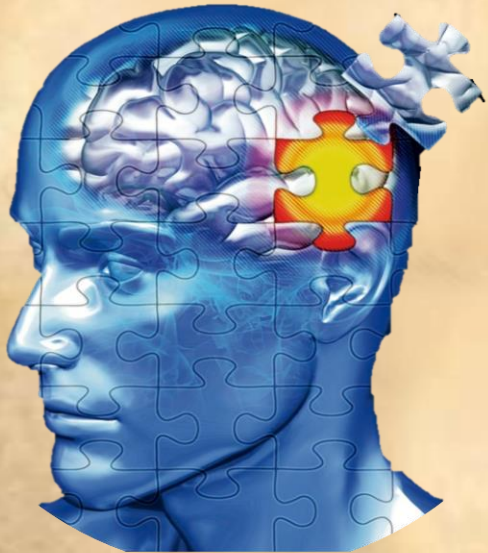


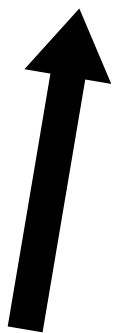
APOLOGETICS



The
Mind's
Journey
to
Heaven



Wasn't the resurrection of Jesus just a made-up hoax?



we will need to define this



legend...fairy tale...myth...fiction

The person asking this question is usually either ...

- An Atheist or Secular person...and they struggle to believe miracles in and of themselves.**
- An Orthodox Jew...and they inherently cannot accept the resurrection for what it means to Judaism.**
- A Muslim background...and they have been taught false approaches to discount the evidence of the resurrection.**

Let's define the term resurrection.



What it is.

- Resurrection = Bodily Resurrection = Physical Embodiment post death
- Two kinds typically referred to
 1. Temporary Reversal of Death
 - Truly dead...no more activity for some time. In some cases body had begun to smell of decay.
 - Multiple Examples...9 in total and one group in the Bible = Zarephaths widow by Elijah, Sone of Shunamite woman by Elijah, Lazarus, etc.
 - These all died an additional time later in life.
 2. Embodiment after Death into an immortal physical body
 - Only One Example at the present = Jesus
 - Physical body was different but physical nonetheless
 - Jesus ate food...let them touch his scars...sat in chairs...was recognized as he was known.
 - Yet he passed through walls...ascended into heaven.

#2 IS THE DESCRIPTION USED FOR THE CHRISTIAN RESURRECTION...PHYSICAL LIFE AFTER DEATH!

What it is NOT.

- Resuscitation.
 - Being dead for a short while and being revived is not resurrection.
- Non Bodily embodiment
 - No where in pagan culture nor religious culture was the term resurrection referred to as a non bodily embodiment...or a "gone to heaven" or an "exalted" state.
 - All of the cultures had a term for Physical embodiment or resurrection even if they didn't believe in it.



Is the Resurrection Important?

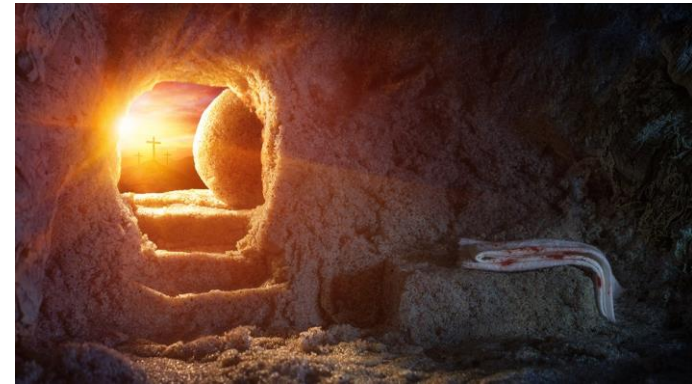


- **It is an essential central part of all that we believe.**
 - I Corinthians 15:12-19
 - If Christ has not been raised to new life, then our faith is worthless and we are to be pitied more than anyone.
 - Romans 10:9-10
 - ...believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead...
 - 2 Cor 4:14, I Thess 4:14, Rom 1:4
- **If Jesus was not raised, then he was not God and was a liar for he foretold he would be raised...moreover that he would take up his own life again.**
 - Matt 16:21, 17:9, 22, 23, 20:18,19, 26:32, Luke 9:22-27, John 2:18-22
- **If Jesus was not raised and therefore not God, then none of his promises were true and he was a false prophet.**
 - Then the following would not have happened as a result...
 - Sending of the Holy Spirit, Conversion of Sinners, Salvation by union with Christ, Forgiveness of Man's sins, Freedom from the wrath of the Father, Eternal life for the believer, Protection from Satan and our sin nature.
- **Since all of the Old Testament is about Jesus, then if Jesus was a fraud and no one else can fulfill the prophecies of the OT except Jesus, the entire Bible hangs on the reality of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus!**

