

QUANTOCK MINISTRIES

www.quantockministries.org.uk

*A Bible teaching and preaching ministry
for the Christian community*

D M HERRING
45 LUXBOROUGH ROAD
BRIDGWATER
TA6 7JN

01278 451297
qmings@aol.com

THE TRUTH OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

The evidence for the resurrection of Jesus has always been beyond the ability of any critic to disprove. It is the central, unassailable truth on which our Christian faith is founded. As Paul argues in 1 Corinthians 15 v 12 – 19, without the resurrection there is no point to the Christian faith, but with the resurrection our own rising to eternal life is underwritten and guaranteed, as he goes on to demonstrate in the rest of that chapter.

Here are three points of evidence among many:

- a) The complete change in the Lord's followers. It would be impossible to overstate the distress, confusion, and fear of the whole group of followers at the time of the Lord's crucifixion. Yet less than 2 months later they are utterly transformed into a large number of powerful and joyful people, totally convinced of the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead and that they had seen Him. There was no grief, no wistful looking back at a more glorious past, no fear - just overwhelming authority and confident influence.
- b) The total absence of any tomb, shrine or place of pilgrimage that would be associated with Jesus' last resting place. If the resurrection had not taken place, someone among all His followers would have broken ranks and started a tradition of paying homage somewhere. The women had already started to do that on the first Easter Sunday morning before they knew He had risen.
- c) The huge number of eyewitnesses. This is the case Paul makes in 1 Corinthians 15 v 6 – 8. He is saying to his readers that they need not take his word for it; they could go and ask any one of about 500 people who were still living as he wrote. A small group could possibly be deceived, but such a large number would not all tell exactly the same story unless it was true.

The arguments that have been offered to get around the evidence can be easily dismissed. Here are three:

- a) The disciples stole the body (Matthew 28 v 12 – 15). The idea that the miserable and disorganised bunch of disillusioned followers were able to do such a thing is laughable, but even if they did, we are back at the point of dealing with the issue raised in b) above - what did they then do with the body? If they had, in fact, stolen the body to perpetuate a resurrection myth, would many of them then have been so willing to face death themselves for what they knew to be a deliberate lie?
- b) The authorities stole the body. However, both the Roman and the Jewish authorities were soon horrified at the rapid spread of Christianity, especially as it was based on belief in the Lord's resurrection. Had either party taken the body they would very soon have produced it to demonstrate the falseness of the Christian position. The absence of any such action by the authorities is very telling.
- c) Jesus did not actually die. This argument suggests that in some way He survived all the pain and torture and revived in the cool of the tomb. However, the nature of His injuries, both before and at the cross (He had lost so much blood already He could not even carry His cross), together with the soldier's spear producing blood and water (John 19 v 33 – 34), shows that the soldiers were right in their conclusion that He was already dead. Even if He were not, the lack of food, water, and air in the tomb for three whole days would have finished Him off.

Our eternal status is utterly central to our faith. The undeniable certainty of Jesus' resurrection to eternal life guarantees ours. For this, our own resurrection event, He must therefore return as He promised.