

DID THE WOMEN ONLY THINK THEY KNEW WHERE JESUS WAS BURIED FOR HE WAS ACTUALLY BURIED SECRETLY?

Jesus died on the cross we are told. We are told he was put into a new tomb soon after. It was supposedly found empty a few days later and the rumour started that he had risen.

There was nobody at the burial supervising. So was the burial only a coverup? Was he removed when people were not looking? Was the tomb closed with nothing in it? The tomb was found open a few days later but nobody says anybody was watching when it opened so if it was opened anybody could have removed the body.

Some surmise that if the gospels wanted to say Jesus rose from the dead, it was best to say he was put into a tomb which was then found empty. If Jesus were thrown into a common grave with other criminals the story would not be as impressive or catchy. For instance, nobody would know if he went missing from the grave or not.

The body could have been buried in secret after being taken from the tomb.

Secret burials of stolen bodies were not unknown. Read Tobit (chapter 1) a book that some think belongs to the Old Testament. "While Shalmaneser was still emperor, I took good care of my own people whenever they were in need. If they were hungry, I shared my food with them; if they needed clothes, I gave them some of my own. Whenever I saw that the dead body of one of my people had been thrown outside the city wall, I gave it a decent burial. One day Sennacherib cursed God, the King of Heaven; God punished him, and Sennacherib had to retreat from Judah. On his way back to Media he was so furious that he killed many Israelites. But I secretly removed the bodies and buried them; and when Sennacherib later searched for the bodies, he could not find them. Then someone from Nineveh told the emperor that I was the one who had been burying his victims. As soon as I realized that the emperor knew all about me and that my life was in danger, I became frightened. So I ran away and hid."

WRONG TOMB?

Could it have been that the people who reckoned Jesus had disappeared from the tomb had in fact gone to the wrong tomb?

The location of Jesus' resting place would have been totally hidden by the Romans and highest-level Jews from the likes of Joseph of Arimathea and the women and everybody in case a martyr-cult would be launched. If Matthew is right that the Jews expected a resurrection then that was the simple way to ensure the body never went missing. The Jews and Romans did not want Jesus to have fans after his death for they killed him to extinguish his influence.

The two Marys sitting facing the tomb at the interment might have been at a distance. The Gospels say they were inconsolable. They could have made a mistake by coming to the wrong tomb and their agitated mental state and the darkness of Friday though they had observed where Jesus had been laid on Friday. The apostles did not see where Jesus was laid so they could have been misdirected by the women.

The tomb might have been open awaiting a body and the men in white could have played a cruel trick on the women.

The Jews must have asked Joseph, who they knew well, where Jesus was if Joseph really took care of the funeral as the gospels report. They would have. We know Joseph was devious and dishonest. He knew that if they were told the truth they might remove the body to prevent some believer from stealing it. They needed to know for if they had watched the funeral the gospel would say so in case anybody would complain that the circle at the funeral was too close for comfort. So, they might have sent the soldiers to the wrong tomb – to a tomb that was already empty.

Jesus would probably have been removed or stolen from the tomb he was really in when everybody thought he had already gone from the other tomb.

If the women ever realised they had made a mistake they would have been afraid to say so and might have said nothing. Mark says the women were too scared to tell that they saw the risen Jesus.

Maybe it was eventually learned that they had gone to the wrong tomb and that was why the women were not arrested for body snatching and nobody was accused of tampering with the tomb.

It was the women who told others about the empty tomb. So it seems. Did the women deliberately lie to the apostles about the tomb and where it was?

The Christians would not have said where Jesus was in case the Jews and the Romans would have him thrown on the dump. Pilate handing Jesus over to Joseph would have been highly irregular if it happened. It would have been tantamount to admitting the Romans had had an innocent man killed so he could have been forced to reverse his decision. Pilate giving away the body would be almost impossible so the gospel lies but at least the gospel is hinting that nobody knew for sure where the body was taken.

The gospels cannot stand as evidence for a supernatural disappearance of the body when they cannot satisfy us that the right tomb was found.

JESUS

Jesus told the Pharisees and Scribes he would do no miraculous sign for them but the sign of Jonah and he would be three days in the heart of the earth before rising again. That does not sound like a tomb which would hardly be in the heart of the earth. It sounds like a deep burial in the ground. The Christians conveniently do not take the heart of the earth literally.

Acts 1:15-20 says that Judas, who betrayed Jesus, bought a field with the proceeds of having betrayed Jesus and died violently and horribly in it. If a body was found there was it Jesus' while liars said it was Judas? And why does Matthew 27 says the Sanhedrin bought it with the money for Judas flung it back at them and called it the field of blood? Why would the Sanhedrin call a field in honour of the blood of Jesus whose death they had paid blood money for? Did they bury Jesus there if they were that remorseful and turned that decent?

RESURRECTION IS A PROBLEM TOO

The Church says the New Testament stresses how Jesus' resurrection was different to a mere coming back to life and he was the first to rise like that which is why he is called the first fruits of the resurrection. The resurrection is a form of eternal salvation unlike a mere rising from the dead.

Matthew has an account of multiple resurrections with the entities leaving their tombs at the time. They rose before Jesus. So when it has resurrections happening before Jesus's, he was not the first of the fruits. Some think there is an error in the timing so Jesus and a pile of people rose at the one time. So either he rose first and they rose seconds later making it all much the same time or they were collectively the first fruit.

Lot of empty tombs about then?

Matthew weakens the case for a supernatural resurrection of Jesus and his account of the saints rising has no credence for he never said he had evidence for it. He just interprets what he had heard or perhaps he just assumes it happened. The

stories of people rising from the dead might have prompted the apostles to do the same with their hero. Perhaps they enjoyed telling it so much that they eventually came to believe their own lies.

You would wonder why the gospels seem to be interested in the tomb and its emptiness for an empty tomb in itself does not show a resurrection happened and Jesus could have been stolen and still rise. Surely a test done by the apostles or whoever on the risen man to make sure he had a body would be more important. There are no accounts of a test. Even when Jesus asks Thomas to test we are not told that Thomas did the test. Luke says Jesus has a body but nobody checks. John says there were a number who went to see the tomb and found it empty including Peter. Some sceptics feel the empty tomb started of the idea that Jesus rose.

Oddly in John you have Magdalene saying the Lord has been taken away by some "they". That is a strange way to talk about a man who supposedly at the time was dead and expected to stay dead. A real Lord could rise again so it seems she made up her mind to say he rose just because the tomb was vacant!

