

Did Jesus REALLY rise from the dead?

(A Reading Comprehension Exercise)

The Bible tells us that Jesus lived on earth and died to pay for our sins. But how can we know if the story is really true? Here is some of the evidence that it is a true story:



- Many history writers, such as Josephus, Tacitus the Roman, and Pliny write about Jesus.
- Jesus' tomb is empty. No one has ever found His dead body.
- Old Testament prophecies gave *details* about Jesus which really did happen. For instance, 700 years before Jesus lived, Isaiah wrote that He would be buried in a rich man's grave (Isaiah 53:9, "He had done no wrong, and He never deceived anyone. But He was buried like a criminal; He was put in a rich man's grave.")
- Jesus also prophesied about his own death. Before he died, Jesus said, "We're going up to Jerusalem, where the Son of Man will be betrayed to the leading priests and the teachers of religious law. They will sentence him to die. Then they will hand him over to the Romans to be mocked, flogged with a whip, and crucified. But on the third day he will be raised from the dead." (Matthew 20:18-19) This is what really happened several days later.
- Over five hundred people claimed to have seen Jesus after He rose from the dead. Since Jesus had just been killed for saying He was God, what would give this many people the courage to stand against the religious leaders?
- Jesus' close disciples were all killed (martyred) for their beliefs (except John). Would that many people who knew Jesus' claims and teachings be willing to die for a lie?

As you can see, there is a lot of evidence that the story of Jesus' resurrection is true. (You can find even more evidence on the Internet.) But it is also true that believing the Bible takes *faith*. What is faith? The Bible tells us, "Faith is the *confidence that what we hope for will actually happen*; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see." (Hebrews 11:1) Sometimes it is hard to have faith. We may even have doubts. So how can we have faith? The Bible tells us we can get faith by reading the Good News about Jesus. "So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ." (Romans 10:17) Would you like to have more faith? Why not read the Bible? Begin with the book of John and ask God to give you faith if He is truly real.

*All Bible verses are taken from the New Living Translation.

Vocabulary

martyr
history writers
disciples
grave
Internet
five hundred
evidence
confidence
crucified

Sentence Completion 1

Use the vocabulary words to answer the questions below:

1. Who were Josephus, Tacitus and Pliny? _____
2. How many people saw Jesus after He rose from the dead? _____
3. What do you call someone who dies for the beliefs? _____
4. What are Jesus' followers called? _____

Sentence Completion II

Use the vocabulary words to complete the sentences below.

1. There is a lot of _____ that the story of Jesus' resurrection is true.
2. Faith is the _____ that what we hope for will actually happen.
3. Jesus was buried in a rich man's _____.
4. Before he died, Jesus told his disciples he was going to Jerusalem to be mocked, whipped and _____.
5. You can find more information about Jesus on the _____ and in the Bible.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does it take faith to believe the Bible? How can reading the Bible help us get more faith?
2. Why is the Bible called the *Gospel* or *Good News* about Jesus?
3. Do you know any other evidence that the Bible is true?
4. What are some of the reasons people think it is false?