

Was Jesus' tomb or body lost in an earthquake

The Gospel of Matthew recounts the earthquake that happened that Sunday morning just before the tomb of Jesus was found empty. After an earthquake it would be normal to go to the wrong tomb or the wrong part of the tomb. The gospel says the earthquake happened because an angel came down from Heaven. But only some soldiers seen the angel so for everybody else it was just an earthquake.

Earthquakes mean fear so how reliable were the witnesses of Jesus when they were in a fear-filled context? The soldiers who supposedly saw the angel were terrified too.

The Greek conjunction *gar*, for, is an interesting one regarding how it is used in Matthew 28:2. The verse says there was a huge earthquake *gar* for God's angel came down and rolled back the stone and sat on the stone. *Gar* is an explanatory conjunction. Matthew says the earthquake happened and the angel coming down is why it happened. He does not say yet if the women seen the angel or not.

He uses the word *ginomai* which means there was. So he writes *there was* a great earthquake which means the simple past. He writes of the angel in the simple past too in the word *katabas* ("had descended"). Then he talks about the women. He then is clear that the women did not see an angel or the earthquake or the stone being moved for they were not there yet. All that had happened before they arrived.

Is Matthew lying about the angel moving the stone for he wants nobody to think that the earthquake moved it? If an angel is there, it is not a normal person. An angel rolling back the stone may not mean he grabbed it and pushed it. Magically causing nature or earth tremors to do it counts as him doing it for he is!

The Christians think people went into the tomb that day and saw that the body was absent but since when do people go into caves after earth tremors and earthquakes? How many people visit tombs during and immediately after earthquakes?

So far we see that Matthew does not say where he got his information which is why it is stupid to consider any of it to be eyewitness testimony - it is hearsay at most. The story seems to describe the ground shaking and the stone moving which was thought to be down to an angel. He mentions the soldiers seeing the angel. But he seems to hint the women saw no angel.

Some think that the body of Jesus disappeared at the earthquake that happened on Sunday morning so he was swallowed up into the earth. Reasons for Hope says the fact that no cracks were mentioned proves that this never happened and that the cloths were left behind is another disproof (page 100). But there still could have been cracks – and why would the gospels pay any attention to them? And the authors of the book know fine well the gospels were not too detailed!

One of the cloths was found, according to John, lying on the ground while the head one was rolled up by itself. (What does it mean by rolled up, by the way? Was it neatly rolled up as if somebody had tidied up after the body had gone or was the cloth meant to have been rolled up loosely and put on the corpse's face? These questions are important and show that there is no room in the gospel for the Christian suggestion that Jesus was not stolen because nobody would have tidied up the tomb and earthquakes do not tidy up after gobbling bodies. Do they think the risen Jesus was more likely to tidy up than thieves would be?) Jesus could have rolled out of the wrappings into the ground or even got out of the tomb alive and got away himself or somebody saved him. The cloths lying on the ground might also suggest that whoever robbed the tomb was disturbed and was in the process of tidying up the cloths when he had to make a getaway or that he threw new shrouds down as false clues while he made off with Jesus in the shroud. There might have been another cloth that was rolled and forgotten about and this was the one that the people at the tomb thought covered the head. The gospel of John never says how many cloths were used so Jesus could have been swallowed in the shroud next his skin while the other cloths simply came off and were left behind. Aftershocks could have taken place that moved the stone later to expose the empty tomb.

THE WWW

Still Standing on Sinking Sand, Farrell Till,
www.infidels.org/library/magazines/tsr/1997/1/1sink97.html

Why I Don't Buy the Resurrection Story by Richard Carrier
www.infidels.org/library/modern/richard_carrier/resurrection/index.shtml

A Naturalistic Account of the Resurrection, Brian Marston

<http://www.phlab.missouri.edu/~c570529/PhilosoStop/resurrection.html>

This site argues that somebody unknown stole the body to stop the apostles stealing it or venerating it and lost it and argues that the witnesses of the risen Jesus were lying because no effort was made by them to preserve first hand reports of what was seen and how and when. It argues that since the apostles had followed Jesus at great personal sacrifice and now he was dead they invented the resurrection to save face. Also the inclination of people at the time to believe in dying and rising gods may have overwhelmed them and made them lie to themselves that Jesus had risen. He answers the objection that a lie like that would need a large-scale conspiracy for lots of lies start off with a small group of people and if the lies are attractive other people will believe them. Plus he says that Jesus could have rigged events to make sure he would fulfil Old Testament prophecy so the Christians should not be saying the gospel story is true for it fits old prophecy. I would add that owing to the total absence of evidence that Jesus was nailed to the cross and the fact that the gospels never say any of his friends were close to the cross that Jesus might have been tied to it and the Christians later assumed he was nailed because the psalm seemed to say so.

The Case For Christianity Examined: Truth or Lies?

www.askwhy.co.uk/awstruth/ChristianCase.html

Historical Evidence and the Empty Tomb Story, A Reply to William Lane Craig by Jeffrey Jay Lowder

www.infidels.org/library/modern/jeff_lowder/empty.html

The Resurrection, Steven Carr

www.bowness.demon.co.uk/resr.htm

Did Jesus Really Rise from the Dead? Dan Barker versus Mike Horner

www.ffrf.org/debates/barker_horner.html

Craig's Empty Tomb and Habermas on the Post-Resurrection Appearances of Jesus

www.infidels.org/library/modern/richard_carrier/indef/4e.html

Did a Rolling Stone Close Jesus' Tomb by Amos Kloner

www.bib-arch.org/barso99/roll1.html

Who Moved the Stone? Review by Steven Carr,

www.bowness.demon.co.uk/stone.htm This tells us that if you assume that two contradictory books are true in all they say and try to make them fit you will manage it but the result will be contrived. You are really still assuming they are true and have no proof for it. This observation should be a warning to the fundamentalist Christians who say there are no contradictions in the Bible. They have no faith in the Bible at all for they are only assuming it is right. If they really believed, they would not need to work out and produce laughable far-fetched ways of reconciling Bible contradictions. They wouldn't do that with anything else but the Bible.

Morison claims that Peter's clever and unbiased mind was behind the first Gospel, that of Mark. But Morison only assumes this for there is no evidence that the gospel is clever and unbiased or that Peter had much if anything at all to do with it. Morison then tries to make out that the claim of Luke that the apostles waited seven weeks before saying Jesus had risen from the dead is too detrimental to the evidence for the resurrection to be true. In other words, the evidence for the resurrection is right and any evidence against it is wrong! That is bias if I ever seen it. He then makes out that these things which undermine the pro-resurrection evidence prove it happened. So the evidence against the resurrection makes the evidence for it stronger! How ridiculous.