

## Jesus rose from the dead – Some Historians agree!

At the centre of the Christian faith is the death of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection. It is common knowledge that professional historians are virtually unanimous in affirming Jesus' death on the cross as fact.<sup>1</sup> Further, according to an in-depth, 700 pages academic study, almost all scholars writing on the subject also regard the following as indisputable facts because there is very strong evidence for them:

*-Very shortly after Jesus' death, the disciples (followers of Jesus) had experiences that led them to believe and proclaim that Jesus had risen and appeared to them.*

*-Within a few years after Jesus' death, Paul converted after experiencing what he interpreted as a post-resurrection appearance of Jesus.*<sup>2</sup>

The two quotes above are from the ground-breaking book, "The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach" by Prof Michael R. Licona. In it he writes:

*"The objective of this investigation was to learn and apply the approach of historians outside of the community of biblical scholars to the question of whether Jesus rose from the dead ... and then weighing a number of hypotheses representative of what is being proposed at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In the end, the resurrection hypothesis came out on top and meets the standards discussed herein for being historical."*<sup>3</sup>

For more details the reader is encouraged to buy the book or to read a review on it. In this footnote 4<sup>4</sup> are several links to assessments of Prof Licona's study.

### Muslim objection not valid anymore

A number of Muslims agree that the death of Jesus on the cross was accurately recorded by historians, but only as it appeared to the witnesses at the time. This view is based on Surah 4, An-Nisa, verses 157-158, "they neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so ... But Allah raised him unto Himself ..."

This alternative view is not possible in light of the strong evidence in favour of the resurrection of Jesus presented above. What is clearly taught in the Bible finds confirmation from other historians and scholars<sup>5</sup> who have applied the established historical methodology.<sup>6</sup> Surely Jesus would have corrected his followers who believed he actually died on the cross, if it merely 'appeared to be' the case.

Moreover, none of the first century manuscripts circulating among the early church support the Quranic version of events written in the sixth century. It is unclear, like all the other passages concerning the end of Jesus' life on

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.uncover.org.uk/questions/whats-the-evidence-outside-the-bible-for-jesus-life-and-teaching/>  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/14/what-is-the-historical-evidence-that-jesus-christ-lived-and-died>  
<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/historical-evidence-for-the-resurrection>

<sup>2</sup> Licona, Michael R. The Resurrection of Jesus. A New Historiographical Approach (p. 303). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition. 2010

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. (pp. 619-620). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

<sup>4</sup> <https://apologetics315.com/2013/10/book-review-the-resurrection-of-jesus-a-new-historiographical-approach-by-michael-licona/>

<https://jenniferguo.wordpress.com/2015/07/08/the-resurrection-of-jesus-a-new-historiographical-approach-michael-licona/>  
[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKewajcTo8oz2AhVYPOwKHVqYBloQFnoECCQQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.etsjets.org%2Ffiles%2FJETS-PDFs%2F54%2F54-4%2FJETS\\_54-4\\_823-883\\_Book%2520Reviews.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2r6qy\\_tD8WEmNRMxdc6ZzF](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKewajcTo8oz2AhVYPOwKHVqYBloQFnoECCQQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.etsjets.org%2Ffiles%2FJETS-PDFs%2F54%2F54-4%2FJETS_54-4_823-883_Book%2520Reviews.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2r6qy_tD8WEmNRMxdc6ZzF) (pages 839 –844) digital version, pdf: pages 17-22

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewajcTo8oz2AhVYPOwKHVqYBloQFnoECCUQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.academia.edu%2F12562597%2FReview\\_of\\_The\\_Resurrection\\_of\\_Jesus\\_A\\_New\\_Historiographical\\_Approach\\_Michael\\_R\\_Licona\\_IVP\\_Academic\\_2010\\_718\\_pp\\_in\\_Theology\\_February\\_2012\\_pp\\_51\\_52%3Fauto%3Ddownload&usg=AOvVaw01wOYWqY\\_dDKmDcVfudDFa](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewajcTo8oz2AhVYPOwKHVqYBloQFnoECCUQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.academia.edu%2F12562597%2FReview_of_The_Resurrection_of_Jesus_A_New_Historiographical_Approach_Michael_R_Licona_IVP_Academic_2010_718_pp_in_Theology_February_2012_pp_51_52%3Fauto%3Ddownload&usg=AOvVaw01wOYWqY_dDKmDcVfudDFa)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWSG5okmUr8> - <https://www.publicchristianity.org/an-historian-examines-the-resurrection/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://smartfaith.net/2020/08/29/atheist-historians-admit-evidence-for-resurrection/>  
<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/historys-biggest-hoax-how-historians-think-about-the-resurrection/>

earth.<sup>7</sup> No wonder there are a number of Muslim interpretations concerning it. Some Muslim scholars are even supporting the traditional Christian view.<sup>8</sup>

