

A LOOK AT LESS STROBEL'S BOOK THE CASE FOR EASTER

From Strobel's book, The Case for Easter.

It tries to answer those who think Jesus did not rise from the dead.

Lee Strobel interviews the scholarly Dr Metherell in this book.

Metherell obvious is afraid of any suggestion that Jesus might have survived the cross and goes out of his way to make it look as if it should have finished Jesus off.

Despite the absence of a description current with Jesus, Metherell like a psychic seems to know things about Roman floggings in Jerusalem and what they entailed. He is sure that Jesus got at least thirty-nine lashes and the whip was armed with balls to tear bits of flesh off. The spine would have been exposed and Jesus would have been thrashed down as far as the backs of the legs. That is pure speculative nonsense and out of desperation Strobel writes down a quote for us. It is from the "historian" Eusebius who claimed that the "sufferer's veins were laid bare, and the very muscles, sinews, and bowels of the victim were open to exposure." Eusebius would know especially when he wrote three centuries after the event. Surely then men died during flogging if it were that bad. Flogging was not meant to kill. The gospels lie that Pilate was forced by the Jews to send Jesus for crucifixion against his will. Pilate could have solved the problem by having Jesus die during flogging. Metherell with his supernatural knowledge diagnoses Jesus with hypovolemic shock. So Jesus lost a huge pile of blood and the heart raced to pump the absent blood and the blood pressure would have dropped which explains the fainting allegedly reported in the gospels. Except that the gospels say Jesus did not faint but just fell under the weight of his cross. The thirst Jesus had matches the diagnosis except that Jesus did not drink until he was nearly dead. That refutes the diagnosis.

Interestingly if Metherell were right it would refute the Turin Shroud which by no means shows a flogging as brutal as what he describes. Jesus tummy has no intestines hanging out. Christians would not be as fond of the Shroud if they noticed how it implied that Jesus didn't get the worst experience.

Metherell later states that a soldier came along after Jesus died. Metherell our psychic knows that the soldier was fairly certain that Jesus was dead. The soldiers used to break the legs of crucifixion victims if they needed them to die rapidly. Jesus never got his broke. The argument is because it was clear he was dead. But surely the soldiers just broke the legs of victims in case they merely looked dead. Our soldier simply stuck a spear in Jesus to confirm his death. But the soldier broke the legs of the other victims around Jesus so if he needed to confirm it it was enough to break the legs of Jesus. The spear story is just a lie and Jesus would have had his legs broken. The Christians don't want to think that because the Old Testament is supposed to say there would be no bones broken.

Metherell speculates that it was the right side that got jabbed. By the way it is interesting how the gospel writer never said which side it was. You would say if you really saw the stabbing like the gospel writer claims. Metherell's explanation for how the spear would produce blood and water after going through the right lung into the heart explains the effusion of water and blood as remarked by the gospel writer. But he has forgotten he does not know what side it is the writer meant! Metherell says that the water came out first and then a "large volume of blood." Thought he said Jesus didn't have much blood left after the flogging? Strobel asks how the water and blood came out in that order when the gospel says it was blood and water. Metherell replies that the order does not necessarily imply chronological order but order of importance. The blood was mentioned first for more of it came out.

William Lane Craig in a talk with Strobel says that 1 Corinthians 15:3 to 7 is an early creed which Craig says was used soon after the resurrection and it "undoubtedly goes back to within a few years of Jesus' crucifixion". He is trying to make it older than 1 Corinthians. But there is no evidence that it was in popular use at all. It is not necessarily a creed though it reads a bit like one. Why didn't Paul say it was a creed instead of making it pass either as a creed or as part of a chapter about the resurrection. And what if Paul was not using a creed that was in use but giving one that the Churches could start using? Craig by using the word undoubtedly is just lying and overstating. He says the gospels seem to follow the structure given. But that could mean the gospels were written up using it as a framework. If the creed is lies then the gospels are lies that embellish the creed. Paul had serious problems with the faith of the people he was writing to so why didn't he just order them to use the creed?

It is suggested that the core gospel story of the resurrection is the same in all four gospels regarding how Joseph gets the corpse of Jesus and entombs it and a small group of women come to the tomb on Sunday morning and report angels and

that the tomb is empty. It is argued that if there are contradictions they are secondary to all this and "those kinds of secondary discrepancies wouldn't bother a historian."

It is boasted that Mark's account of how Jesus' tomb was found empty and how is unadorned and reads like history not legend. The earliest Jewish critics apparently never denied the tomb was empty but just wondered what really happened to the body. This is said to show the tomb was empty. But there were lots of things the critics never mentioned so the argument is paper thin.

Metherell should not be in a position to talk like a crank but through religion he is.