Hope Of The Empty Tomb

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday April 17th, 2022

Text: Luke 24:1-9

### Intro

1. On the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 Peter preached Jesus as:
   1. The Man (Acts 2:22-23)
   2. The Crucified (Acts 2:23)
   3. The Resurrected (Acts 2:24, 32)
   4. The Exalted (Acts 2:33)
   5. The Divine (Acts 2:34-36)

The death of Jesus is important *(Paul said, “of first importance” – I Cor. 15:3)* for His blood washes away sin *(I Cor. 1:23-24; 2:2; 15:3; Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5)*

But the importance didn’t end there! *(Many good men have died for good causes!)*

The resurrection of Jesus is ***central*** to Christianity!

* 1. Jesus said He would rise the 3rd day (If He didn’t, then He was a false prophet):
     1. *John. 2:19; Matthew 12:40; 27:63; Mark 8:31-32; Luke 24:7, 21*
  2. The apostle Paul confirmed it as central to our faith:
     1. I Corinthians 15:12-19: If Christ is not raised, our faith is in vain, we are still lost in our sins, and above all men are to be pitied!
     2. But Jesus has risen! (I Corinthians 15:20)

1. The resurrection is historical certainty – Luke 24:1-9; I Corinthians 15:1-4, 20
   1. The angels told the women at the tomb, “He Is Not Here, But He Has Risen!” (Lk. 24:6)
   2. Numerous theories have been provided to explain away His resurrection over the years:
      1. The wrong tomb theory: Disciples discovered wrong tomb empty.
      2. The stolen body: The disciples stole away His body.
      3. The swoon theory: He didn’t really die but was comatose, then awoke.
      4. The hallucination theory: His disciples didn’t really see Him alive.
   3. None of these explains why the tomb was empty (for even had the disciples gone to the wrong tomb, Joseph of Arimathea knew where it was – *Matthew 27:60: It was His!*).
2. The empty tomb stands as evidence that Jesus “is not here, but He has risen” and gives us hope!

#### Physical Evidence: Tomb Of Jesus

* 1. It was a solid rock tomb *(Mt. 27:60; Mk. 15:46; Lk. 23:53: Cut out of rock)*
     1. There was no possibility of entrance from outside (Mt. 27:60; Mk. 16:3-4).
     2. There was no possibility of escape from within (Jn. 19:39-40; *11:44: bound).*
  2. It was a new tomb (Jn. 19:41; Lk. 23:53)
     1. There was no mistaking the body:
        1. His was the only body laid in the tomb.
        2. *Lk. 23:53:* “where no one had ever lain.”
  3. It was a borrowed tomb (Mt. 27:57-60; Lk. 23:50-53)
     1. The tomb belonged to Joseph of Arimathea – It was his “new tomb.”
        1. Joseph was a rich, righteous man.
        2. It was donated for the burial of Jesus because it was nearby in a garden adjacent to Golgotha and they were pushed for time because of the Sabbath (Mk. 15:42-46; Jn. 19:41-42).
        3. The disciples knew where the tomb was, so the wrong tomb theory is dismissed!
           1. Mt. 27:61; Lk. 23:55: Mary Magdalene & the other Mary were there!
     2. Is. 53:9: *He was with a rich man in death.* Foretold by Isaiah and fulfilled by Joseph of Arimathea *(Mt. 27:57).*
  4. It was a guarded tomb (Mt. 27:65)
     1. A “guard” or “watch” of Roman soldiers consisted of four squads of four men working in shifts every four hours. *(Acts 12:4 for reference)*
     2. The placing of the watch further refutes the visiting of the wrong tomb.
        1. Not only did Joseph know where his tomb was, but also the Jewish & Roman authorities.
        2. The Jews were concerned over where Jesus was laid to ensure He gained no credibility with the people – they remembered Him saying He would rise up the 3rd day (Mt. 27:62-63).
        3. Pilate entrusted the securing of the tomb to the Jews themselves.
     3. These facts demonstrate no mischief was involved:
        1. Such a force of Roman soldiers could easily have repelled 11 men with two swords among them – Luke 22:38
        2. The soldiers reported what had happened and were bribed to lie and were told they would be kept out of trouble (Matthew 28:11-15).
           1. Roman soldiers could face death if their charge escaped. *(Acts 12:18-19: Herod executed soldiers watching over the escaped Peter; 16:27: Philippian Jailer was about to kill self)*
           2. This dispels the stolen body theory!
  5. It was a sealed tomb (Mt. 27:66)
     1. The tomb had a stone rolled in front of it *(Mt. 27:60; Mk. 16:3-4)*
        1. Dispels the swoon theory: A man flogged and crucified within an inch of his life won’t have the strength to roll an “extremely large” stone away and then fight off 4 Roman Legionnaires!
     2. The Guard sealed the tomb (Mt. 27:66)
        1. The seal was not intended to make it impregnable.
        2. The seal represented the authority & protection of Rome (police tape).
     3. It prevented the tomb from being opened without it being detected.
        1. Verifies Jesus was dead in the tomb – Roman stamp of approval.
        2. Discouraged a fraudulent removal of body.
  6. It was an inspected tomb (Mk. 15:47; Lk. 23:55-56)
     1. The tomb location, situation, and condition were well known.
        1. Joseph of Arimathea had cut it out of rock himself *(Mt. 27:60).*
        2. Nicodemus, the women & John had been to the tomb the night He was laid in it *(Mt. 27:61; Lk. 23:55; Jn. 19:35-42).*
        3. The Pharisees and Sadducees knew where the tomb was *(Mt. 27:66).*
        4. The Roman guard knew where it was *(Mt. 28:13).*
        5. Mary, Peter, and John were all there at same tomb on Sunday morning *(John 20:2-8).*
  7. It was an empty tomb (Luke 24:1-3)
     1. All parties to the burial of Jesus agree that He was dead *(Mk. 15:42-47; Jn. 19:31-42).*
        1. The Jews wanted to make sure they were dead – *Jn. 19:31-33*
     2. All parties to the burial of Jesus agree that His body was in the tomb *(Mt. 27:63-64; 27:66; Mk. 15:45-47).*
        1. The Jews wanted to make sure He was sealed up in it – Mt. 27:62-66
     3. All parties to the burial of Jesus agree that the tomb was empty on Sunday morning *(Mt. 28:9, 11-15; Jn. 20:2-8) –* Lk. 24:5-6 (Mt. 28:6, 9)
        1. The Jews tried to make sure it was kept a secret – *Mt. 28:11-15*
  8. The well-known tomb was verified as empty on the third day!

