

Now, I think that these are all exaggerations. But the point is, everywhere this faith went, it spread like lightning. Those people had seen the resurrection of Jesus and they would not keep silent even in the face of torture and death. And the more they were persecuted in one place, the more they and the news of Christ's resurrection spread to another. Soon the whole world of that time became Christian, and the resurrection truly did create a revolution. The whole history of the world for the next 300 years after the death of Christ—and since—can best be explained by one simple fact. Jesus rose from the dead. That fact changed the world.

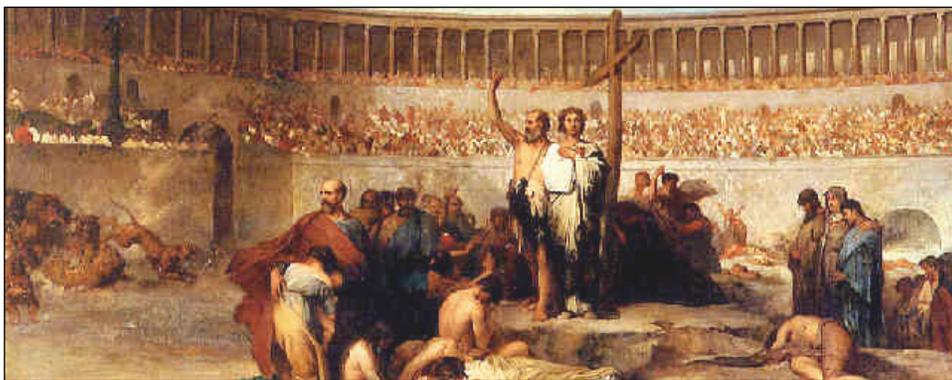
Conclusion

Let me conclude with a few words from Dr. Greenleaf:

All that Christianity asks of men...is, that they would be consistent with themselves; that they would treat its evidences as they treat the evidence of other things; and that they would try and judge its actors and witnesses, as they deal with their fellow men, when testifying to human affairs and actions, in human tribunals. Let the witnesses [to the resurrection] be compared with themselves, with each other, and with surrounding facts and circumstances; and let their testimony be sifted, as if it were given in a court of justice, on the side of the adverse party, the witness being subjected to a rigorous cross-examination. The result, it is confidently believed, will be an undoubting conviction of their integrity, ability and truth.

*Christianity does not profess to convince the perverse and headstrong, to bring irresistible evidence to the daring and profane, to vanquish the proud scorner, and afford evidences from which the careless and perverse cannot possibly escape. This might go to destroy man's responsibility. All that Christianity professes, is to propose such evidences as may satisfy the meek, the tractable, the candid, the serious inquirer.*¹⁶

He says, be honest. Humble your heart. Life, *eternal life* is available for the asking. What will you do? What will *you* do with the resurrection of Jesus? God says, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9). Will you?



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¹ William Federer, *America's God and Country: Encyclopedia of Quotations* (St. Louis: Amerisearch, 1994), 267.

² Wilbur M. Smith, *Therefore Stand* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1972), 423.

³ Simon Greenleaf, *A Treatise on the Law of Evidence* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1883), 13.

⁴ Greenleaf, correspondence with ABS, Cambridge, November 6, 1852.

⁵ Greenleaf, *An Examination &c.* (New York: Kockcroft, 1874), 25.

⁶ Sir Lionel Luckhoo, *The Question Answered: Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?* (Luckhoo Booklets), back cover.

⁷ Tom Anderson, *And the Truth Shall Set You Free*, independent booklet publication, 1998.

⁸ Val Grieve, *Verdict on the Empty Tomb* (London: Church Pastoral Society, 1976), 26.

⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.5.20, 20.9.140.

¹⁰ F.F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 113

¹¹ William Ramsay, *The Bearing of Recent Discoveries on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 81.

¹² Suetonius, *Life of Claudius*, 25.4.

¹³ Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 16.

¹⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18.63.

¹⁵ Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 37:4-8.

