

THE RESURRECTION – FACT OR MYTH

Author: Dr. E Johnson Phd; MlibSc; BlibSc.

Copyright © 2005 Dr. E. Johnson All rights reserved

Dr Johnson was born into a Christian family on 29th May 1944 at Trivandrum, Kerala State India and took his doctorate in library and information science in 1988 from Kerala University.

Dr Johnson also obtained a Diploma in Journalism and has published papers on Information Systems, Gospel articles and pamphlets. His main interest and passion is personal evangelism and has written and distributed many Christian messages as tracts with a heartfelt desire to reach the lost in India.

During his childhood he saw a vision of lightning of God but as yet has not fully realised its implication. In 1972 February 12th Dr. Johnson received Jesus as his personal saviour in a public meeting and developed a desire to preach the gospel and organise small prayer meetings in different places.

Currently he is engaged in missionary activities on a small scale in various areas of Kochi and other districts in Kerala.

You can contact Dr E Johnson via our website:
www.christian-book-store.co.uk

Resurrection of Jesus Christ is a fact or myth

There are difference of opinion regarding the resurrection of Jesus Christ .If Christ was not resurrected, faith of Christian doctrine is zero. Since Christ is resurrected the hope of eternal life was given to all believers of Christ. Humanity will ask what is the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Believers will say the word of God available in the Holy Bible is a proof. World is always for historical and scientific or archeological evidence. Historical evidence is recorded information from the Bible. Archeological evidence is the inner heart of Christian believers who met Jesus in different occasions, in different times in different manner. There are millions of people in different status, both literate and illiterate, black and white, men and women, chosen by God who lived in the past and, living today have experienced personally the risen Jesus.

Historical evidence of the Bible

Prophetic revelation.

For you will not leave my soul in shoel nor will you allow Your Holy one to see corruption Ps.16 (10).

But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He shall receive me Selah. Ps. 49(15).

As it is written Jesus said to the persons who went to the tomb "Do not be alarmed you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go tell His disciples-and peter-that He is going before you into Galilee, there you will see Him' as He said to you. Another prophecy in connection with the resurrection of Jesus was in 'You ascended the high mount leading captives in your train and receiving gifts from people even from those who rebel against the Lord God's abiding there. His ascension is fulfilled and recorded

'Jesus was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.' Mark, 16(9).

St Paul also says 'He was buried and that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures' 1 Cor.15(4).

Again St. Paul says When he ascended on high He made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people.'Ephesians4, (8).

Proof from Gospel

But Jesus died and then conquered death. He spoke again to and through the beloved disciple John to all men when He says:

"Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Revelation 1:17-18).

It was John who was the first to believe, when he entered the empty tomb and saw the collapsed grave clothes on the shelf where the body had lain, "and he saw, and believed" (John 20:8). Soon the other disciples also saw the risen Jesus Himself. Paul, writing years later, after seeing Christ on the way to Damascus,

and perhaps also after some research on his own, tells about some of these appearances: ". . . He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; . . . After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

And last of all He was seen of me also.... " (I Corinthians 15:5-8).

In the New Testament it is clearly recorded all the four gospels that Jesus himself showed to his disciples. in different occasions in different manner .Another interesting fact is one of His disciples Thomas told to other disciples when they said that they saw Jesus, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hands in his side, I will not believe' John20(25). Understanding this fact when they were all in the house, Jesus came and stood among them and said 'Peace be with you'. Then he said to Thomas, put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.', Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God'. Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.' This is a great evidence of resurrected Jesus recorded in the Bible. Similarly there are number of illustrations in the Bible regarding the appearance of Jesus to His disciples.

Again in the Bible St Paul says 'If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being through a human being for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ

1 Corinthians, 15(17-22). 'Jesus was the first one to rise from the dead, and therefore he is the first born from the dead.' the first fruits of them that slept. (Colossians 1:18). He was put to death in the flesh, but alive in the spirit. 1Peter 3:18

The resurrection proves not only the pious earthy life before his death but also his work as a Savior, Mediator and Intercessor and sending Holy Spirit as our guide.

In the book of Acts alone, there are at least 25 passages mentioning specifically the glorious message of the resurrection. There are more than 30 such passages in the epistles, even though all the people in the churches to whom the epistles were written already believed it and needed no further convincing.

