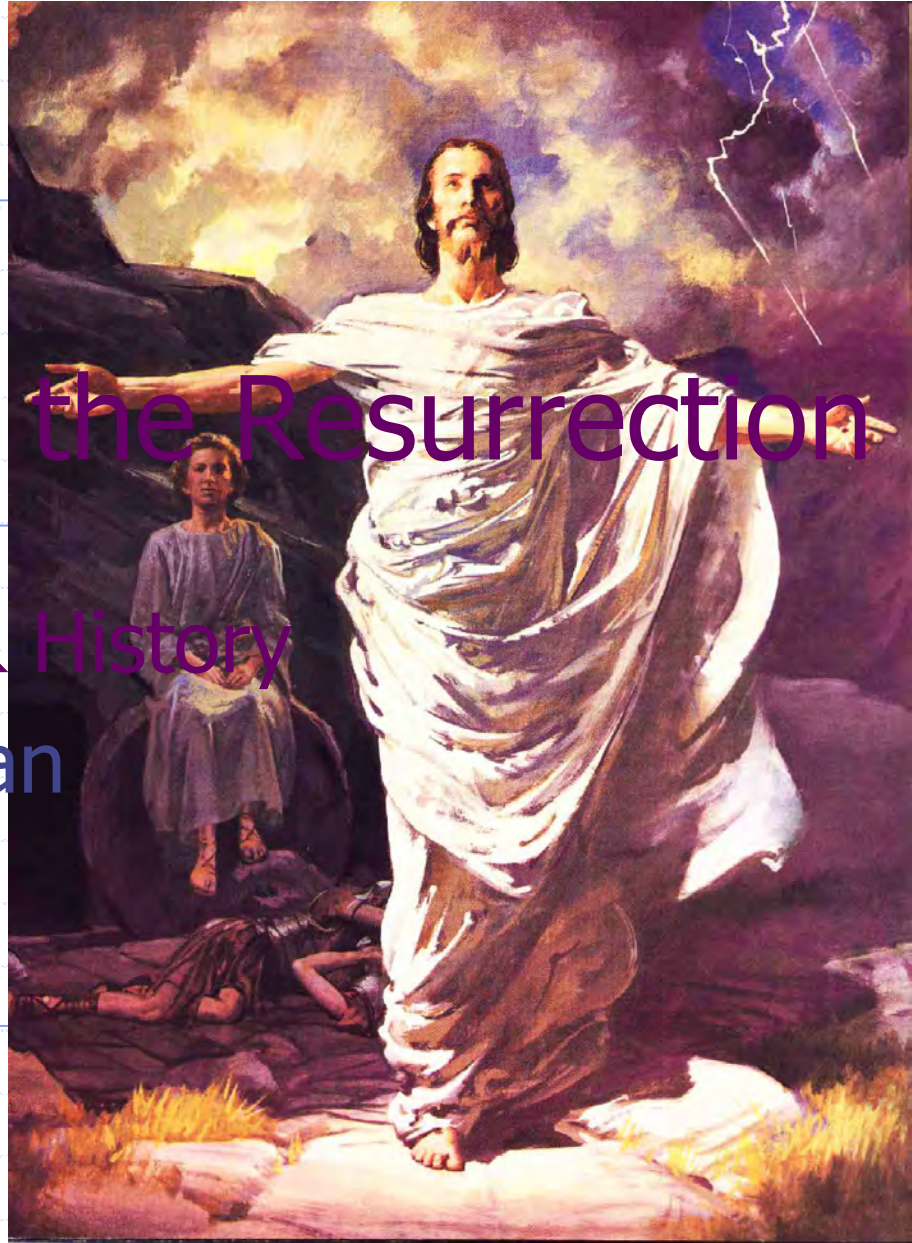


Evidence for the Resurrection

From Prophecy & History

Robert C. Newman



The Importance of Jesus' Resurrection

- ◆ Validates Jesus' claims vs charge for which he was executed
- ◆ Indicates God accepted Jesus' sacrifice
- ◆ Points to a life beyond this one
- ◆ Reminds us that history is controlled by God



Alternative Theories

- ◆ There have been several theories proposed over the centuries to avoid Jesus' resurrection:
 - Stolen Body Theory
 - Coma Theory
 - Hallucination Theory
- ◆ Let's look at each of these first.

