

All the evidence for Jesus is biblical and even then it is very odd evidence.

If Jesus had been a real man or anybody really knew him why are there no normal stories of him helping people? It is all miracle stories. Why would you choose stories of somebody using miracles to help people as if the ordinary ways to help are something to be forgotten? Even Catholic hagiographies are replete with good works done by the saints and are not so obsessed with supernatural tales that they want to forget them.

Not surprisingly, the evidence outside the Bible makes a strong case for Jesus having being made up.

The evidence for the existence and life details of Jesus Christ is wholly biblical. Nothing outside of the Bible is any good. There is no unbiased evidence that Jesus lived. Nobody outside the Church gave any evidence for him. There were far more people outside the Church than in it. There are far more unbelievers in the gospels than believers. And yet we have nothing from these unbelievers to give us an indication that this man lived. A man of importance that is ignored by most authorities or not mentioned by them is not likely to have existed. It doesn't prove that he didn't exist but it makes his non-existence plausible. There is no reason for their silence which makes our argument even more plausible. If they hated him they would have mentioned him quicker and Jesus says in the gospels that everybody outside his following hates him and his disciples and his sheep and always will.

THE CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE

Now to the Christian witnesses.

The gospels say that there was darkness over the land that could not be explained when Jesus took his last breath.

Julius Africanus wrote about 221.

It was claimed by Julius that a man called Thallus wrote that darkness because of a solar eclipse covered the land at the full moon and it is Julius who tells us that this happened when Jesus died (page 35, He Walked Among Us). Julius says Thallus is wrong for eclipses cannot happen then. Julius wanted to believe that the darkness was a miracle caused by the death of Jesus Christ.

Thallus is no help for those who want to believe in a historical Jesus for he was only telling us what was believed at that time and he could have been writing in the early second century at the latest (page 35, He Walked Among Us). No evidence that it is more than a legend is forwarded or indeed can be for no ancient historian from the time the darkness mentioned in the gospels and they would have for it would have been a major scare. There is no evidence that the eclipse ever happened. How could the quote from Julius, "In his third book of history, Thallus, tries to explain the darkness as an eclipse of the sun and this explanation makes no sense to me", which is all we got, amount to Thallus saying Jesus was crucified? Yet lying Christian defenders gave the impression that it does!

Thallus never mentioned Jesus. But Julius dates the eclipse in Thallus' work to the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberias Caesar (page 35, Who Walked Among Us). This would come to 29 AD which is too early to have been the year of the crucifixion of Christ. So Julius and Thallus can be safely assumed to be of no assistance at all to those who wish to believe in the existence of Jesus.

We don't have this Thallus guy's book. We don't know if Julius, who was writing in 221 AD too long after the event, was telling the truth about what Thallus wrote. Eusebius indicated that Thallus wrote a history that ended in 109 BC (Josh McDowell's Evidence for Jesus, Is it reliable? – search for it on the WWW) which would mean Thallus did not write about the darkness at the time of Jesus at all. Some think Eusebius was mistaken here and the history went up as far as 92 AD

Eusebius seems to have had a short version of Thallus' works. Everybody else had a longer and different version (Josh McDowell's Evidence for Jesus: Is it Reliable?). Eusebius would have had the longer version especially when it said that there was a darkness at the time of Christ but it seems he believed the shorter was the right one. Eusebius liked to fake evidence for Christ and he wouldn't have missed that one. It is likely that Julius lied about what Thallus wrote. There is no evidence that Eusebius knew of the darkness story in Thallus and when he said that Thallus recorded nothing for after 109BC it is plain that he denied the authenticity of any version of Thallus that did. It seems then Julius was lying. He was trying to fabricate evidence for the existence of the historical Jesus.

It may be that Thallus was misread or Julius used a bad copy of his writing and/or Julius only thought or assumed that the darkness he mentioned happened at the time of Christ or perhaps Thallus meant an eclipse and not a supernatural blackness. So Thallus may not have mentioned the cross at all. Or perhaps the legends that were used to concoct the gospels were circulating for years before Jesus was allegedly born and Thallus had spoken of a Jesus way back before 109 BC.

Not to be outdone, Christians have tried to redate the writings by Thallus that Julius had in his possession. They say that Josephus put Thallus into a time slot in which Thallus could have known about Jesus when Thallus' name popped up in Jewish Antiquities 18. They want to claim that Thallus was an eyewitness of the darkness and knew about the crucifixion, But his name got in through an 18th century and convenient error (Josh McDowell's Evidence for Jesus: Is it Reliable?). Josephus wrote Allos not Thallos. Thallus could have written any time up to 180 AD which means he can't be relied upon. McDowell admitted that writers like Julius liked to exaggerate and invent evidence for their assertions.

Julius said that Thallus dated the darkness to the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberias which brings us to 29AD (page 35, He Walked Among Us). This contradicts the gospels which say that 29AD is too early for the crucifixion of Jesus. He Walked Among Us foolishly argues that Thallus was just been careless. It cannot know that. Thallus may have been right about when the miracle darkness happened. This would mean that the gospels said the crucifixion happened when it couldn't have happened meaning there was no crucifixion. He Walked Among Us tries then to argue that Thallus did not try to explain away the crucifixion which shows it must have happened. But maybe he was not interested? You can't expect him to write about everything he can. The fact of the matter is, there is no evidence that Thallus mentioned Jesus or his cross at all (Josh McDowell's Evidence for Jesus, Is it Reliable?).