The Islamic account as understood by most Muslims, does not allow for Jesus to be seen alive on earth anymore. It also turns God into a deceiver of all Christians, the world's largest religion today. Who knows what else he only made to appear in the life of those who were loyal to him? Can such a "god" be trusted at all? Therefore, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead has become an additional argument against the religion of Islam. Let us briefly look at other ones that have recently come to light:

### **Mecca, the city at the centre of Islam is not known until late in history**

According to Islam Mecca is one of the best spots on earth;<sup>9</sup> the first House (of worship) appointed for mankind was found there.<sup>10</sup> Mohammad was born and raised in Mecca.<sup>11</sup> If that is the case, why is there no reference to such an important city in any historical document outside the Quran until 741 AD<sup>12</sup>, that is 109 years after the death of Muhammad? Why is Mecca not known by any of the kingdoms surrounding Arabia before the 8th century? Why does it not appear on any map before 800 AD.<sup>13</sup> If Mecca was one of the oldest, most important cities of mankind, why was it only mentioned in history so late? Furthermore, Mecca is not on any trade routes found in 7th century Arabia. They all went along and on top of the Western Plateau. Mecca is 1,000 meters below it. No trade by sea went via Mecca either, but along the Western coast of the Red Sea, in Africa. Only there was plenty of water, essential for food, people, towns, trade and history.<sup>14</sup>

### **Parts of the Qur'an were originally made up of songs written by Christian sects**

Since the Quran was written in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, it is necessary to understand the words in the context of that ancient setting. For a thousand years before the birth of Islam, Aramaic (or Syriac as it sometimes called) was the common language of many parts of the Near East. It was the native language of the first Christians and the main liturgical language of the early Christian churches from Syria to Iran.

Dr Günter Lüling analysed poetry in the Quran which looked familiar to him as an Aramaic scholar in the 1960s. He removed the dots and vowels from the Arabic script which were only added to the text later and replaced them with Aramaic dots and vowels. To his surprise he discovered that the poems were identical to 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> century hymns written by some byzantine Christian sects in Aramaic. Those songs contain text about Jesus and were used for worship by them! Dr Lüling wrote about his findings initially as a PhD thesis in 1969. They were first published in 1977 and have been translated into English in 2003.<sup>15</sup>

Additionally, according to some scholars about a quarter of the text in the Quran is obscure in meaning for both Arabic native speakers and Western translators. Dr Christoph Luxenberg used a 7-step process<sup>16</sup> of textual elimination to recreate the original text in Aramaic. He showed in an in-depth study<sup>17</sup> how many of those

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<sup>7</sup> <https://christianityexplained.net/to/muslims/easter-story-found-quran/> <https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/green/crucifixion.html>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2opKa287\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2opKa287_0) For Isma'ili commentators (Ibn Al Rawandi, Abu Hatim and Razhes) who agree with the Christian view see also, "The Cross of Christ: Islamic Perspectives by Jr. Oakes, W. Richard, pages 256-264, 305-311, quoting Abu Hatim Al-Razi, "Alam al- Nubuwwa", pages 131 -132

<sup>9</sup> <https://islamqa.info/en/answers/199894/the-best-spot-on-earth-in-general-terms-is-makkah-then-madinah-but-the-best-place-to-live-on-earth-for-each-person-is-the-spot-where-he-is-most-able-to-obey-allah-and-his-messenger>

<sup>10</sup> Surah 3:96

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Muhammad/Biography-according-to-the-Islamic-tradition>

<sup>12</sup> <https://madainproject.com/mecca-through-time>

<sup>13</sup> [https://nabataea.net/explore/founding\\_of\\_islam/mecca-not-on-ancient-maps/](https://nabataea.net/explore/founding_of_islam/mecca-not-on-ancient-maps/)

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y\\_r\\_dZ5CBsg&t=1091s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_r_dZ5CBsg&t=1091s)

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.amazon.com/Challenge-Islam-Reformation-Reconstruction-Reinterpretations/dp/8120819527/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=3250SG5VB3JPB&keywords=gunter+luling&qid=1649097654&srefix=gunter+luling%2Caps%2C233&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Challenge-Islam-Reformation-Reconstruction-Reinterpretations/dp/8120819527/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3250SG5VB3JPB&keywords=gunter+luling&qid=1649097654&srefix=gunter+luling%2Caps%2C233&sr=8-1)

<sup>16</sup> For more details, please watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UPlOjW0Oo4&t=1996s>

<sup>17</sup> "The Syro-Aramaic Reading of the Koran: A Contribution to the Decoding of the Language of the Koran" [https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/3899300882/ref=db\\_a\\_def\\_rwt\\_hsch\\_vapi\\_taft\\_p1\\_i0](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/3899300882/ref=db_a_def_rwt_hsch_vapi_taft_p1_i0)

passages can be understood in light of the fact that Aramaic had a pervasive influence on the development of the Arabic text of the Quran.

