Historical Verifications of the Resurrection of Jesus

Houses of Light Church • April 8 y 9, 2023 • Pastor Netz Gómez

Acts 10:39-41

"And we apostles are witnesses of all he did throughout Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a cross, 40 but God raised him to life on the third day. Then God allowed him to appear, 41 not to the general public, but to us whom God had chosen in advance to be his witnesses. We were those who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead."

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Currently in the world there is a lot of skepticism, many are abandoning their religious beliefs to simply get carried away by the ideas that are in vogue which are leading to moral and social chaos. Precisely in this context, while we celebrate Holy Week and more specifically the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, I want to talk about a type of proof that is used to verify that an event was real and it is historical proof, that is, that what happened historically proves that something really took place.

B. In the case of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, there are many things that people can question, stating that it is something impossible, **but the historical evidence is undeniable and should lead us to very decisive conclusions.**

II. THE AFFIRMATIONS OF JESUS HIMSELF

A. Christ predicted his resurrection unequivocally and directly when his disciples still could not even comprehend either:

Matt. 16:21 ***"From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."***

Matt. 17:9 ***"And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead."***

Matt. 17:23 ***"and they will kill him*** *[Jesus]****, and he will be raised on the third day." And they were greatly distressed."***

Matt. 20:19 ***"and deliver him*** *[Jesus]* ***over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day."***

B. That Jesus said that he would go up to Jerusalem to die is not that remarkable, even though all the details he gave regarding that death, weeks and months before he died, together form a prophetic phenomenon. But when he said that he would rise again from the dead on the third day after he was crucified, he said something only a fool would dare say, if he expected the devotion of his disciples to persist, unless he was sure that would resurrect **No founder of any known world religion of men ever dared to say such a thing.**

C. **Christ openly declared that He was the Son of God, His resurrection from the dead was God's seal to the truth of that declaration.** If He had

continued under the power of death, it would have been an indication that God disapproved of the claim He had made to be His Son.

III. THE HISTORICAL TEST: THE BEFORE AND AFTER THE RESURRECTION IN THE LIFE OF THE APOSTLES

A. **What happened to the followers of Jesus and to Christianity in the first century has only one logical explanation: a risen Savior.** The same disciples did not believe that Jesus was resurrected, He himself had to convince them that he had risen.

Mk. 16:11-13 *"But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it. 12 After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. 13 And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them."*

Lk. 24:36-43 *"As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" 37 But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. 38 And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." 40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. 41 And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate before them."*

B. **How could it be explained that Peter denied Jesus but after His death stood up to preach about Jesus with all courage if Jesus did not rise? What produced the change in Pedro?**

C. **In fact, Peter's first preaching on the day of Pentecost is totally based on the resurrection. Peter affirms that it was prophetically anticipated.**

Acts. 2:22-24 y 32-33 *"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— 23 this Jesus,[c] delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. 24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it... 32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing."*

D. **The only explanation** for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the courage and power it brought to these men who had been fearful and doubting before this **is the resurrection of Jesus.**

E. Professor Leaney in his book: Vindications: "**Essays on the Historical Basis of the Christian Faith**" states: *"The New Testament itself does not allow at all the possibility of putting the matter another way: Jesus was crucified and buried. His followers were greatly dejected. Very shortly thereafter they were extremely triumphant and manifested such confidence that it seemed to*

come from a sustained life of devotion... If we were to ask them and they would answer us through the power of their writings, what caused this change, their answer... would be, "Jesus, the one who was dead, appeared to several of us alive after his death and the rest of us believed their testimony."

F. **The risen Lord was certainly what made these men and women believe and stand firm in a society where everyone was against them, both the political and religious system persecuted them to death.** How can one explain the change from unbelieving men to people who courageously gave their lives for Jesus unless He had risen?

Acts. 4:13 ***"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus."***

Acts. 4:31 ***"And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness."***

G. **Without the resurrection the testimony of the apostles would have no foundation.** That Christ had risen was so certain to the apostles and first disciples because they themselves had seen both death and resurrection.

Acts. 3:15 ***"and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses!"***

H. The resurrection intimately penetrated the lives of first-century Christians; the fact that it appears in their tombs, in the drawings found on the walls of the catacombs; it was an essential part of the hymns; and it became one of the most vital themes of the great apologetic writings of the first four centuries. It even became part of the Nicene creed.

I. If there had not been a resurrection, Christianity would not have been able to sustain itself because, unlike the Islamism that was imposed, Christianity presents itself more as an invitation from God (**Jn. 3:16**).

J. Wilbur M. Smith noted scholar and teacher in his article "Scientists and the Resurrection" says: "*The weapon that destroys rational confidence in the historical record of this momentous and pre-announced event has not yet been and never will be forged... .* ***The resurrection of Christ is the true pillar of the Christian faith. This is the doctrine that in the first century transformed the world, that elevated Christianity pre-eminently over Judaism, and over the pagan religions of the Mediterranean world. If this be accepted, all that is vital and characteristic in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ must likewise be admitted."***

IV. THE CURRENT EVIDENCE AND THE INVITATION TO YOU

A. There are many more historical proofs of the resurrection, such as the dramatic conversion of Saul, the persecuted of the church, to Paul, who gave his life for Jesus.

Gal. 1:23-24 ***"All they knew was that people were saying, "The one who used to persecute us is now preaching the very faith he tried to destroy!" 24 And they praised God because of me."***

B. Jesus continues to break into the midst of chaos and hopelessness; just as He did in the first century He continues to do so today because He lives and acts with His power and love in people like you and me.

C. This is something you too can experience today. It is simply a step of faith; recognize that you are a sinner and that without Jesus you are exposed to the judgment of God but if today you repent of your sins and believe in the gospel that is the good news of salvation that Christ died in your place to save you, that is, to free yourself from condemnation and give you eternal life together with Christ.

1 Pet. 1:21 *"who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."*

1 Pet. 3:21b-22a *"It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him."*

D. It begins with a prayer of faith and continues for all eternity with Christ.

Rom 10:8-10 *"The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart. And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: 9 If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved."*

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The course: "Overcoming Codependency" already started this Friday but you can still register at www.housesoflight.org
2. HOLY58 Youth Service this Wednesday, April 12 at 7:00 p.m.
3. Our Young Adult Set (YAS) will have a time to impart the vision and fundamentals of our community on Saturday, April 15 at 9:00 a.m. Please register through the QR code that appears on the screens.
4. This Wednesday, April 19 at 6:30 p.m. we invite the entire church to a special dinner to join in the vision of our House of Prayer as we continue to host His presence. Space is limited, please register at www.nhop.la or at the table outside.