Stolen Body Theory

- ◆ The oldest alternative: disciples stole the body
- ◆ Earliest version has soldiers testifying to events which happened while they were asleep!
- ◆ Theory cannot explain:
 - Tactics of apostles
 - Career of Paul
 - Content of New Testament



How is that?

◆ Tactics of the apostles

- Began proclamation right in Jerusalem
- Gave their lives for truth of their testimony
- Did not use force to advance their views

◆ Career of Paul

- Changed sides: powerful, wealthy → weak, poor
- Continually risked life to proclaim message

◆ Content of the New Testament

- Emphasis on truth-telling, multiple witnesses
- Readers invited to check for themselves

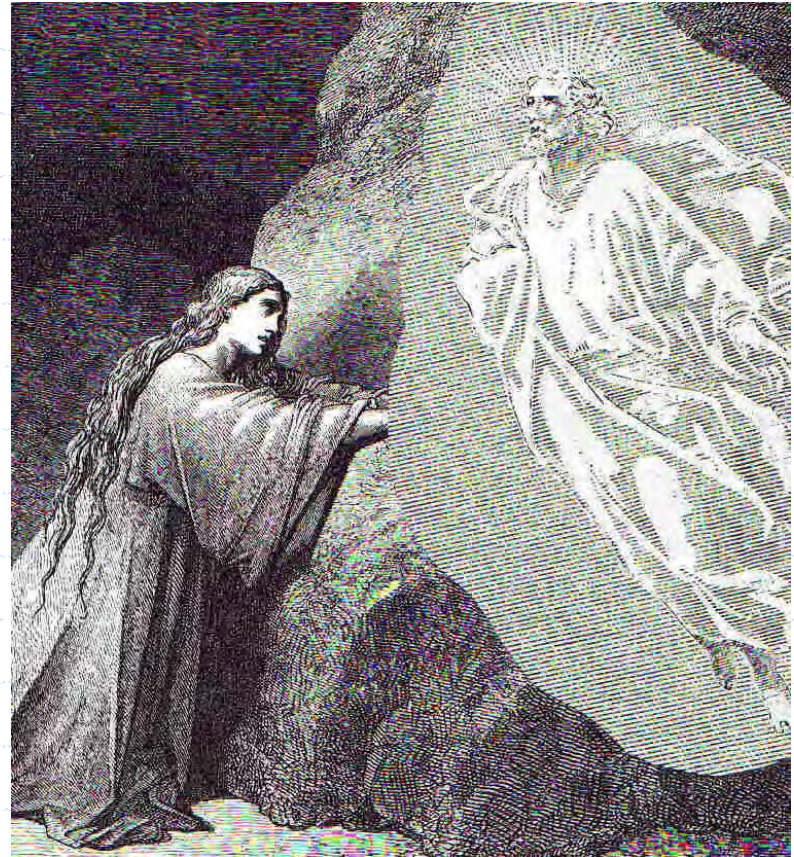
Coma Theory

- ◆ Jesus, unconscious, revives in tomb.
- ◆ But:
 - How get out of tomb?
 - How convince disciples he'd conquered death?
- ◆ Fatal problem is physiology of crucifixion: person will strangle in coma.



Hallucination Theory

- ◆ Women go to wrong tomb, mistake gardener for Jesus, begin to have hallucinations.
- ◆ But:
 - How mistake tomb in broad daylight?
 - How avoid authorities producing body?
- ◆ Hallucinations do not produce hour-long, multiple-sense, multiple-witness appearances.



Evidence for Jesus' Resurrection

◆ From History:

- Historical evidence points strongly to Jesus' resurrection as an event which really happened.
- Alternative explanations must do funny things with the data.

