

2-2018

False Views in Regard to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Harold Willmington

Liberty University, hwillmington@liberty.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second_person



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "False Views in Regard to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ" (2018). *The Second Person File*. 183.

https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second_person/183

This The Final Days of Jesus Christ's Ministry is brought to you for free and open access by the Theological Studies at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Second Person File by an authorized administrator of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu.

FALSE VIEWS IN REGARD TO THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

“Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain” (1 Cor. 15:12-14).

“And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter” (Acts 17:32).

“But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some” (2 Tim. 2:16-18).

There is perhaps no other single event related to the earthly work of Christ that is so hated, feared, and opposed by Satan than the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ! Thus, it is not in the least surprising to see the rise of many false views regarding the true meaning of the empty tomb.

Here are some of these erroneous theories:

- **The wrong tomb theory**

A. Dan Story writes:

According to this theory, during the dingy morning hours when the women returned to Jesus' tomb to complete the burial procedures, they simply made a mistake. They went to the wrong tomb, found it empty, and concluded Jesus had risen from the grave. (*Defending Your Faith*, Thomas Nelson, p. 97)

B. Ron Rhodes adds:

To believe in this theory, we'd have to conclude that the women went to the wrong tomb, that Peter and John ran to the wrong tomb, that the Jews then went to the wrong tomb, followed by the Jewish Sanhedrin and the Romans who went to the wrong tomb. We'd also have to say that Joseph of Arimathea, the *owner* of the tomb, also went to the wrong tomb. As well, the angel from heaven appeared at the wrong tomb.

I don't think so. (*The Complete Book of Bible Answers*, Harvest House, Eugene, Oregon, p. 139)

- **The Fraud Theory**

Self-proclaimed Jewish scholar Hugh Schonfield has advocated this bizarre theory in his highly controversial book, *The Passover Plot*.

Schonfield argued that Jesus conspired with Joseph of Arimathea, Lazarus, and an anonymous young man to convince His disciples that He was the Messiah. He allegedly manipulated events to make it appear that He was the fulfillment of numerous prophecies. Regarding the resurrection, Jesus allegedly took some drugs and feigned death, but was revived later. Unfortunately, the crucifixion wounds

ultimately proved fatal and He died. The plotters then stole and disposed of Jesus' body, and the appearances of Christ were simply a case of mistaken identity.

This theory is full of holes. First, Christ was of the highest moral character in the way He lived His life and in His teachings. It breaches all credulity to say that Jesus was deceitful and sought to fool people into believing He was the Messiah.

Moreover, there are many prophecies fulfilled in the person of Jesus that He couldn't have conspired to fulfill, such as His birthplace (Micah 5:2), being born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14), and the identity of His forerunner, John the Baptist (Malachi 3:1).

It is also highly unlikely that the plotters could have stolen Jesus' dead body in order to dispose of it. The tomb had a huge stone (weighing several tons) blocking it, it had a seal of the Roman government, and it was guarded by Roman guards trained in the art of defense and killing. (Ibid, pp. 136, 137).

Thus, the only fraud here is on the part of Mr. Schonfield!

- **The Swoon Theory**

This interesting view says Jesus did not die on the cross but merely fainted from loss of blood and exhaustion.

Later, He was revived by the coolness of the tomb and eventually made His way out.

In the article "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ" the Journal of the American Medical Society concluded: "Clearly, the weight of historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to His side was inflicted and supports the traditional view that the spear, thrust between His right ribs, probably perforated not only the right lung but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured His death. Accordingly, interpretations based on the assumption that Jesus did not die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge." (March 21, 1986, p. 1463). (*When Skeptics Ask*, Victor Books, pp. 120-123)

- **The Stolen Body Theory**

This view says one of three groups—the Pharisees, the Romans, or Jesus's disciples—may have removed Jesus's body. Again, there is not one shred of evidence to support this. One would have to believe the possession of a dead and decaying body would transform His followers from fearful cowards to fearless champions!

- **The Heart Theory**

Here we are to believe that Jesus was only resurrected in the heart of His friends. The trouble with this however is that none of those friends actually believed He would literally rise from the dead until they saw Him with their own eyes and heard His words with their own ears!

But, if this theory be true, then Jesus' resurrection could simply be classified along with the resurrection of Buddha, Confucius, etc., whose memories are even today revered in the hearts of their followers!

- **The Vision Theory**

This says, in essence, that the early disciples were guilty of using some kind of primitive LSD. If this be true, then the practice was certainly widespread, for on one occasion alone over 500 claimed to have seen Him (1 Cor. 15:6)!

Furthermore, this vision was indeed a remarkable one, of its own, being able to be seen, heard, felt, and to consume food and water! Quite a feat for a lowly vision.