¹⁶ Simon Greenleaf, *An Examination &c.* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 46-53.

The Son Also Rises

Ἰησοῦς ἔζησεν
"Jesus is risen" written
on a Christian grave in
Jerusalem c. 50 A.D.

A serious investigation into
the most significant event
in the history of the world

Why Should You Examine the Evidence Seriously?

You might know the name of **Dr. Simon Greenleaf**. He was one of the founders of the Harvard School of Law, and there was another school of law named after him. He and Justice Joseph Story, the man whom he succeeded, are credited with giving the Harvard Law School the stature that it has today.

He wrote several famous works on law and evidence. Chief Justice Fuller of the United States Supreme Court said of Dr. Greenleaf, "He is the highest authority in our courts."¹ The Dictionary of American Biography says that that Greenleaf is "the greatest single authority on evidence in the entire literature of legal procedure." *Evidence* was his specialty. In the middle of the 19th century, he wrote a massive work called *A Treatise On the Law of Evidence*, which is still considered to be the greatest single authority on legal evidence.²

But he's famous for one more reason. Simon Greenleaf was also a famous skeptic of Christianity. He didn't think that anyone in modern times should believe in the resurrection of Jesus. And one time in class, when he was expressing his views, a student asked him why he didn't believe in the resurrection. And maybe you can guess what the student asked him. Had he ever examined *the evidence*?

Well, no, he hadn't. This man, who's been called the greatest authority on legal evidences in the history of the world, had never considered the evidence for his own unbelief. But he thought it was a worthy project. So he embarked upon a study of the evidence for the resurrection—Biblical, historical, archaeological, logical—to put the claims of the Bible to rest.

Dr. Greenleaf writes, "If a close examination of the evidences of Christianity may be expected of one class of men more than another, it would seem incumbent upon lawyers who make the law of evidence one of our peculiar studies. Our profession leads us to explore the mazes of falsehood, to detect its artifices, to pierce its thickest veils, to follow and expose its sophistries, to compare the statements of different witnesses with severity, to discover truth and separate it from error."³ Later he wrote to a friend, "For myself, I must say, that [I have] for many years made the evidences of Christianity the subject of close study."⁴

And his conclusion? He concluded that the resurrection of Jesus was a historical fact, and that anyone who honestly examined the evidence for it would be convinced this was the

case. The famous skeptic turned into a famous Christian. He wrote a whole book called *An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in the Courts of Justice* in which he demonstrates that “the facts related by the Four Evangelists are proved by competent and satisfactory evidence.”⁵ After closely examining everything over several years, he concluded that if the evidence for the resurrection were placed in any unbiased courtroom in the world, the resurrection would be deemed a historical fact.

And that is not just his idea. There are many, many such testimonies. Let me just mention a few. **Sir Lionel Luckhoo**, who just passed away, was a trial lawyer and diplomat, a man who was knighted twice by Queen Elizabeth. He is in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the most successful lawyer who’s ever lived. As a defense attorney, he won 248 murder trials in a row. So, as you can imagine, this was a very skeptical person, and he didn’t believe in the resurrection either. But somebody challenged him and said, “Why don’t you investigate it yourself? Use your monumental legal skills and investigate the resurrection.” So, he spent years investigating. And this man was known for taking an airtight case and dismantling it piece by piece. All through the years, there was no case so tight that he couldn’t find some hole. But this is his conclusion: “I say unequivocally that the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is so overwhelming that it compels acceptance by proof which leaves absolutely no room for doubt.”⁶ And he too became a believer in Jesus Christ. And in his own words, he said, “My life was changed 180 degrees for the good.”

Tom Anderson is the former president of the California Trial Lawyers Association, voted by the National Law Journal as one of the top ten trial lawyers of our time. He had a similar experience. He, too, was a skeptic and started on a study of the evidence. He says, “You see, my four-month study was motivated to find a loophole, any loophole, in the truths of Christ. Finding none scared me.” He wrote a book back in 1998 how he had become a Christian after being “awed, amazed and convicted by the evidence.”