Julius wrote that a man called Phelgon in 140 AD wrote that there was an eclipse of the sun from the sixth hour to the ninth in the time of Tiberias Caesar (page 36, He Walked Among Us). It is strange that Julius would cite Phlegon when Julius was keen to prevent anybody thinking it was an eclipse that happened for he never properly criticised Phlegon's view. Julius had no need to quote this man when he said that it was silly to say an eclipse could happen at the full moon. Anyway, had the darkness happened, the Christians might have worked it into their fictitious story of Jesus. It is only a single sentence and it is an interpolation. Eusebius quoted Phelgon without this sentence. We don't know if Phelgon was a good historian or not. We cannot use anything he says as evidence for the reality of Jesus Christ.

Justin Martyr sought to defend Christianity in 150 AD by claiming that the Acts of Pilate verified Jesus' divine sonship. But the Acts were a forgery. There is no evidence that Pilate became a defender of the faith as the Acts say. Justin can be read as only assuming that these Acts exist and it is possible for a scholar to assume that a book must exist though it doesn't and tell us to go to the book for further data (The Jesus of History, A Reply to Josh McDowell).

In 197 AD, the lawyer and theologian, Tertullian, claimed that Tiberias Caesar, as a result of reading Pilate's writings, wanted the Roman senate to promote Christ as a God but could not persuade them (Apology V.2). But we can't pay much attention to this hearsay when it made it unto paper so long after the alleged event and Tertullian never named his source or verified it. Plus, Tiberias had plenty of other avenues through which to promote Christ.

The senate could have been persuaded to accept Christ as a god if Christ was open to paganism and was not the bigot of the gospels who supported the totally nasty Jewish law which deplored the worship of other gods and if his death was not Rome's fault. If the gospels are right that Pilate acted to destroy Jesus in the name of Tiberias, Tiberias would not have rehabilitated Christ. We know that Tertullian lied because he claimed that Tiberius made threats against those who opposed Christians. Tiberias hated cults and did not tolerate them at all. Paul and the New Testament never say that Tiberias converted to Christianity or at least to the worship of Christ. Neither does any ancient writer (Josh McDowell's Evidence for Jesus: Is it reliable?). The more honest Christians admit that Tertullian was not above serious exaggeration (page 16, Runaway World). But they are happy to say that because Tertullian said that Pilate's report on the crucifixion and its aftermath was still in the Emperor's Archives he must have been truthful here. The report if it existed would have inevitably have accused the unprofessional disciples of Jesus of stealing the body of Jesus so they would dislike and hide that aspect of the case. Even they are embarrassed to admit that they prefer the testimony of unknown and admittedly stupid men to the legal and political testimony of trained men which was accepted by Rome itself.

The Jesus Mysteries (page 133) lists 27 prolific pagan writers who never even mentioned Jesus though they were near his time.

There is no real evidence for Christ. The silence is deafening. It shouts at us that this man never lived. It shouts at us that if he was unknown the evidence for him would have been easy to fabricate. It warns us to beware.

NO ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Ossuaries bearing Jesus' name have been found to be tampered with or irrelevant.

The Turin Shroud is presented as Jesus' burial cloth. There is no smearing. The image has hair in the standing position when it supposedly depicts a corpse laid out for burial. The blood is like it was painted on. The carbon dating to the middle ages has never been disproved. The cloth has some unexplained aspects but a lot of that is down to experts contradicting each other and confusing people.

JOSEPHUS

Josephus the Jewish historian and collaborator with Rome allegedly praised Jesus as a holy wise man who appeared alive to his followers after the Jews got Pilate to execute him by crucifixion. Jesus and his followers did bring trouble on the Jews and Jesus vandalised the Temple. Hardly a good wise man! Josephus would have despised him. None of the account can be trusted and reads like an insertion by a Christian. Nobody knew of the Jesus entry until centuries after Josephus. Origen was clear that Josephus did not recognise Jesus in any sense. The effort made to bolster evidence for Jesus indicates that the Christian religion was based on lies.

The testimony says that that Jesus won disciples and was crucified under Pilate and rose BECAUSE the prophets spoke of these and countless others things about him. THE TESTAMENT DOES NOT CLAIM TO BE A TESTIMONY. WHAT IT CLAIMS IS THAT YOU MUST CHECK OUT THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES TO SEE IF WHAT IT SAYS ABOUT JESUS IS TRUE!! This is critically important. It means that even if Josephus did write the Testament it still does not help in the case for a historical Jesus because it depends on human interpretative ideas about Bible prophecies. It is not history that is here but faith. This means that his later reference to James being the brother of Jesus the so-called Christ is put into a new context. It is not saying Jesus existed because he indicated before that that this was a matter of faith. The evidence is overwhelming. Josephus and Rome and the Jews did not know of a Jesus of history.

CONCLUSION

Considering the extraordinary claims made for Jesus, we would expect more than just testimony from his followers to back up his existence not to mention these claims. We would expect there to be outside and unbiased evidence from non-believers as well. Testimony from your friends is fine but testimony from your enemies that supports your friends is infinitely better. After all, your friends are biased and your enemies are not. Testimony from the friends of Jesus is very weak testimony for they were far too keen on turning him into the epitome of perfection and divine revelation. They were too biased. We have only hearsay testimony for Jesus for there is no proof that eyewitnesses wrote the gospels. You need something better than hearsay for such extraordinary claims and the existence of such an extraordinary man.