◆ From Prophecy:

- Old Testament passages predict something of this sort for the Messiah.
- These passages were written centuries in advance.

Evidence from History

- ◆ We can't go back in time to see what really happened, but we do have several significant lines of evidence:
 - Existence of the Church
 - Existence of the New Testament
 - Testimony of the New Testament



Existence of the Church

- ◆ Lots of religions have arisen with false beliefs.
- ◆ But:
 - Jesus' followers were completely demoralized by his death.
 - Within a short time they were boldly proclaiming his resurrection in the city where he was killed.
 - Most of the apostles died as martyrs, not willing to retract their claims to have seen the risen Jesus.
 - The church expanded to fill the Roman Empire without use of military evangelism.

Existence of the New Testament

- ◆ Several religions have holy books...
- ◆ But:
 - The NT records spectacular events and comes from within a century of the events it records.
 - External evidence points to two apostles & two associates as authors of the Gospels, and to a former enemy as author of most of the NT letters.
 - The uniform testimony of the NT is to multiple eyewitnesses, extended appearances, multiple senses.
 - The evidence for the reliability of the NT is as good as for any ancient history.

Testimony of the New Testament

- ◆ We have accounts of post-resurrection appearances in six NT books:
 - 1 Corinthians 15:1-9
 - Mark 16:1-8 (9-20)
 - Matthew 28
 - Luke 24
 - John 20-21
 - Acts 1, 9, 22, 26

Questions to Consider

- ◆ How many post-resurrection appearances?
- ◆ How long did they last?
- ◆ When did they occur?
- ◆ Where did they occur?
- ◆ What form did Jesus take?
- ◆ To whom did he appear?
- ◆ What was the chronological order?

Suggested Scenario

◆ Book/chap	1	Cor15	Mk16	Mt28	Lk24	Ac1	Jn20
◆ Women				9			
◆ Mary M.			9				11-17
◆ Peter	5				34		
◆ 2 on Road			12		13-31		
◆ 10 Apostles	5?				36-48		19-23
◆ 11 Apostles	5?		14?				26-29

Suggested Scenario

◆ Book/chap	1	Cor15	Mk16	Mt28	Lk24	Ac1	Jn21
◆ 7 at Sea							1-22
◆ 11 on Mt		6?		16			
◆ James		7					
◆ Ap @ meal		7?	14?			4-5	
◆ Ap @ ascension		7?	14?		49-51	6-8	
◆ Paul @ Damasc		8					

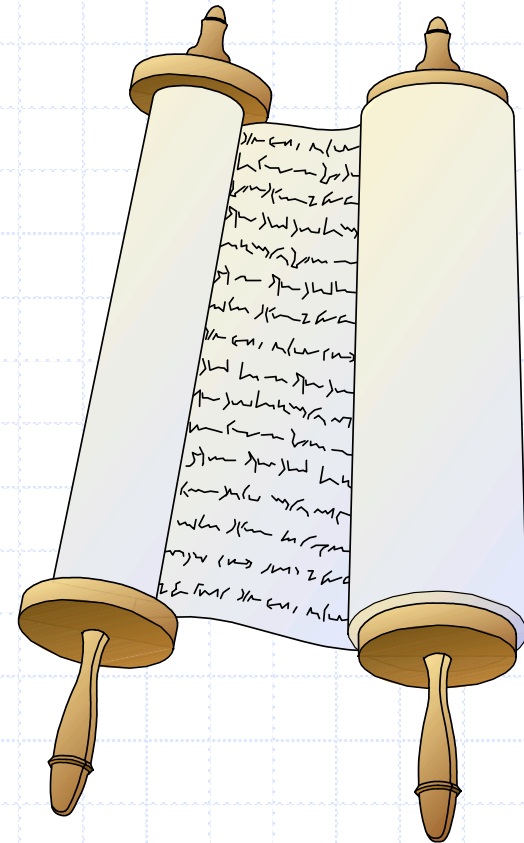
Conclusions on NT Accounts

- ◆ The accounts are harmonizable.
- ◆ They don't look like they were contrived to fit.
- ◆ They indicate 11-13 recorded appearances.
- ◆ They occur from the 3rd day to the 40th, plus the later appearances to Paul.
- ◆ The longer appearances take on the order of an hour each.