All of the promises of God are hinged on Jesus and so they are all either YES as proved by the resurrection or NO as proved by the lack of the resurrection.

Can it be proved that it did happen?

- Can we prove it was true?
 - Yes... but not using scientific method.
 - Remember the scientific method cannot prove most anything in history.
 - How can you prove through repetition what you ate for Thanksgiving dinner last year?
 - We must use other methods involving the *Historical Evidential Approach*...more like a detective or a lawyer would use to prove a crime.
- Is it absolute proof?
 - NO...nothing is absolute about proving historical events.
 - The only way to know absolutely is to be God.
 - Yet, we can know historical facts sufficiently to put our trust in them.
- Is it extensive, compelling and even overwhelming?
 - YES...let's metaphorically look inside the tomb...touch his side...see for ourselves.

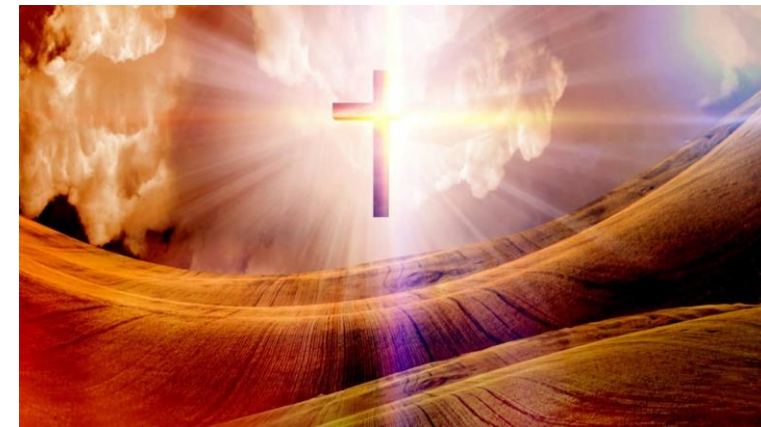




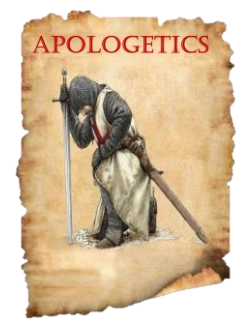
Recommendation #1

Establish a rapport on the Trustworthiness and Validity of the Bible first!

- Reference the Series we did on topic of the Bible's trustworthiness...
 - CE HOUR SERIES: Apologetics...the Minds Journey to Heaven
 - CE HOUR LESSON: Can we trust the Bible?
- Get the person to read one of the following resources:
 - The Case for Christ by Les Strobels
 - Evidence that Demands a Verdict by Josh McDowell
 - The Reason for God by Timothy Keller
 - The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus by Gary Habermas and Michael Licona
 - **The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach by Michael Licona**
 - The Resurrection of the Son of God by NT Wright
- I have utilized a lot of these sources for my material.



Thank the Lord for their hard work on this topic!



Recommendation #2



Show them how Jesus is the fulfillment of OT scripture!

Examples

- Christ's Triumphant Ride into Jerusalem (Zechariah 9:9; John 12:12-15; Matthew 28:8-11)
- Rejection of Christ by His Own People (Isaiah 53:3; John 1:10-11, 12:37-38)
- Jesus was Silent before His Accusers (Isaiah 53:7; Mark 15:5)
- The Soldiers Divided His Garments and Cast Lots for His Clothes (Psalm 22:17-18; John 19:23)
- Not One of His Bones Would be Broken (Numbers 9:12; John 19:31-37)
- They Would Pierce His Hands and Feet (Psalm 22:14-16; Luke 24:39; Galatians 3:13)
- Jesus Will Die as a Sacrifice for Our Sins (Isaiah 53:5-6, 8, 12; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)
- Jesus was Buried in a Rich Man's Tomb (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60)
- Christ Would be Seated at the Right Hand of God (Psalm 110:1; Hebrews 10:12-13; Acts 2:32-36)

Here is the one we seek to prove today!

