

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION:

The existence of New Testament itself is evidence, since all of it was written within 70 years of event, and it includes the testimony of numerous eyewitnesses to the ministry of Jesus and his post-resurrection appearances.

So is the existence of Christianity, which stakes its whole validity on his resurrection, whose influence has changed countless lives, the calendar of most of the world and become the world's largest and most widespread religion.

If Jesus' resurrection never happened, his opponents had an excellent opportunity to quash the resurrection story at its beginning. Jesus' burial was in the major city of Judaism, and the authorities were opposed to the movement from the first.

The early Xn leaders who claimed to have seen the resurrected Jesus were willing to die rather than give up their testimony, though they gained nothing in this life by their obstinacy.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES:

Fraud Theory: Jesus' disciples stole the body from the tomb. Earliest competing view of resurrection, though NT says soldiers bribed to say this. **Response:** Not very satisfactory at the time, as the presence of guards at the tomb was embarrassing. Disciples seem far too scared to try anything of this sort. Why die for a fraud? What did the disciples have to gain?

Coma Theory: Jesus went into coma on cross, which was mistaken for death. He revived later in the tomb, got out and appeared to disciples. **Response:** Problem of walking on nail-pierced feet; of guards; of impression this would give disciples; especially of physical effects of losing consciousness on cross & being asphyxiated.

Hallucination Theory: Jesus died on cross, but disciples later had (grief-induced) hallucinations that he alive. **Response:** Problem of empty tomb; of the nature of hallucination vs. NT appearance accounts; of being seen by unbeliever (James) and opponent (Paul).

CONCLUSIONS

There is excellent historical evidence for the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, as good as for any miracle in history, and even for any event in ancient history.

There is only so much that historical evidence can do. People can doubt anything they want from history (particularly after centuries) and no eyewitnesses can contradict them, at