Evidence from Prophecy

◆ Consider the three major OT passages which point to the resurrection of the Messiah:

- Psalm 16
- Psalm 22
- Isaiah 53



Text of Psalm 16

I have set the LORD always before me.
Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Content of Psalm 16

- ◆ Speaker does not fear being shaken.
 - God is with him.
- ◆ His body is safe.
 - It will not be abandoned to the grave.
 - It will not see decay.
- ◆ Instead he will experience:
 - Life
 - Joy of God's presence
 - Eternal pleasures

Text of Psalm 22

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?... All who see me mock me, they hurl insults, shaking their heads.... You lay me in the dust of death.... Dogs have surrounded me, a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet.... They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.... I will declare your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise you.... The poor will eat and be satisfied.... All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD.... Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn – for he has done it.

Content of Psalm 22

- ◆ Speaker is:
 - Abandoned by God
 - Laid in dust of death
- ◆ Opponents (mockers, dogs) surround him:
 - Piercing his hands and feet
 - Casting lots for his clothing
- ◆ Speaker will be rescued, resulting in:
 - Help for poor
 - Message for whole world & future generations

Isaiah 52:13-53:2

See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. Just as there were many who were appalled at him – his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness – so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand. Who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? He grew up before him like a tender shoot, like a root out of dry ground.

Content of Isa 52:13-53:2

- ◆ God's servant will be exalted.
- ◆ Many were appalled at his disfiguration.
- ◆ He will sprinkle many nations.
- ◆ Kings will shut their mouths when they understand.
- ◆ This message will be hard to believe.

Isaiah 53:2-5

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Content of Isa 53:2-5

- ◆ God's servant not majestic:
 - Despised and rejected
 - Familiar with suffering
- ◆ We thought God had struck him.
- ◆ But instead:
 - He carried our sorrows.
 - He was pierced for our transgressions.
 - His punishment brought us peace.

Isaiah 53:6-9

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of my people he was stricken. He was assigned a grave with wicked men, yet he was with a rich man in his death, because he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

Content of Isa 53:6-9

- ◆ We were straying, but God put our sin on His servant.
- ◆ He was unusually silent when suffering.
- ◆ He was taken away by oppression & judgment.
- ◆ Though assigned a grave with wicked men, he was with a rich man in his death.

Isaiah 53:10-12

Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by knowledge of him my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Content of Isa 53:10-12

- ◆ God makes him a guilt offering.
- ◆ But he will live again:
 - See his offspring
 - Prolong his days
 - See the light (of life)
- ◆ Many will be justified by knowing him.
- ◆ He will be counted great & strong because:
 - He died while considered a sinner.
 - But actually he bore the sins of others.

Summary on Prophecy

◆ Psalm 16

- God will not abandon his Holy One to the grave, nor let him see decay.

◆ Psalm 22

- He is pierced in hands & feet, surrounded by enemies, laid in dust of death, clothes gambled away
- He is rescued & this becomes worldwide news down through the generations

◆ Isaiah 53

- Unbelievable report of servant's exaltation
- Despised by Israel, suffers as a sin offering
- Then he will see his offspring, prolong his days.

Conclusions on Resurrection

- ◆ Evidence for resurrection of Jesus is about as good as one could get for a controversial event in history.
- ◆ Having it occur in a time of more advanced technology would not avoid objections.
- ◆ Knowing God & finding out what he is like is important! We dare not ignore it.



The Importance of Jesus' Resurrection

- ◆ Validates Jesus' claims vs charge for which he was executed
- ◆ Indicates God accepted Jesus' sacrifice
- ◆ Points to a life beyond this one
- ◆ Reminds us that history is controlled by God



The End

... of this talk

But the beginning of a
new life...

... if you put your trust
in Jesus!

