



H E I S
R I S E N

C E L E B R A T E T H E S A V I O R



**In order for life to have meaning, value
& purpose, we need:**

- 1. God**
- 2. Immortality**

The Resurrection of Jesus matters because of:

- 1. Who He claimed he was**
- 2. What he claimed he would give people who follow Him**
 - IMMORTALITY – this is the best news ever. It gives us HOPE.**

The Resurrection of Jesus matters because of:

**If God raised THIS MAN from the dead, he was
vindicating his claims.**

Why is Jesus the only way?

- 1. Every person has the same UNIVERSAL problem**
 - Guilt from sin**
 - Estrangement from God**
- 2. Jesus is the UNIQUE & ONLY person who has ever offered a Solution for this problem**

**This argument does NOT depend on
the authority of the New Testament.**

**It depends upon historical facts which are
acknowledged by the consensus of New
Testament scholars today.**

**(most of whom have a critical view
concerning supernatural explanations)**

**Most New Testament scholars do NOT
accept the New Testament as
authoritative.**

**Most New Testament scholars only accept
CERTAIN PORTIONS of the New Testament
which meet certain “Criteria of Authenticity”**

Historical Congruence:

The element is consistent with other historically known facts about the context in which the element occurred.

Independent early attestation:

The element is attested by:

- **Multiple sources that are independent from each other**
- **and do not rely on a common source**
- **and that were written down shortly after the event / saying took place.**

Embarrassment:

**The saying / event is embarrassing to or
counterproductive for the source.**

Dissimilarity:

The saying / event is unlike prior Jewish thought forms or subsequent Christian thought forms

Semitisms:

The linguistics contain Aramaic or Hebrew traces in their use of language.

Coherence:

**The saying / event is consistent with
established facts about Jesus.**

The Best Explanation of 3 Historical Facts:

- 1. Empty Tomb**
- 2. Post Mortem Appearances to Individuals & Groups**
- 3. Belief of the Early Church in His Resurrection**

Is this hypothesis:

**“God resurrected Jesus of Nazareth
from the dead”**

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**A lot of times, people will say Jesus never even
claimed to be divine or special;**

**Rather, his followers made that up hundreds of
years later**

**But this is precisely what he got
crucified for.**

Claim to be the Messiah:

- 1. Early church universally referred to him as “Jesus Christ” (almost a surname)**
- 2. No non-messianic forms of Christianity**
- 3. Gospels clearly depict disciples’ belief that he was the Messiah while following him (he told them so several times)**

Claim to be the Messiah:

- 4. Jesus consciously fulfilled the Zechariah prophecy about Messiah riding in on a donkey**
 - Multiply attested by Mark & John**

Claim to be the Messiah:

5. **The “titulus” nailed to his cross is generally regarded as historical by critical scholars**
 - **(DISSIMILAR to Christian titles used for Jesus by church)**

Theological Significance of Claim to be the Messiah:

**For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.**

**And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

Isaiah 9:6

Claim to be the Son of God:

- 1. The parable of the tenants is universally accepted as authentic, and Jesus makes himself the unique Son of God in this parable.**

6 He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

7 But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'

8 And they took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard.

9 What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.

Mark 12

Claim to be the Son of God:

“All things have been committed to me by my Father.

**No one knows the Son except the Father,
and no one knows the Father except the Son and
those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.**

Matthew 11:27

Theological significance of claim to be the Son of God:

- **God's UNIQUE & ONLY Son**
- **Distinct from and higher than all the prophets**
- **The HEIR of Israel**
- **God's FINAL messenger**

Claim to be the Son of Man:

1. Multiple Early Independent Attestation:

- **Mark 8:38**
- **Mark 13:26-27**
- **Matthew 10:32-33/Luke 12:8-9**
- **Matthew 24:27,37,39/Luke 17:24,26,30**

Claim to be the Son of Man:

- 2. Dissimilarity from early church teaching:**
 - The church never called him this, so it is unlikely they wrote those words back into his mouth.**

Claim to be Messiah, Son of Man & Son of God:

But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"

And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

Mark 14:61-62

Theological Significance of claim to be Son of Man:

Dan 7:13-14

(13) "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.

