



# DID CHRIST RISE FROM THE DEAD?

## Study 5

## The Empty Tomb

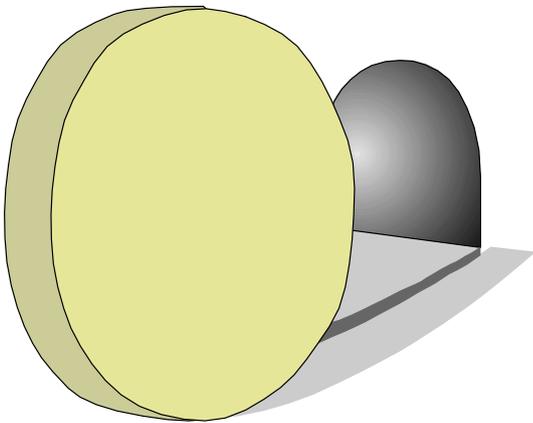
### John 20:27-28 (NLT)

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!" "My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed.

The Easter story, and in particular the part about the empty tomb, has good reason for being famous. It caused a sensation at the time and, despite enormous publicity surrounding the event, Christ's body never was found. If he had been hardly known, and died privately, it is possible with some difficulty that his grave was switched to someone else's back yard. The story might have had a simple explanation like that except for the following considerations:

- Entire cities don't forget where they bury public figures.
- Public executions don't get meddled with by the public.
- People in their right mind don't break the Roman seal.
- Jews don't give money to Gentiles. (except to keep their mouths shut)
- Two ton stones don't roll quietly.
- Roman guards don't fall asleep.
- Untrue stories don't get believed by 3000 to 5000 people at a time.

NO ONE  
FOUND THE  
BODY OF  
CHRIST.



The truth is, there is not one record, of any claim, by any person, to have seen the dead remains of Christ, despite enormous publicity surrounding the event, violation of the official Roman seal, and the vital vested interests of the Jewish authorities! There are only four possible explanations as to what might have happened.

### Do you believe this?



Matthew 27:57-28:20

Or one of these?

**Body removed by authorities.**  
(So that disciples could not deceive public)

**Body stolen by disciples.**  
(So that they could create the resurrection myth)

**Jesus only swooned.**  
(Buried alive by mistake then regained consciousness)



Why then didn't the authorities produce his body?  
If they had it, they could have quashed the rumours forever.

1. If asleep, how did guards know it was the disciples?
2. If asleep, how didn't they hear a 2-ton stone move?
3. Not one record of disciples admitting stealing a body.

1. Confirmed dead by 4 executioners?
2. Split out of grave clothes?
3. Rolled the stone?
4. Got through the guards?

The last three explanations are flawed. On the other hand, the trouble with believing that Jesus Christ rose to life again is that it has serious implications for us. Write 1 Corinthians 15:20 and compare it with John 5:28-29

THERE ARE  
FOUR  
EXPLANATIONS  
TO THE EMPTY  
TOMB. ONLY  
ONE IS RIGHT.

“But \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*and proof that those who sleep in death will also be raised.”*

**Do you want to receive eternal life** and enter through Christ into a new relationship with God?

Fill in the missing line from John 6:40

*“This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son*

\_\_\_\_\_

*and I will raise them up on the last day.”*

If you believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead you are only a few steps from receiving His gift of eternal life. Please go to Rainbow study 6, and do the next and final study in 'Rainbow - Discovering the Christian Faith' When you make your decision, the Spirit of Christ will come into your life; you'll enter into a living relationship with Him, and receive the legitimate right to be a son or daughter of God.

WOULD YOU  
LIKE TO RECEIVE  
GOD'S GIFT OF  
ETERNAL LIFE?