And one more—the former Lord Chief Justice of England, **Lord Darling**, said, “No intelligent jury in the world could fail to bring in a verdict that the resurrection story is true.”⁸

Many men have spent years studying all the evidence, and I can only bring you a tiny bit of what they have learned. But before we begin, let me quote Dr. Greenleaf once more.

In examining the evidence of the Christian religion, it is essential to the discovery of truth that we bring to the investigation a mind freed, as far as possible, from existing prejudice, and open to conviction. There should be a readiness, on our part, to investigate with candor to follow the truth wherever it may lead us, and to submit, without reserve or objection, to all the teachings of this religion, if it be found to be of divine origin.

You must realize first that this is really possible. If it is possible that there is a God, then it is possible that God raised Jesus from the dead. And yet, as Dr. Greenleaf says well, we do not come to this subject impartially. We all have our own reasons for not wanting to believe. So, he says, let us endeavor to lay that aside as much as possible and look honestly at the evidence for what happened nearly 2,000 years ago.

1. Eyewitnesses

There are two possible reasons that we believe anything is true. One is to witness something ourselves. But there is another reason to believe. And, actually, most of what we believe about the world comes to us this way. The other reason to believe something is true is if a credible witness—or even better—if many credible witnesses tell us so.

This is how we learn things in school. And this happens every day in the courts. This is the basis of our legal system. You *can* actually bring evidence into court, and that is often done. But most of the evidence presented in court is the testimony of credible witnesses. And you can go to the electric chair in Virginia on the basis of *one credible witness*. Most things that we know about the world we have learned by believing the testimony of credible witnesses.

There are many, many eyewitness accounts of the resurrection. Do not quickly dismiss

5. Established Early

The resurrection is not a legend that developed over time. **Claudius** was emperor from 41 to 54 A.D. Less than 20 years after the resurrection, there was such major turmoil that he expelled the Jews from Rome in A.D. 49. His ancient biographer **Suetonius** records, “Because the Jews of Rome caused continuous disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus [or Christ, he] expelled them from the city.”¹² In the 50s, he records, “Punishment was inflicted on the Christians, a class of men given to a new and mischievous superstition.”¹³

Josephus was military commander who lived at the same time as Jesus, although he apparently never met him and never became a Christian. He served as general of the Jewish army during their revolt in the late 60s. He was captured, became loyal to Rome, and tried to negotiate peace with the Jews. Afterward, he became the court historian to Emperor Vespasian and wrote many historical works in the early 70s. Here is what this man who was alive at the time of Christ wrote: “At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good, and he was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them after his crucifixion and that he was alive; accordingly, he was perhaps the Messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders.”¹⁴

He was not a religious man; he was just saying it was a possibility. The point is that the resurrection is not some legend about Jesus that developed years after the fact. Here is an impartial historian, living in Judea at the same time, who knew what was going on. Josephus summarizes, “*These disciples refused to abandon their discipleship because they say he rose from the dead.*” So the resurrection account is established very early. Christ’s resurrection was actively being preached during that generation, while there were still hundreds of eye-witnesses available, exactly as Paul testifies in his letter to Corinth.

6. Revolution

The resurrection changed the whole history of the world; and in a very short time, the world of that day was conquered by Christianity. These witnesses to the resurrection turned the world upside down, in that generation.

And this is one of the recorded charges against the Christians. “These [men] who have turned the world upside down have come here too” (Acts 17:6)! “We have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world” (Acts 24:5)! People preaching that Jesus had risen from the dead were turning the whole world upside-down.

And that revolution continued. **Pliny** was governor of Pontus and Bithynia from 111-113 A.D., and he wrote a famous letter to the emperor **Trajan** about how to try and punish Christians in court. The governor complains, “For the contagion of this superstition has spread not only to the cities but also to the villages and farms. But it seems possible to check and cure it. It is certainly quite clear that the temples ... had been almost deserted.”