(14) And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

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**If this man Jesus, who blasphemously claimed to be
divine, was resurrected from the dead, then it
means that God has vindicated his claims and his
promises.**

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Historical Fact #1: The Empty Tomb:

Jesus' tomb was discovered empty on the first day of the week by a group of his women followers

1. Jesus' burial site was known to Jews & Christians alike:

- **It is very likely that Jesus was buried in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb**
- **The disciples had a lot of bad feelings toward the Sanhedrin who had murdered their Master.**
- **Why would they make up a story that one of them gave him an honorable burial?**

- 1. Jesus' burial site was known to Jews & Christians alike:**
 - Disciples knew where tomb was & would not be able to believe in resurrected Jesus in the face of an occupied tomb.**
 - Resurrection meant resurrection of the BODY, especially the BONES to a first century Jew.**

1. Jesus' burial site was known to Jews & Christians alike:

- **Jewish leaders knew where tomb was & would point to it, or even exhume the body to put a quick stop to Christianity.**

Assessing historical hypotheses:

Step 1 : Establish the facts

Step 2: Make sense of the facts, evaluate competing explanations of the facts.

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2. Multiple early independent attestation of the empty tomb

- 1. The pre-Markan passion source (within seven years of the crucifixion) includes the empty tomb**

2. Paul's 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 early tradition implies the empty tomb:

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received:

that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,

and that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

2. Multiple early independent attestation of the empty tomb

**3. Matthew quotes an independent source
(according to the vocabulary)**

2. Multiple early independent attestation of the empty tomb

4. Luke has an independent source (we know this because he includes two disciples verifying of the report of the women that the tomb was vacant, this not found in Mark)

2. Multiple early independent attestation of the empty tomb

5. John gives another independent attestation of the empty tomb

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3. Simplicity of Mark's account suggests authenticity

- **It is stark in its simple, straightforward account of the events.**
- **No mention of triumph over death, no Messianic titles, no theological reflections or motifs**
- **This suggests it is a mere factual retelling of event**

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4. Witnesses to the empty tomb were women

- **Fits the criteria of EMBARRASSMENT:**
 - **If the story were made up, wouldn't you want to make up credible witnesses to the event?**

4. Witnesses to the empty tomb were women

- **Don't people forget nowadays how much Jesus did to elevate the status of women?**

4. Witnesses to the empty tomb were women

- **Josephus wrote that the rules for testimony were:**

“let not the testimony of women be admitted, on account of the levity and boldness of their sex”.

4. Witnesses to the empty tomb were women

- **Rabbinical texts of the time:**

“Sooner let the words of the law be burnt than delivered to women!”

“Happy is he whose children are male but woe to him whose children are female!”

And a daily prayer of Jewish men included: “Blessed are you, Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who has not created me a woman”.

5. Earliest Jewish Response to Gospel Admitted the Empty Tomb:

- **And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day. Matthew 28**

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2. Jesus appeared to individuals and groups after his death

- **Paul's early list of witnesses**
- **These witnesses would still be around for people to question- that is why Paul is citing them. This was a common technique at the time for backing up a fact-citing living witnesses.**
- **Not enough time for a legend to develop (5-6 years)**

Paul's early list of witnesses:

... and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.

Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

1 Cor 15:3-8

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2. Jesus appeared to individuals and groups after his death

- **Independent Gospel Accounts:**
 - **Paul cites appearance to Peter:**
 - **Luke's Emmaeus Road account**
 - **Luke was working with early material here**

2. Jesus appeared to individuals and groups after his death

- **Independent Gospel Accounts:**
 - **Paul cites appearance to “the Twelve”:**
 - **Luke 24:36 – 42**
 - **John 20:19 – 20**

2. Jesus appeared to individuals and groups after his death

- **Independent Gospel Accounts:**
 - **Paul cites appearance to James, Jesus' brother:**
 - **James became a pillar of the church and died a martyr for Christ**
 - **What else besides seeing him alive from the dead would make a person worship their brother?**

2. Jesus appeared to individuals and groups after his death

- **Independent Gospel Accounts:**
 - **Paul cites appearance to “all the apostles”:**

So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.” Acts 1:21-22

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3. Jesus' followers came to sincerely believe he was resurrected from the dead

- **Christianity came to being in the mid first century.**
- **Christianity IS the belief that he rose from the dead.**

WHERE DID THIS BELIEF COME FROM ?

3. Followers came to sincerely believe he was resurrected from the dead

- **His ethical teaching was not enough**
- **Messianic expectations at the time were for a military leader to throw off Rome**
- **There was no expectation of a Messiah who died, was cursed by God on a tree, and was later resurrected**

“anyone who is hung on a pole is under God's curse” Deut21:23

Remember, for 1st century Jews, the resurrection meant the following:

- **A PHYSICAL RESURRECTION (especially the bones) of**
- **ALL MEN AT THE SAME TIME**
- **AT THE END OF TIME**

(there was no idea of a Messiah being resurrected before everybody else as a forerunner)

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Explanatory Scope:

The explanation accounts for a greater VARIETY of observable data

Explanatory Power:

**The explanation makes the observable data more
PROBABLE than other hypothesis**

Plausibility:

- **Explanation is implied by a greater number of accepted truths than rivals**
 - **People say the resurrection is implausible because “dead men don’t rise”**

