

JESUS' RESURRECTION FEAT IS NOT THAT IMPRESSIVE - OTHERS DID AS WELL AND BETTER

Christians make a huge deal about Jesus supposedly having risen from the dead. Miracles are really not that special except to propagandists.

Lots of people did better wonders than Jesus so why should we believe in him or in his resurrection? If they did as good as him or near as good as him the same question pops up and there is no answer to it. Unlike Jesus, his rival Simon Magus, was said by those who did not believe in him to have had the power to do miracles. We have no source like that at all about Jesus. It is all information from people who believed.

Books that have a case for belonging in the Bible speak of Judas Maccabeus. His relative unpopularity in Jewish culture and in the records of him are inexplicable considering his achievements and how the book of Daniel virtually calls him Messiah. Proposed explanations are that he was suspected of being a messiah or a model for messiah.

To pray to the saints as Catholics do is to repudiate the Christian faith and to create new gods. The pagan gods were just saints for they could do do what they wanted as other gods controlled their powers and gave them the powers. So it is with the Catholic saints so the Church cannot say, "They are nothing without God" and use that as a cover for what they are, deities. They are demigods if you want to take inspiration from the Hindu pantheon. Some of the saints performed resurrections from the dead which the Church accepts. They did better attested miracles than Jesus. The saints died and appeared to people afterwards. The Catholics say they did not claim to be gods or Messiahs so they are different.

They claimed to be gods better than God. The fact that they were not explicit about this before they died means nothing. If they should have been then Jesus was not who he said he was.

The vast majority of Jesus' doctrines were revealed supposedly by Jesus to his Church following Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus rose from the dead. The Church allegedly came to understand that Jesus was God after he was off the scene. Fundamentalist Christians explain that the apostles knew a lot of the stuff when Jesus was alive but they were so stubborn that it took time after Jesus' death before they could come to terms with it and explain it and teach it. There is no evidence for that speculation. Liberal Christians happily admit that it was all made up or thought of long after Jesus was gone. So a long dead obscure Catholic saint could start appearing from beyond the grave and start claiming that he rose bodily from the dead and reveal for the first time that he was the incarnation of God the Father all the time. It is not that hard to arrange for people who can be trusted to say they met this being. The Bible calls Jesus the only way to God and the only begotten Son of God but that does not rule out other incarnations of God. The Christians think it is a great proof for the resurrection if they could prove that the Jews, disciples of Jesus or the Romans could not have nicked the body of Jesus as if it proved nobody else did it. But it is not and the real evidence for the resurrection is the appearances of Jesus so a missing body is not an essential.

If Jesus was God then most of the body of God has rotted for we are shedding dead cells all the time and our bodies are endlessly replacing themselves with fresh materials so it is mad to think that God would necessarily raise a body he once incarnated himself into from the dead. The evidence for the resurrection of Jesus can be easily made unconvincing merely by the emergence of evidence for the divine seal upon a rival who also rises from the dead. It does not have to actually emerge. It is enough that it can. Faith in the resurrection of Jesus and his unique role as saviour is an insult to anybody who wants to believe in a copycat of his. It's sectarian. Rather than calling us to love, the resurrection calls us to war. It commands that we support it meaning that we should destroy the evidence for the resurrection of any other Messiah. It despises God.

Jesus, according to the New Testament, made huge claims for himself. He claimed to be the best prophet ever and the Son of God and the saviour. The evidence for the resurrection even if it is as strong as the Christians say still is not enough to justify his making those claims and to justify people believing him. If Jesus was a man of integrity then he couldn't approve of us believing in the resurrection. Sometimes you can have very strong evidence for something but there could be one fact that calls on us to ignore it. You can perhaps build a very very strong case for X having been Jack the Ripper. But this case is no good if X didn't keep on killing people as a serial killer would. Then the evidence would be invalidated by a psychological fact, namely that serial killers don't stop killing and especially if they glut their appetite on gore like the Ripper did. If you say it was a miracle that changed the Ripper so that he stopped killing you reinstate the evidence. But you do this at the expense of credibility. In reality you are not letting the evidence speak for itself though it looks as if you are. You are showing undue and unfair bias. When you shed credibility, the evidence is merely evidence in name only. That's all. That is what Christians do with the resurrection. The evidence makes them no better off. It is exploited to trick people to make them think they are making sense when they say Jesus rose from the dead.

