



THE MAN WHO LIVED

Fans of the fictional Harry Potter know that, after being attacked as a baby by the Dark Lord, he was known as “the boy who lived”. With all due respect to the magical writing skill of J.K. Rowling, there is a far more important “Man Who Lived”—a real man who died and rose again after three days in the grave.

Beginning with Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem on what we call Palm Sunday, this article will also discuss his death and the significance of his Resurrection. For a more detailed discussion of Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection, see the Bible Study: “Why was Jesus Crucified?” and the Fringe File: “The Shroud of Turin”.

PALM SUNDAY AND THE TIMING OF THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Palm Sunday is noted as the Sunday before the Resurrection, commemorating the time that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. It’s called “triumphal” because the people were wildly exuberant, hailing him as a king and waving palm branches, shouting, “Hosanna, hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” Ironically, only days later they would be either cursing him or failing to come to his aid when the Sanhedrin decided to kill him. This was due to a lack of understanding on the part of the people; they expected him to be a “messiah” who would save them from Roman domination, not a “Messiah” who would save them from their sins.

Jesus orchestrated both of these events (the triumphal entry and the uproar that led to the crucifixion). When Jesus entered Jerusalem that day, he was deliberately fulfilling a prediction made hundreds of years before by the prophet, Zechariah: **Rejoice, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey...** (Zechariah 9:9). *(In that time period, kings rode on donkeys and soldiers rode on horses.)*

This was the only time Jesus had permitted himself to be called a king or treated as a king. Anytime before that would have been premature. When the Pharisees criticized him for allowing the people to praise him this way, he answered: **“I tell you, if these (people) were silent, the very stones would cry out.”** (Luke 19:40).

These were events that must lead up to the crucifixion, and when he deliberately ran the moneychangers out of the Temple and outraged the Sanhedrin, he sealed his fate. It was the pre-ordained time for these things to take place and he, not the Sanhedrin, was in control.

Speaking of timing, there is another interesting component of the triumphal entry. By using mathematics and [Daniel 9:24-27](#), Bible scholars have ascertained that there were to be 173,880 days between the giving of this prophecy concerning the Messiah, and the time the Messiah entered Jerusalem as King. According to their conclusions, this is exactly the number of days between the prophecy and Jesus’ triumphal entry. For a description of their precise calculations, see this link: [The Unexpected King: A Palm Sunday Surprise](#).

DEATH BY CRUCIFIXION

This subject was fully addressed in the article, “Why Was Jesus Crucified?” Instead of detailing the terrible aspects of that type of execution here, I would just like to emphasize the fact of his death. There are some bizarre theories about how he may have survived the cross (he only fainted and was later resuscitated; the Romans somehow confused Simon of Cyrene with Jesus of Nazareth and Simon was crucified instead of Jesus), and there are equally bizarre theories about the empty tomb (his body was removed or “stolen” and hidden).

Jesus had endured a severe scourging prior to his conviction which would have left any man at least half dead. He had lost so much blood and was so physically depleted that he had to have assistance (Simon of Cyrene) in carrying the heavy, wooden beam of a cross to the place of execution. He was then nailed by his hands and feet to the upright cross where he hung for about six hours. In order to make sure he was dead, a Roman soldier thrust a javelin or spear into his side.

Jesus' body was placed in a tomb which was sealed shut by the Roman government, where it remained for three days. These events are fully documented in the Bible, and Jesus' death by crucifixion has also been verified by non-Christian writers and historians of that time period.

EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION

- I. Besides his immediate friends and followers, Jesus appeared to over five hundred people after his death ([I Cor. 15:6](#)). Although he still bore the scars of his crucifixion, he was not staggering or crawling as he would have been after sustaining such wounds and then being resuscitated rather than resurrected. He even ate and drank in his resurrected body.
- II. The disciples went from hiding in fear of the Romans and Jewish officials to boldly proclaiming Jesus' resurrection. Would they have done so if they had any doubt that he had risen? If it was a lie, what did they have to gain? Don't most people lie to get out of trouble, not to get into it?
- III. Persecution of these men and women who believed in the resurrection. They were beaten and stoned to death; eventually they were being burned alive, thrown to the lions and other wild beasts, disemboweled, and tortured in whatever ways evil men could conceive. Instead of dying out, Christianity flourished.
- IV. The conversion of skeptics such as Saul of Tarsus, a zealous Pharisee who arrested and killed Christians and later became their greatest emissary, Paul (his Roman name).
- V. The fact that Jesus' tomb was found empty and no one could produce the body. The tomb had been sealed and guarded by the Romans who said they had fallen asleep, although the penalty for sleeping on duty was death.

Many atheists have taken upon themselves the goal of proving Jesus' resurrection to be false, and many ended up becoming Christians. Sir Lionel Luckhoo, a famed murder trial lawyer, has stated: "The evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is so overwhelming that it compels acceptance by proof which leaves absolutely no room for doubt."

And finally, the apostle John affirms Jesus' resurrection by saying: ***"This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true. Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written."*** (John 21:24-25).

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION

“Theologically, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is ‘the cornerstone of Christian doctrine’ (R.A. Torrey, *The Certainty and Importance of the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead*, Bible Institute of Los Angeles, 1917). “...it is mentioned 104 times or more in the New Testament and was the most prominent and cardinal point in the apostolic testimony.” (Custance: Doorway Papers).

“A Messiah who crept out of his grave, took refuge in retirement, and afterwards died from exhaustion, was not one who could satisfy the requirements of a community which had been crushed by his crucifixion...Yet it is the most certain of historical facts that the Christian community commenced a new life immediately ... Nothing but a resurrection could have served the purpose.” (C.A. Row, *The Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead*, Religious Tract Society, London, 1883.)

The apostle Peter preached at Pentecost: “***This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him... God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.***” (Acts 2:23-24, 32).

Peter’s death is not recorded in the Bible, but early Christian tradition holds that he was crucified upside down for his faith. Likewise, Paul is said to have been beheaded for his belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. All of the original apostles except possibly John died martyr’s deaths according to early church writings.

CONCLUSION

Jesus, by His own consent, was attacked by the original Dark Lord, Satan, and rose victorious over him. Satan and his entities obviously thought that by killing the anointed Savior of the world, they had thwarted God’s plan for redeeming mankind and returning them to a right relationship with Him in Heaven (also known as New Jerusalem, the new Eden, the new earth, etc.) Satan, in his pride, underestimated God’s ability to bring to completion any promise and plan of His Own making.

These evil beings should have known better, but God (perhaps) supernaturally withheld from them the foreknowledge of the Resurrection. *That changed everything!*

Paul says in I Corinthians 15:17: **“If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins.”** Bible scholar R.A. Torrey echoes this when he says: “The crucifixion loses its meaning without the resurrection. Without the resurrection, the death of Christ was only the heroic death of a noble martyr. With the resurrection, it is the atoning death of the Son of God.”

Do you believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

OTHER SOURCES AND RELATED WEBSITES:

[The Scarlet Thread: An Easter Devotional](#)

[The Case for Christ](#)

[Why Should I Believe in Christ's Resurrection?](#)

[Doorway Papers: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ](#)

[The Crucifixion of Jesus. Wikipedia](#)

[Jesus Christ: Crucifixion](#)

[Crucifixion and Shroud Studies: Medical Aspects of the Crucifixion](#)

PROPHETIC BIBLE VERSES (not an exhaustive listing):

[Betrayal](#)

[Messianic Psalms with Commentary](#)

[Suffering Savior](#)

RESURRECTION VERSES

[Jesus' Burial, Resurrection and Appearances after Resurrection](#) Chapters 8 and 9

See the related Fringe File: *What is Easter?*