Tertullian, a man born just over 100 years after the resurrection, wrote this to the Romans: “We are but of yesterday, and yet we have filled all the places that belong to you—cities, islands, forts, towns, exchanges; the military camps themselves, tribes, town councils, the palace, the senate, the market-place; we have left you nothing but your temples. ... Nearly all the citizens you have in nearly all the cities are Christian.”¹⁵

Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, wrote, “There is no people, Greek or barbarian, or of any other race, by whatever name or manners they may be distinguished, however ignorant of arts or agriculture, whether they dwell in tents or wander about in covered wagons, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered in the name of the crucified Jesus to the Father and Creator of all things.”

Emperor **Maximian** complains “almost all” had abandoned Rome’s worship for Christianity.

declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked—but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand (Isaiah 53:7-10).

And there are many more passages predicting the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

4. Torture

These eyewitnesses to the resurrection were killed in the most unspeakable ways because they insisted that Jesus was alive. All of the Apostles sealed their testimony in blood, except John who was exiled on a Roman penal colony. Paul got off easy because he was a Roman citizen—he was only beheaded. Peter, on the other hand, was crucified upside down and forced to watch the death of his wife. The Romans maintained their rule in part by becoming the world's foremost experts in death by excruciating torture. And the cross was such a terrible death that we even have a word about that experience: excruciating—*ex*, from, *crucis*, a cross.

We know from the letters of **Pliny** and the **Emperor Trajan** that the Romans were ready to let the Christians go if they recanted. That's what they *wanted* to happen. They wanted the eyewitnesses to change their story. But they all maintained their testimony to their dying whisper. And knowing what happened to them, we can say confidently that if these men could possibly have had any second thoughts about what they had seen, they would have.

And so, the Romans began inventing new, innovative ways of torturing the Christian witnesses to death. **Cornelius Tacitus** (55-120 AD), known as “the greatest historian” of ancient Rome, wrote this of Nero who began his persecution of Christians in 59 A.D.:

“Nero ...inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and **a most mischievous superstition**, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome. ... Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired. Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle.”

In 64 A.D., **Nero** set fire to Rome, and then blamed it on the Christians. Nero *hated* the Christians. You did not want to be a Christian in those days. If there were any way for these people to deny the risen Christ, they would have done so. If someone takes a knife to your wife's neck and says, “Change your story, or I will sell your children into slavery, and this very evening I will cover you and your wife with tar and light you on fire in Caesar's garden,” what would you say? Unless you were so certain of the resurrection of Jesus, that you

knew that this was not the end, you would say anything—anything. That is when you really figure out what you really believe. And they said, “This is not the end. I saw Jesus rise, and we will rise too. This is not the end.”

Dr. Greenleaf said of these noble witnesses, “The annals of military warfare afford scarcely an example of the like heroic constancy, patience, and unflinching courage. They had every possible motive to review carefully the grounds of their faith, and the evidences of the great facts and truths they asserted.” But finding themselves unable to recant, they and their families died under the most gruesome methods of torture ever devised by man. And it was at this very time that the Greek word for a witness, *martyros*, took on a new and terrible meaning. Do *not* lightly dismiss the testimony of such men.



Christians were crucified and mocked

them just because they wrote their testimony down in what is now called the Bible. Can you imagine, in a trial, someone saying, “Your honor, we can't have any of *these* eyewitnesses testify, because they say they wrote down what happened and they believe it's *true*. We need *impartial* witnesses.” And remember that most of the people who saw Jesus rise from the dead sealed their testimony with their own blood. Let them have a fair hearing.

This is the way that the resurrection of Jesus is to be proved to the world. Jesus told the people, “You shall be *witnesses* to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). And this is what the disciples of Jesus always preached. You might think that the disciples would stand up and tell people about the *Sermon on the Mount* or some of Jesus' moral teaching. But that is not the case. Instead, every time they stand up, they say, “This Jesus, God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses” (Acts 2:32). This is the heart of their message to the world. “Jesus has risen from the dead. Jesus is alive!” And they recorded their own interaction with the risen Jesus on various occasions.