#### Eyewitness Testimony

* 1. The appearances of Jesus to individuals:
     1. Mary Magdalene – *Mk. 16:9-11; Jn. 20:11-18*
     2. Peter – *Lk. 24:34; I Cor. 15:5*
     3. James, the Lord’s brother – *I Cor. 15:7*
     4. Saul (Paul) of Tarsus – *Acts 9:1-9; I Cor. 15:8*
  2. The appearances of Jesus to small groups:
     1. The women – *Mt. 28:9*
     2. The two on the road to Emmaus – *Mk. 16:12-13; Lk. 24:33-35*
     3. The ten apostles (missing Thomas) – *Jn. 20:19-23*
     4. The eleven apostles (including Thomas) – *Jn. 20:24-29*
     5. The seven disciples in Galilee – *Jn. 21:1-14*
     6. The eleven apostles on Mt. of Olives – *Acts 1:4-13; I Cor. 15:7*
  3. The appearance of Jesus to over five hundred brethren at one time:
     1. I Cor. 15:6: “He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time.”
     2. Many of them were still alive and could verify the info at that time!
     3. Dispels the hallucination theory.
     4. One man’s testimony may be rejected.
     5. A small group could even conspire together, or be influenced in a way, so could be rejected.
     6. A large group won’t all see the same hallucination!
  4. Jesus was seen ALIVE by multitudes after His resurrection!

#### Are The Witnesses Credible?

* 1. What possible motive would they have to lie? *(I Jn. 1:1-4; II Pet. 1:12, 15-16)*
     1. Their homes and property were seized – Heb. 10:34
     2. Their families were tortured and put to death *(Letter from Gov. Pliny the Younger to Emperor Trajan in A.D. 112 –* [*http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/texts/pliny.html*](http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/texts/pliny.html)*)*
     3. They often lost their lives
     4. Consider Paul’s trials – *II Cor. 11:21-33*
  2. It could have been put to rest if someone produced the body of Christ!
     1. If the disciples stole the body, why suffer death and torture for a lie?
     2. If Jews stole body, why let Christianity spread?
     3. If Romans stole body, why persecute people believing a lie?
  3. There wasn’t a body because the tomb was empty!

## Conclusion

1. Every first day of the week Christians remember Jesus Who was fully God (Philippians 2:6) and fully man (Philippians 2:7-8), Who died, was buried, and ROSE the 3rd day according to the Scriptures (I Corinthians 15:3-4), and ascended to Heaven to return again one day (Acts 1:9-11).
   1. Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane alone. His tears, sweat, and agony were for us.
   2. Jesus stood condemned before Pilate alone. His blood and pain were for us!
   3. Jesus was crucified between two thieves and had a crowd standing all around made up of friends and enemies alike, and yet He felt all alone. His blood, pain, humiliation, and death were for us!
2. We remember Jesus the Exalted! (Philippians 2:9-11; Acts 2:33)
   1. Jesus rose from the dead and conquered death for us!
   2. He promises to return and bring the faithful to ever be with Him!
3. There is hope in the empty tomb: Jesus is risen and will one day return!
   1. He will bring reward and judgment: you must obey the gospel – *II Thess. 1:7-9*
   2. *Are you ready?*
4. Do you have the hope of the empty tomb?
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized into His name!
6. If a Christian in error, don’t wait till it’s eternally too late. Repent and be renewed!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!