What is the use in the Christian boast that the resurrection of Jesus is convincing and their salvation when they cannot prove that the beautiful Victorian medium, Florence Cook, didn't raise the long dead Katie King temporarily from the dead? Florence was caught out in fraud later but there is no satisfactory evidence that she was faking the Katie King appearances. Unlike the resurrection of Jesus, we have witnesses we can trust and who we know were careful. We know next to nothing about the witnesses of Jesus and none of these witnesses wrote the gospels.

Jesus claimed that his resurrection was a sign that he had authority to speak for God. After death experiences of a being of light are stronger evidences than the evidences of the resurrection. Yet this being of light never judges. He meets nearly everybody at the gate of a Heaven so he contradicts Jesus who hoped that most people are destined for Hell. So the evidences against Jesus' divine authenticity are stronger than evidences for it. The being of light then contradicts the resurrection of Jesus. We can know and interview the witnesses of the being of light experiences which we cannot do with the self-proclaimed witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus.

The near death experiences make it evil to stake so much on the apostles for it is through the apostles that we have to learn about Jesus and his resurrection. There was not much point in a resurrection as a sign when men had to testify to it so Jesus should have written his own testimony and got them to testify that it was genuine and believable to them instead of letting them interpret things for themselves. A testimony which is provided by people we can meet and check out and evaluate for ourselves is vastly superior to the apostles. Jesus appeared after his death to give evidence and the cancellation of that evidence by better evidence means that the appearances were illusions or lies or from the devil.

Christians boast that sources hostile to Jesus admitted that his miracles were real and attributed them to demons. They take it that Jesus' miracles prove that he had the right to demand absolute control over our bodies and minds. But Jesus had plenty of rivals to destroy their right to assume such things. The Christians claim that it is harder to believe that the apostles or other disciples of Jesus stole his body or that Jesus got out of the tomb himself and pretended he rose from the dead than to believe that he did rise. So impossibilities are more convincing than improbabilities! It is strange that Christians admit there is an extreme minority of people who have bizarre powers like people who can hold light bulbs in their hand and make them light up which ought to put them on their guard with Jesus. They say Jesus was not one of these people but his power came from God. But Jesus could have had limited miracle powers with which he played dead and escaped from the tomb and made his friends hallucinate his appearances until he was well enough to meet them personally. They cannot refute that.

There were many Messiahs who did not need the degree of dishonesty it took to believe in Jesus to believe in them.

Hostile sources said that the false Messiah of the second century Simon Bar Kochba, who bore the messianic title, Son of a Star, did signs and wonders (page 20, *The Beast and the Little Horn*) and got loads of followers through them.

All early Christian sources claimed that Simon Magus, who became a false Messiah, had incredible miraculous powers. Even the Bible says Simon Magus was said to be the Power of God and was regarded as such by ALL the Samaritans, a sect similar to the Jews, and who was famed for his miraculous powers. Jesus had no rivals grudgingly writing that he did miracles but Simon did!

Al-Hallaj the Sufi God-man from Persia seems to have claimed to have been God. He suffered a horrific death by martyrdom for his blasphemy of claiming he could speak for Allah. He was crucified and mutilated and the body was burned to ashes. But the head however was put on display to put others off following him or copying him. He famously laughed with delight as he was nailed. If Jesus had been burned you would have missing ashes to worry about not a missing corpse!

Joan of Arc allegedly came back from the dead after being burned at the stake. The Catholic Encyclopedia says, "Five years after the Maid was burnt at the stake another woman impersonated her, was received at Orléans as the true Joan of Arc, and found influential supporters in that character for more than three years." It is agreed that the new Joan who came after the real one was burned at the stake for heresy and witchcraft was an impostor. But there is no proof of this. If a sect appeared based on her resurrection it would be more convincing than Christianity. Joan had during her time in prison heard from the saints who talked to her that she would not be martyred but have a "great victory". That is open to interpretation and it could be that it means she will be transported from the flames or perhaps even rise again victoriously. Nobody believes that Joan rose from the dead though her evidence that she did is better than Jesus'.