Paul summarizes the list of eyewitness in his first letter to the church in Corinth. This is the earliest book of the New Testament, except possibly for *James*, between 55 and 57 A.D.

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also. (1Cor 15:3-8)

This was written very soon after the resurrection of Jesus. He starts off by saying that he's reminding them of what he told them in 51 A.D. when he was there, which is what he himself received from others. Paul had heard the testimony of those eyewitnesses when he was in Damascus in 32 A.D. and in Jerusalem with the other disciples in 38 A.D. Of course, there are more appearances of Jesus recorded in the Bible than these. Jesus appears to several women at his tomb, and to some disciples on the Emmaus road. But this is Paul's summary:

• **The Twelve:** Jesus spends a lot of time with the twelve disciples after he rose. He meets them in their upper room and lets them feel his scars. He eats breakfast with them. He meets with them on a mountain. He meets them near Bethany. And these men author the New Testament.

Now, you say, what about Luke? He never saw Jesus. That's true. So this is how he starts his books. The Gospel of Luke begins, “Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who **from the beginning were eyewitnesses** and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed” (Luke 1:1-4). And the book of Acts, begins “The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He, through the Holy Spirit, had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by **many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days**” (Acts 1:1-3). Luke is in the Bible because he records the testimony of all the *eyewitnesses*. He documents the “many infallible proofs” which Jesus made to his disciples for forty days before he went up to heaven.

• **Over five hundred brethren at once:** When Paul is writing, there are still hundreds of men and women out in the world telling others that Jesus rose from the dead. And here, he recalls how Jesus appeared to *500 people* at once. If you were to put 500 people on the witness stand and examine them for twenty minutes apiece, it would take over a month to hear their testimony in court. I wonder how many courts in America would dismiss 500 people and a solid month of eyewitness testimony. Some critics have said that these people were just hallucinating. One psychologist replied, “If you had 500 people all having the same hallucination at the same time, that would be a bigger miracle than the resurrection itself.”

• **By James:** Paul continues, “After that He was seen by James,” by which he means, the brother of Jesus. Jesus’ own brother didn’t believe in him, so Jesus makes a special appearance to James to show him that he really is alive from the dead. And James explodes. He becomes the leader of the Jerusalem church, and he writes probably the first book of the New Testament, the book of James. He becomes the foremost apostle of Christ in Jerusalem, testifying to the resurrection of Jesus. And the secular Jewish historian Josephus, who was in Jerusalem at the time, records his martyrdom in 62 A.D. “[The high priest] assembled the Sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some of his companions; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned.”⁹

• **By all the apostles:** That is, not just the twelve he just mentioned. This is almost certainly referring to the 120 disciples in the upper room recorded in Acts chapter 1—the ones Jesus met with and sent out to testify of the resurrection (*apostelos* just means “one who is sent”).

• **Last of all ... by me also:** Paul is perhaps an even more amazing witness than James. Paul had been the chief persecutor of the new Christian church. He went out and arrested Christians and helped put them to death. One day, he is going to Damascus to round up some more victims, and Jesus meets him on the road. And all of a sudden, the chief persecutor of the church becomes the chief preacher of the resurrection to the world. And people can’t believe it. Even the Christians can’t believe it. The chief enemy of the Christians, a life-long Pharisee, a man who had never seen or known Jesus, is preaching that Jesus has truly risen from the dead and has appeared to him. Paul is the most surprising eyewitness of all.

In summary, Jesus appears to hundreds of eyewitnesses in a great variety of ways—to tenderhearted people, to skeptical people; in the daytime, at nighttime; at mealtime, outside, inside; in the mountains, on the plains, at the beach, in the upper room; in public and in private. He eats with people, meets with people, and has them feel the scars in his hands and side. And so Jesus, by “many infallible proofs,” demonstrates that he has truly risen from the dead.