The wonderful I Corinthians 15, deals in depth with the implications of the resurrection.

“ . . . if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept" (I Corinthians 15:17-20).

Historical Evidence

The body of Christ according to Jewish burial custom, was wrapped in linen which is applied with a number of mixed types of aromatic substances. After the body was placed, a very large stone was rolled and kept at the tomb entrance. There is mention in the new testament about the worry of the women who went to see his body in the morning to apply spices. The tomb was sealed by Roman authorities. (Mark 16:3)

Roman guards who are fully armed were guarding the tomb so that no one will be able to break the seal or come near to rob Jesus body. But on the third day, the stone was rolled out and it was empty. But his disciples and women who were with him didn't believe it. Even after it was told by Jesus earlier itself about his resurrection. The Roman officials became perplexed and they made a rumor that he was robbed off by some of his disciples.

Evidence of Broken Roman Seal

The first obvious fact was the breaking of the seal that stood for the power and authority of the Roman Empire. The consequences of breaking the seal were extremely severe.

Evidence of Empty Tomb

After the resurrection, the tomb was empty. The Disciples of Christ did not go off to some other place to preach that Christ was raised from the dead. Rather, they went right back to the city of Jerusalem, where, if what they were teaching was false, the falsity would be evident.

Gamaliel, who was a member of the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin, put forth the suggestion that the rise of the Christian movement was God's doing; he could not have done that if the tomb were still occupied, or if the Sanhedrin knew the whereabouts of Christ's body.

Evidence from the moving of large stone & the guards anxiety

On that Sunday morning, the people who approached the tomb was the unusual position of the large stone that had been lodged in front of the doorway. All the Gospel writers mention it. The guard who were responsible to guard the grave would have got severely punished for their irresponsibility

Evidence of grave clothes

John, a disciple of Jesus, looked over to the place where the body of Jesus had lain, and there were the grave clothes, in the form of the body, slightly caved in and empty. That's enough to make a believer out of anybody. John never did get over it. The disciples were so much disturbed on seeing the grave clothes, which were

undisturbed in form and position. Matt 28:2, Luke 24:4, John 20:12

Evidence of Jesus' Appearances

Christ appeared alive on several occasions after first Easter. The first is the large number of witnesses of Christ after that resurrection morning. One of the earliest records of Christ's appearing after the resurrection is by Paul.

The historical fact of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ stands at the very heart of the Christian faith. It is founded upon the Person of Jesus Christ, his sacrificial death and his bodily resurrection.

After the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the waiting disciples, the apostle Peter declared: "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear" (Acts 2:32 and 33).

After healing the crippled beggar at the Beautiful Gate of the temple in Jerusalem, Peter declared to the astonished onlookers. "You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this" (Acts 3:15). And because Jesus is alive, miracles of healing and deliverance are still happening today.

Resurrection of Jesus for His believer's in the later period.

The first missionary of India, Sunder Singh says that he met Jesus in December 18th 1904 in a vision and he heard the voice "How many days you will trouble me? I died for you. I gave my life for you." After that the power of the Lord entered in his heart. He decided to preach the gospel to all over the world. He became a missionary of Jesus Christ. Same way thousands of the people all over the world met Jesus in their personal life. The pioneer of the

modern missionary movement William Carey heard the voice of the lord and dedicated his life for Jesus Christ. He came to India and served for the Lord. His masterpiece was

‘Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God’

I saw a vision in my childhood the crucified Christ was resurrected. That only forced me to write this.

The scripture says concerning those that would share with Christ Jesus not only in his sufferings but also in His resurrection For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of His son, in order that he might be the first born within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified. Rom,8, (28-30).

Again St Paul says in 1st; Corinthians 15 (57): Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gift of Holy Spirit

Jesus sent Holy Spirit as our enabler and a teacher for the believers in his place as it he had promised us through the Bible that He would send the Holy Spirit, His resurrection and return to glory (John 7:37-39; 14:26; 15:26; 16:7). The resurrection was the means of continuing Christ’s ministry to us today. The major feature of this present age, the indwelling Holy Spirit, was vitally dependent on the resurrection.