- Jesus Would Not Stay Buried but Rose from the Dead (Psalm 16:10; Matthew 28:6; Romans 6:8-11)

What approach should we use then?



- There are multiple ways to respond but the *minimal facts argument* is usually the best and quickest way to address this question.
- Two requirements for a "minimal fact":
 1. Each fact must be confirmed by several strong and independent arguments, typically 10 or more historical confirmations.
 2. The vast majority of scholars -- even liberal Christian scholars, non-Christian scholars and atheists -- must recognize the occurrence's historical nature."



6 Such Minimal Facts Support the Resurrection



1. Jesus died by crucifixion
2. Very soon after His death, His followers had real experiences that they thought were actual appearances of the risen Jesus
3. Their lives were transformed as a result, even to the point of being willing to die specifically for their faith in the resurrection message
4. These things were taught very early, soon after the crucifixion
5. James, Jesus' unbelieving brother, became a Christian due to his own experience with whom he believed to be the resurrected Christ
6. The Christian persecutor Paul ... became a believer after a similar experience.

All of these 'minimal facts' come not only from multiple eyewitnesses as recorded in Scripture, but from numerous non-biblical sources -- even sources hostile to Christianity.

- Extra Biblical historic documents such as Thallus, Tacitus, letters of Pliny the Younger to Emperor Trajan, Josephus (Jewish Historian), Babylonian Talmud, and Lucian of Samosata all give clues corroborating the Bible...if analyzed carefully.

The Pre-Resurrection Facts



- *Jesus was dead.*
 - Jesus was crucified as verified by the Bible...a Roman historian Tacitus and Jewish historian, Josephus, all agree he was crucified.
 - Crucifixion was likely created by the Persians but the Romans spent 200 years perfecting it prior to Jesus.
 - Note there is no record of anyone surviving crucifixion unless the Romans took the person down and provided medical assistance...even then they rarely could be spared.
 - Jesus side was pierced to prove he was dead as the soldier believed he was dead and did not break his legs. If the soldier thought he was alive, he would have broken his legs.
 - Presence of blood and water flowing from the spear wound is medical proof he was dead.
 - Pontius Pilate and a centurion confirmed Jesus was dead before handing his body over to Joseph of Arimathea to be buried. They were experienced at identifying death!
- *Tomb was used.*
 - Of the 3 types used at that time period, 2 of them fit the gospel narratives.

The Pre-Resurrection Facts



- ***The Burial.***

- Jewish law...

- Required burial within 24 hrs even for criminals...yet prohibited burial on the Sabbath.
- Jesus was crucified on Sabbath eve so he would have been buried right away as the Bible outlines.
- All of the practices outlined match all we know from archeology about the Jewish burial practices of the time (Magness, SDOS, 170)

- Roman law...

- It is true that Roman law many times opposed Jewish traditions.
- However, it is also true that Romans allowed them to do their traditions in many cases as a way of making peace.
- Moreover, the Sanhedrin were required by their law to bury any criminal executed by them. Since they were the ones bringing the charges to Pilate, it stands to reason that they would do the burial.

- Archeology...

- In 1968, we discovered Yehohanan's remains dated to 20AD...showing that crucified people were given proper burial.

- The Bible...

- Confirms he was buried.
- Would not have highlighted the Sanhedrin burying him unless it were true since they just crucified their Lord.

- The Sanhedrin...

- It was too political and dangerous to not track where he was buried. They would want to see this done properly.

- There is no conflicting tradition stating that he wasn't buried.

- If this was legend, then we would likely see alternate stories from the same time period.

The Pre-Resurrection Facts



• The Stone.

➤ Types used

- Only two kinds of stones used...Round and Square cork like.
- Round was large and only a few have been found. They were all used on very elaborate and wealthy tombs.
- Matthew, Mark and Luke indicate the stone was “rolled” away. This would line up with the “rich mans tomb”.