## INTERESTING MARBLE SLAB DISCOVERED.

A marble slab, dating back to Claudius Caesar, was discovered in 1878 with a curious inscription. It was written in Greek and was a warning to grave robbers. The inscription translated as follows:

“Ordinance of Caesar:

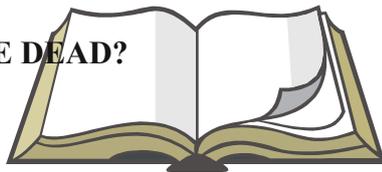
It is my pleasure that graves and tombs remain perpetually undisturbed for those who have made them for the cult of their ancestors or children or members of their house.

If, however, anyone charges that another has either demolished them, or has in any other way extracted the buried, or has maliciously transferred them to other places in order to wrong them, or has displaced the sealing or other stones, against such a one I order that a trial be instituted, as in respect of the gods, so in regard to the cult of mortal's. For it shall be much more obligatory to honour the buried.

Let it be absolutely forbidden for anyone to disturb them. In case of violation I desire that the offender be sentenced to capital punishment on charge of Violation of Sepulchre.”

Previous Roman law concerning grave violation was a heavy fine. So why would the Roman government drastically increase the penalty to capital punishment? Had something happened around here that upset the government so much? Well here's a clue: Claudius reigned shortly after the time of Pontius Pilate, and the place where the slab was found was where officials might have expected the friends of a certain public figure to have resided. The town? NAZARETH!

## Find the answers on this page to DID CHRIST RISE FROM THE DEAD?



NO ONE FOUND THE BODY OF  
CHRIST.

Read from this answer page  
Matthew 27:57-66 to 28:1-20

### Do you believe this? (Matthew 27: 57-66 to 28:1-20 (ESV))

#### Jesus is Buried

<sup>57</sup>When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup>He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. <sup>59</sup>And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud <sup>60</sup>and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. <sup>61</sup>Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

#### The Guard at the Tomb

<sup>62</sup>Next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate <sup>63</sup>and said, “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise.’ <sup>64</sup>Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.” <sup>65</sup>Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.” <sup>66</sup>So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

#### The Resurrection

<sup>1</sup>Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup>And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup>His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup>And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup>But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup>He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup>Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” <sup>8</sup>So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup>And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

#### The Report of the Guard

<sup>11</sup>While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. <sup>12</sup>And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers <sup>13</sup>and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ <sup>14</sup>And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” <sup>15</sup>So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

<sup>16</sup>Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup>And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

## Christianity stands or falls on the resurrection of Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:3-20 (NCV)

<sup>3</sup>I passed on to you what I received, of which this was most important: that Christ died for our sins, as the Scriptures say; <sup>4</sup>that he was buried and was raised to life on the third day as the Scriptures say; <sup>5</sup>and that he was seen by Peter and then by the twelve apostles. <sup>6</sup>After that, Jesus was seen by more than five hundred of the believers at the same time. Most of them are still living today, but some have died. <sup>7</sup>Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. Last of all he was seen by me ...

THERE ARE FOUR  
EXPLANATIONS TO THE EMPTY  
TOMB. ONLY ONE IS RIGHT.

<sup>12</sup>Now since we preached that Christ was raised from the dead, why do some of you say that people will not be raised from the dead? <sup>13</sup>If no one is ever raised from the dead, then Christ has not been raised. <sup>14</sup>And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is worth nothing, and your faith is worth nothing. <sup>15</sup>And also, we are guilty of lying about God, because we testified of him that he raised Christ from the dead. But if people are not raised from the dead, then God never raised Christ. <sup>16</sup>If the dead are not raised, Christ has not been raised either. <sup>17</sup>And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith has nothing to it; you are still guilty of your sins. <sup>18</sup>And those in Christ who have already died are lost. <sup>19</sup>If our hope in Christ is for this life only, we should be pitied more than anyone else in the world.

<sup>20</sup>But Christ has truly been raised from the dead - the first one and proof that those who sleep in death will also be raised.

### Implications. John 5:28-29 (KJV)

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

### Indeed. John 6:40 (NRSV)

This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE  
GOD'S GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE?

Please go to Rainbow, Study 6

More studies (and answers) here:  
[www.5loaves2fishes.net/free-resources](http://www.5loaves2fishes.net/free-resources)