2. Archaeology

What kind of archaeological evidence is there? Do we have pieces of the cross? No. Somebody said that if you put together all the pieces of the cross that have been sold, you would have an ark, not a cross. But what do we have? Well, first, of course, there is the empty tomb. That piece of physical evidence is still available for you to see today. And you can go in. My wife and I did on our honeymoon. And it is empty.

There is an interesting testimony of **Thallus**, who wrote a history of the Eastern Mediterranean around 52 A.D. He records the darkness that fell on the land when Jesus was crucified, but insists that it was an eclipse. But there is an obvious problem with that. Julius Africanus, a Christian writing 150 years later says, “Thallus, in the third book of his histories, explains away the darkness as an eclipse of the sun—unreasonably, as it seems to me. For the Hebrews celebrate the Passover on the 14th day according to the moon.”¹⁰ A solar eclipse can’t take place during a full moon. It’s on the opposite side of the earth.

Phlegon was a Greek historian who wrote an extensive chronology around 137 A.D. He records, “In the fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad [32-33 A.D.] there was the greatest eclipse of the sun and that it became night in the sixth hour of the day [i.e., noon] so that stars even appeared in the heavens. There was a great earthquake in Bithynia, and many things were overturned in Nicaea.”

But the strongest evidence that archeology gives us is the historical reliability of the Bible. And many famous historians and archaeologists have become Christians in the course of their research. One very well-known atheist archaeologist at Oxford wanted to make his career by disproving the facts of the Bible. And he collected a lot of funding for an expedition so he could publish a book. He wrote a book, but it was not what his friends expected. He became a Christian. In 1915, **Sir William Ramsay** published *The Bearing of Recent Discoveries on*

the Trustworthiness of the New Testament. He says, “Luke’s history is unsurpassed in respect to its trustworthiness. ... Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements trustworthy ... this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.”¹¹

In addition, we have ancient fragments of the gospels which prove that this was not a myth which developed over time. The fragment pictured here is from an Egyptian manuscript of the Gospel of John from around 125 A.D. These eyewitness accounts were recorded and very widely circulated *at that very time* in history. And because of the large number of written accounts we possess, the resurrection of Jesus is one of the best attested facts in ancient history. With most events, we may have a couple of written, historical accounts. But, in the Bible, we have many people writing first-hand accounts of the resurrection, and historians recording many, many others.



3. Scripture

Paul writes “[Christ] rose again the third day, *according to the Scriptures*.” When Paul writes that, he does not mean according to the *New Testament* scriptures. They did not exist. He means the *Old Testament* scriptures. He means, “according to Moses and the Prophets.” In other words, the resurrection of Jesus was not a new message. It is the same message that was taught for centuries every Sabbath day at the synagogue, as they looked forward to the coming Messiah. **Isaiah** says, “He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces” (Isa 25:8). **David** prophesies, “For You will not leave my soul in the grave, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption” (Ps 16:10). The promised Messiah (or in Greek: *Christ*) is going to come and triumph over death. **Daniel** prophesies to the King of Babylon around 600 B.C. when this will take place:

After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.... And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever (Daniel 2:39-44).

It is *impossible*, someone will say, that anyone could predict ahead of time that four successive kingdoms should rule over the Mediterranean world before the coming of Messiah. Nobody can predict the rise and fall of great kingdoms. This had to be edited by Christians after the fact. No, plenty of copies of Daniel have been found in ancient Jewish libraries B.C., such as those from the libraries at Qumran and Nag Hammadi. The fact is that God promised his people around 600 B.C., while they were still in exile, that Messiah would come 490 years after their return to Jerusalem (described as seventy “sevens” or weeks of years):

Seventy weeks [or “sevens”] are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself (Daniel 9:24-26).

The Book of Daniel is a short book, well worth your time to read. In it Daniel foretells much more of the future history of the Messiah and the Mediterranean world. God also told Isaiah over 700 years before Jesus about the death and resurrection of the Messiah:

He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will