➤ Average Stone Weight

- A stone with the size required to cover an entrance of these “rich man’s tomb” would have weighed a minimum of 440lbs upwards of 2 tons.
- Not easily moved by anyone.

➤ How did Joseph roll it in place?

- A wedge was typically used to hold the stone open for an empty tomb.
- The Stone was put in a track of sorts rolling down towards entrance.
- When the wedge was removed... presto...it rolls in place.

The Pre-Resurrection Facts



- **The Seal.**
 - Matt 27:66 says they sealed the stone.
 - Typically this was done by attaching a cord with a wax seal signature to the opening and to the stone.
 - This was done to ensure no one stole the body while the guards slept.
- **The Guard.**
 - Matt 27:62 says a guard was placed in addition to the seal.
 - The guard was likely Roman and the same guard given to the Jewish leaders to arrest Jesus.
 - Either way they would have believed their lives were at stake if they allowed something to happen to the body.
- **The Guard's Reaction.**
 - Matthew 28:2-4, 11-15 says the guards were like "dead men" at the sight of an angel.
 - Their fear of reporting to their Roman leaders explains why they went to the Chief of priests with their information about the resurrection.
 - Failing their duties would cost their life through court martialing.
 - Getting the support of the Chief of Priests was likely their only hope of surviving the failure of their duty...as the body was gone...how could they explain this?
 - The joint lie with the Chief of Priests supported the guards and the Jewish agenda.
- **The Disciples Were Scattered.**
 - This is a rather embarrassing fact for the authors of this story. If they were going to make up a story, this is not likely how they would have written it.
 - It speaks to their uniform confusion.



The Post-Resurrection Facts



- **The Empty Tomb.**

- It is hard to argue that the tomb wasn't empty as all of the other explanations assume this as they are trying to find natural ways to explain this.
 - The only theory is the Hallucination theory but this is easily refuted with other means.
- Evidence #1 = Women were first.
 - Women were not considered good testimony in the 2nd temple Judaism time period. If you were making the story up in that day, you would never have used women as the first eye witnesses...unless it were true!
- Evidence #2 = Multiple Attestations.
 - Multiple NT sources attest the tomb was empty.
 - None of the accounts would hold any credibility in that time period if it wasn't empty.
- Evidence #3 = Center of Church Preaching
 - It is clear the resurrection was preached even a few weeks after the death and burial of Jesus. If it wasn't empty then these sermons would have been ridiculously discounted with negative affect on the message.
 - The Jewish leaders would have produced the body.
- Evidence #4 = Surprising Lack of Tomb Veneration
 - In that day many tombs of respected leaders were venerated or showed great reverence and honor.
 - No evidence that the early Christian church or anyone else did this. The location of the tomb was even lost...we don't even know which one it was.
 - Clearly, the location of the tomb wasn't important...because He was alive!
- Evidence #5 = Common Knowledge of the Empty Tomb
 - It was treated as common knowledge the tomb was empty in the speeches in Acts by Peter.
 - If it was in question, this would not have been assumed.



The Post-Resurrection Facts



- **The Empty Tomb.**

- Evidence #6 = Jewish Response Assumes an Empty Tomb

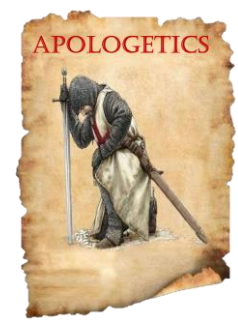
- There is only one Jewish explanation and it assumes the tomb was empty. (see Matthew 28:11-15...and Toledoth Jesu, a compilation of early Jewish writings)
- If there were other arguments, then they would have been discovered.
- Literally, no one was disputing the tomb was empty...only why.

- Evidence #7 = Tradition of Empty Tomb is Very Early

- The empty tomb is in the book of Mark and is dated to within 7 years of the event.
- Far too early to be able to be a legend as most if not all of the witnesses both Christian and Opponents would still be alive and could verify it.

- **The Grave Clothes**

- In John 20:3-9, the grave clothes being left behind.
- Presumably, if someone stole the body, why leave the linen behind as it helps to support the resurrection not hurt it.
- Since the disciples didn't steal the body, they knew it was because Jesus was alive.
- Quoting this as evidence is further credibility the story was eyewitness and true.



TO BE CONTINUED IN PART 2