Soon after the fake Jewish Messiah Sabbatai Zevi died there were stories that became strong established legends. One is that he used magic words to vanquish a gang of bandits. He was able to walk through fire without a mark. He raised the dead. He cured lepers. He was able to go to Heaven and let the angel Gabriel pretend to be him. Even when he was alive the historical facts about the man became embellished in a magical way which was why his fame was so great.

Robert Price in his book *Beyond Born Again* reminds us that Zevi reportedly appeared to his followers after his death. Some of the visions are implausible but many of them are as good as the resurrection appearance accounts. There had to have been people in the first century who heard what the apostles were saying about apparitions and claimed apparitions of their own. That always happens. Indeed the New Testament complains about false apostles. The twelve apostles bring suspicion on themselves for they just say they had the real visions for they were made apostles by Jesus. But no proof is given of this. Jesus could at least have issued deeds to prove this. Their word is not good enough for why their word and not the rivals?

St Gregory of Tours believed that the healing miracles of an ex-lunatic who claimed that he was Christ and should be worshipped were real miracles but that the Devil was behind them (page 41, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*). He died at La Puys when he was cut to pieces by his enemies and his followers still believed in him after that holding that he was resurrected in a spiritual way and that he died for their salvation. Multitudes followed another Messiah called Eudo de Stella who claimed to be Jesus Christ the Son of God. He did miracles too. He claimed the power to control the world and he died at Rouen in prison probably of malnourishment (page 46, *ibid*).

Another very successful Messiah claimed to be God and had loads of followers. It was said he commanded murders. This may have been slander. His name was Tanchelm and there is no reason to hold that he was anything but a holy man (page 46-50) despite the slanders. It is certain that his followers gave up their wealth for the love of him. Yet we are commanded to believe in Christ because his followers took him seriously and testified to him unswervingly. You can't be a cult figure unless you have followers like that. Having such followers doesn't mean a thing.

Frederick II was credited with Messianic authority and if having supernatural power to fight the Antichrist by his German following (page 113). Prophecies by Joachim of Fiore were understood to be talking about him. And when Frederick died it was believed that he would rise again and indeed after his death two men claiming to be him got many followers (page 114).

Another godman was burned at the stake and no bones were found in the ashes which is similar to the body of Jesus vanishing from the tomb (page 115).

Later, Conrad Schmid was accepted by a nation as being the resurrected Frederick and as God incarnate (page 143). He taught that instead of water baptism saving you, you had to save your soul by being flogged so that the blood will run - in effect, a baptism of blood. Nobody knows for sure what because of him after the Inquisition got him (page 144). Many testified that Schmid/Frederick had appeared to them after that and would come again one day to save the world (page 144). They were so sure of this that they beat up their babies to save their souls from original sin by making the blood run.

The Christians brag that some people saw and chatted with and touched Jesus after his resurrection. The Jesus witnesses are largely enigmas to us for the writings they left behind are very very short and don't give us much insight into what kind of people they were. Christians what about the far more trustworthy and better known people who had similar experiences with the Bigfoot most of whom were not alone when they saw the prodigy? I say more trustworthy for we can talk to them and cross-examine them. I don't call them trustworthy. The witnesses of the revived Jesus were never cross-examined and took the precaution of saying nothing for forty days. That shows that Jesus was not too bothered about accuracy and credibility. Accuracy and credibility are reduced as time goes on which is always an indication that something naughty was going on. They were able to state reasons for being sure that what they saw was not just a hoaxer dressed up. The resurrection seers gave no such assurance in Jesus' case. They just took it for granted that it was Jesus. The accounts are of little value when they failed to even state that the identity of the apparition was checked out. Even if he did rise he could not expect us to believe that he did and there are several other ways to prove this as well. Despite the testimonies and the calibre of the witnesses Bigfoot does not exist. Neither does the Loch Ness Monster. There is no doubt about this. When we reject belief in the Bigfoot and Nessie because they cannot exist we are entitled to reject the reports of the resurrection of Jesus Christ too. In fact, the resurrection report is far worse in the credibility stakes than these two myths.

There is a first-hand testimony that money which was guessed to be left by a messenger from God used to appear miraculously in the Mormon Prophet, Brigham Young's pockets. \$250 appeared in his trunk. His close associate Heber C Kimball was thought to be putting it there but he said he was not. We are compelled to talk about Jesus' empty tomb as if it is the only mystery there is. It is nothing special.

Jesus is not that special.