

## **Apologetics | Week 4**

### **The Bodily Resurrection of Jesus from the Dead**

"If Jesus rose from the dead, then you have to accept all he said; if he didn't rise from the dead, then why worry about any of what he said? The issue on which everything hangs is not whether or not you like his teaching but whether or not he rose from the dead" (Keller, RFG).

#### I. Evidentiary Approach to the Resurrection

##### a. Expectations of Res in Ancient World: foolish to Greeks/scandal to Jews (Paul)

###### i. Greco-Roman: Death is powerful and permanent

1. Hades: shadowy existence in underworld; Elysian Fields: normal (boring)
2. Platonic release: immortal soul returning to Divine; Divinization of elite
3. Coming back to life: necromancy, back in Hades, reincarnation, die again
4. Death was powerful and permanent

###### ii. Old Testament: Slowly devel

1. Rare and late. Sheol. Emphasis on eternal fate of Israel. New Creation
2. Gen 1-3: created for eternity in covenant. Death/exile is enemy.
3. Hope: Ps 16:9-11. Not abandoned to decay; Ps 49:14-15
4. Dry Bones Ez 37; Servant: Is 53:10-11; Daniel 12-raised to final judgment

###### iii. 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple

1. Sadducees: no resurrection; Platonic views of immortality of the soul
2. Bodily resurrection at the judgment; Faithful-new bodies in new creation.
3. Plenty of murdered messiah's-no claims of resurrection

##### b. Resurrection and Paul (Gary Habermas "Minimal Facts")

- i. 1 Cor 15-church is denying a future bodily resurrection of the dead.

1. Gospel is anchored in the res; If res, didn't happen, gospel is void
      2. Res of Jesus initiates final res; Body is a prototype; victory over death
    - ii. Early attestation: Gallio Inscription-AD 52; Acts 18:12-16
      1. 20 yrs. after, res historical fact, witnessed, long held, widely spread.
      2. Paul persecuted/martyred for this belief.
  - c. Resurrection in Gospels (written 60's to 90s AD): empty tomb; real encounters
    - i. Lack of scriptural embellishment; True to life account of death, burial
    - ii. Appropriate variance; Empty tomb; Breadth of appearances; early confession
    - iii. Counter-productive details: women, losers, crucifixion
  - d. Existence/Crucifixion/Resurrection of Jesus in non-Biblical sources
    - i. Jewish: Josephus (37-100); rabbinic (220); Gnostic
    - ii. Gentile: Mara (73); Pliny; Tacitus; Suetonius; Thallus (100)
- II. Presuppositional Approach to the Resurrection of Jesus: Alternative?
  - a. Explanation of the Event? Swoon, stolen, hallucination, myth, conspiracy
  - b. Account for Subsequent History? growth, animal sac eliminated, universality
  - c. Underlying Uniting Narrative? Most-faithful individual willingly endures the worst possible experience for the totally undeserving and wins VS the secret, inherent virtues/powers of a member of a marginal group suddenly emerge/are recognized to overpower/destroy the world of the corrupt oppressors.
- III. Conclusion: A handful of peasants made up the narrative on which Western civilization is based or it actually happened.

### **Josephus in Antiquities of the Jews (90)**

About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who performed surprising deeds and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Messiah. And when, upon the accusation of the principal men among us, Pilate had condemned him to a cross, those who had first come to love him did not cease. He appeared to them spending a third day restored to life, for the prophets of God had foretold these things and a thousand other marvels about him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared.

### **Babylonian Talmud (200)**

On Passover Eve they hung the corpse of Jesus the Nazarene after they killed him by way of stoning. And a crier went out before him for forty days, publicly proclaiming: Jesus the Nazarene is going out to be stoned because he practiced sorcery, incited people to idol worship, and led the Jewish people astray.

### **Mara bar Sarapion (73)**

What benefit did the Athenians obtain by putting Socrates to death? Famine and plague came upon them as judgment for their crime. Or, the people of Samos for burning Pythagoras? In one moment their country was covered with sand. Or the Jews by murdering their wise king? ...After that their kingdom was abolished. God rightly avenged these men...The wise king...Lived on in the teachings he enacted.

### **Pliny in Letters (110)**

They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so. When this was over, it was their custom to depart and to assemble again to partake of food-but ordinary and innocent food.

### **Tacitus in Annals (110)**

The originator of the name, Christ, was executed as a criminal by the procurator Pontius Pilate during the reign of Tiberius; and though repressed, this destructive superstition erupted again, not only through Judea, which was the origin of this

evil, but also through the city of Rome, to which all that is horrible and shameful floods together and is celebrated.

**Suetonius in Vita Claudii (110)**

As the Jews were making constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he expelled them from Rome.

**Thallus (100)**

On the whole world there pressed a most fearful darkness; and the rocks were rent by an earthquake, and many places in Judea and other districts were thrown down. This darkness Thallus, in the third book of his History, calls, as appears to me without reason, an eclipse of the sun." (Julius Africanus, Chronography, 18:1)