Should NOT be “Ad Hoc”

- **Explanation implies fewer new suppositions about the past not already implied by existing knowledge**

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Conspiracy Theory:

Not plausible, because it means the apostles were all liars:

- **But they staked their very lives on this lie**
- **Lies make cowards, not martyrs**
- **Critics have universally recognized one cannot plausibly deny that the earliest disciples at least sincerely believe that Jesus was risen from the dead.**

Conspiracy Theory:

Not plausible, because it is:

- **Anachronistic. We are now looking through the rear view mirror about what a Jewish Messiah is.**
 - **That's not how they thought about a Messiah back then.**

Conspiracy Theory:

Not plausible, because it is:

This would be an unbelievably complex conspiracy, which would tend to unravel over time, as all conspiracies do.

Conspiracy Theory:

Not plausible, because it is:

It does not fit with the psychological state of the disciples.

One cannot overestimate how devastating it must have been for them to see their hopeful – conquering – Messiah shamefully crucified by the Romans.

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Apparent Death Theory:

Not plausible, because:

- 1. Jesus would have needed an intensive care unit.**
- 2. He could not have convinced his followers that he was the glorious conqueror death.**
- 3. How could he even walk on feet that had nails driven through them?**

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Displaced Body Hypothesis:

- **This has never been taken seriously by scholars.**
- **The hypothesis was dead on arrival, stillborn.**
- **It assumes people were idiots and could not tell each other the body had been moved.**

Hallucination Hypothesis:

Narrow Explanatory Scope:

You need an additional hypothesis to explain the evidence for the empty tomb.

Hallucination Hypothesis:

Implausible:

Hallucinations typically occur under 2 conditions:

- **Psychoactive Drug Use**
- **Mental Illness**
 - **Neither of these conditions were present**

Hallucination Hypothesis:

Implausible:

- **There has never been a hallucination event similar to the post mortem appearances described in the psychological literature.**
- **You would have to combine elements of many different hallucinations.**

Hallucination Hypothesis:

Implausible:

- **Hallucinations don't occur to groups of people.**

Hallucination Hypothesis:

Implausible:

- **Hallucinations are projections of what is already inside your own mind.**
- **1st century Jews would project visions of Jesus in Abraham's bosom, waiting for the resurrection of all men.**
- **They didn't have a category for a 1 man resurrection ahead of time.**

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Twin Brother Hypothesis:

Ad hoc (Contrived):

- **You really have to assume that Mary & Joseph's baby was somehow switched at birth for a baby that had a twin, otherwise it turns into a conspiracy on Mary & Joseph's part**
- **And then somehow that twin lurked in the shadows the whole time, just waiting for his moment**
- **There is zero evidence for all this.**

**So what hypothesis / explanation of these
3 historical facts do New Testament
critical scholars subscribe to ?**

None

Bottom Line:

- **People do not reject the resurrection of Jesus on historical grounds**
- **They reject it on the basis of an anti-supernatural bias**
- **The historical evidence strongly supports the resurrection of Jesus**

Bayes' Theorum:

Evaluate the probability of the hypothesis:

“God raised Jesus of Nazareth from the dead”

Bayes' Theorem:

$$\Pr(H|E) = \frac{\Pr(H) \times \Pr(E|H)}{\Pr(H) \times \Pr(E|H) + \Pr(\neg H) \times \Pr(E|\neg H)}$$

Pr (H) is 50% that Jesus rose given the background evidence:

- **That God exists**
- **The existence of the church**
- **The definition of God as the greatest conceivable being &**
- **The subsequent likelihood of God wanting to validate the unsurpassed moral teaching of Jesus & to provide a means of forgiveness for sins**

$$\text{Pr} (\neg H) = 50\%$$

**The background probability of Jesus NOT
rising from the dead**

$$\Pr (E | H) = 90\%$$

- **Probability of seeing the evidence we do if Jesus DID rise?**

$$\Pr (E | \neg H) = 5\%$$

- **This is the probability of the 3 historical facts we have been discussing being present if Jesus did NOT rise**
- **It would be 5% probable to see the evidence if Jesus did NOT rise**
- **All of the competing hypotheses to explain the evidence fail miserably, and there is simply no current good explanation of the evidence absent the resurrection.**

This works out to a 95% probability
that the hypothesis

“God raised Jesus from the dead”

is true.

What if we said that the probability
based on the background evidence
was only 30%?

This STILL works out to a 89%
probability that the hypothesis

“God raised Jesus from the dead”

is true.

What if we said that the probability
based on the background evidence
was only 5%?

This STILL works out to a 49%
probability that the hypothesis

“God raised Jesus from the dead”

is true.