Gift of Eternal Life & a proof of God’s Love for us

The living Jesus tells us that if we believe in Jesus Christ as our personal savior, we will be given an eternal life and happiness through out. That doesn’t mean that we will be free of troubles and trials. It means that he will guide us, lead us in his way. When trial and tribulations come, he will carry us. This was given in John 14:19 “because I live, you shall live also.” It is because of

God Almighty's true love for us that he gave his only begotten son who was sent as a human who lead life of man and underwent all tribulation except sin, got him crucified for our sin and resurrected and sent Holy Spirit who is the third person in trinity

Victory over Sin

By crucifixion, and resurrection he has defeated the power of sin and Satan. As it is given in

Gen 3.15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. The proof of resurrection is his victory over sin. As he defeated the satan on the cross, he became the eternal ruler of the church and the head of the church.

In John 11:25 He said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me shall live even if he dies."

As he defeated sin and became blameless he became the judge for the whole world and in the Judgment day both right and wrong will be revealed and who ever did wrong will be put to dungeon.

For believers, it involves their examination before the judgment seat of Christ, (1 Cor. 3:12f; 2 Cor. 5:9; with Rev. 2:1-2). And for unbelievers, it involves the judgments of tribulation (Rev. 6-19), the judgment of the Jews and Gentiles at the end of the tribulation (Matt. 24-25).

Gift of Salvation

As the Old Testament says, whoever do a mistake should go to the tabernacle and do sacrifice of a lamb or dove. But Jesus Christ became the living lamb who was blameless who took our entire sin and burden and was crucified in the cross, resurrected in the third day and got ascended to heaven. Who ever believes in Lord Jesus can claim that salvation. The will get redemption from sin, peace of life and eternal life and Holy Spirit will accompany him

where ever he goes, guide what ever path he takes, be a guardian to him and teach him what to do and what not to do.

In Revelation 3:20 it is recorded that “He stands at the door and knocks seeking the fellowship of those believers who have not been walking with Him.” There are many instances in which we hear this knocking in our heart and we ill neglect it because the Satan is too much cunning that he will divert us from this knock. So as a believer we should open the door and invite Him in for fellowship by confessing our sins and by asking Him to come in and take charge of our lives because, as the exalted Lord, the God-Man Savior, He also has the right to lead, direct, and control our lives through that fellowship. He will give us peace and prosperity.

But there are circumstances in which once we will invite Jesus to our heart also we will be so much preoccupied in our life that we will not have time to have with Jesus. Once he enters our heart, he will be a part of our family and he will always be with us as a resurrected savior. When problems pop us in our life we will forget this personal savior and will be giving more importance to our problems and forge that some one who is 100% willing to help us is waiting for us. We will go to various superstitious beliefs, enjoyment, pleasures of the world, which is momentary and try to forget our problems. But once we come out of those pleasures again all the problems will remain.

Gift of Protection

Whereas when we submit our problem to him he will take care of it. If he is giving us tests, surely he will give us a way to come over it as it is written in I Corinthians 2. I have read a beautiful story of God and a man who were walking through seashore. Both were walking catching the hand and there were two sets of footsteps all over in the sea sand. There was a place were a lot of dangerous pits and shallows. Then the man turned and saw he saw only one pair of footsteps. He became and annoyed and was complaining to God “ God All these days and times, you were

accompanying me and walking with me. When this dangerous place came, you just left me and went off. This is not correct Lord”. God answered with a sweet smile “ My dear son, All these times I was walking with you and when these problems came, because I love you so much that I didn’t want you to call and so I was carrying you in the palms of my hand.” How true it is right.

When we turn back to our personal life and see, we can find that in all our trials and tribulations, he was carrying us miraculously and so our response should be one of total commitment to Him. The resurrection proves He is the Creator-God who is to have preeminence in each of our lives (Col. 1:15-18). Anything less is a contradiction, totally illogical, and pure rebellion on our part.

This means there is no place for doubt, or half-hearted devotion and submission to Christ because He is the Lord and God. Some people measure out their involvement with the Lord, with the study of the Word, and assembling together with believers as if they are doing a great deed. In other words, a lot of Christians are what we might call “Nod-to-Goders.” They go to church occasionally in order to do their little nod to God.

Conclusion

From the above-mentioned evidences and from the lives of all people who are believers in Jesus Christ, we can confirm that the resurrection of Jesus is a well-established and proven fact.

Praise the Lord