One example is the word translated in the Quran as "virgins", believed to be given in paradise to those who die in Jihad. In ancient Aramaic Christian hymns, it is translated as "grapes" that those who enter paradise will enjoy. Another example is the Aramaic word for Quran, "qorono" or "qer'yana". It means lectionary, from the sacred scripture, used in ritual masses.<sup>18</sup> In many other intriguing instances Aramaic vocabulary and concepts found in Christian lectionaries, homilies, sermons, poems and hymns influenced the text of the Quran.

### **Coins and rock inscriptions fail to confirm the standard Islamic narrative**

The coins and rock inscriptions from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> century AD do not confirm the standard Islamic narrative of being the last and only religion.<sup>19</sup> They speak of a different story. It is one of compromise up to as late as 695 AD when the phrase khalifat allah / "ruler" was first introduced and Christian doctrine was attacked: For example, a Christian coin minted between 640 and 660 by the Arab power in the Levant has the cross of Christ on it.<sup>20</sup> A silver Drachma minted by an Arab governor in Persia (651/661) contains Zoroastrian symbols, besides the Arabic inscription, "bsm llh", "in the name of God".<sup>21</sup> Gadara (Hamat Gader) is a rock inscription, dated from 663 AD. It mentions Muawiya, the first Caliph who founded the Umayyad dynasty.<sup>22</sup> The text is introduced by the Christian cross.<sup>23</sup>

As late as 740 -750 AD Abd al-Malik, the fifth caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, introduced the Kufic script developed at Kūfah, Iraq on coins<sup>24</sup>, replacing the Hijazi script. The former was used to write the earliest surviving copies of the Qur'ān from the 8th to the 10th century. One wonders why they were not written in the latter script that was used in the Hejaz region of the Arabian Peninsula, including the cities of Mecca and Medina<sup>25</sup> where the Quran is said to have been revealed first.

We also find a story of reinterpretation in coins and rocks. The Arabic word *mu-hamad* "the praised one" is derived from the Hebrew *ish-hamudot*, "greatly beloved" found in the Old Testament book of Daniel 10:11.<sup>26</sup> The first inscription found on a coin is dated as late as 679 -691 AD.<sup>27</sup> Since Muhammad is said to be the last messenger and part of the Muslim creed, one would expect him much earlier on ancient artefacts.

**Narrative of preservation of Qur'an has holes - Current Qur'an contains thousands of scribal errors - Earliest Arabic Qur'an manuscripts have thousands of corrections** - Details about the last three findings are manifold and can be found elsewhere.<sup>28</sup>

### **Why did Jesus die and rise from the dead?**

Here is what has been established so far: Historians virtually unanimously agree that Jesus Christ died. The resurrection hypothesis explains best the experiences that led the followers of Jesus to believe and proclaim that he had risen and appeared to them. It meets the standards for being historical. Historians, however, cannot tell us the reason why Jesus died and rose again. For this we must, of course, consult those who follow him. Their explanation of these momentous and unique events, recorded in the Torah and Injeel, make the most sense.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HBc66ylaqr0>

<sup>19</sup> The same can be concluded from the study of early writings outside the Quran: [https://www.academia.edu/41940869/WHO\\_IS\\_IN\\_WHO\\_IS\\_OUT\\_EARLY\\_MUSLIM\\_IDENTITY\\_THROUGH\\_EPIGRAPHY\\_AND\\_THEORY](https://www.academia.edu/41940869/WHO_IS_IN_WHO_IS_OUT_EARLY_MUSLIM_IDENTITY_THROUGH_EPIGRAPHY_AND_THEORY)

<sup>20</sup> See pages 7, 9, 10, 15, 22, 32, 35 on this Powerpoint by Odon Lafontaine: <https://thegreatsecretofislam.files.wordpress.com/2021/10/the-creation-of-islam-by-the-caliphs-odon-lafontaine.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. page 14.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Muawiyah-I>

<sup>23</sup> See page 17 on this Powerpoint by Odon Lafontaine: <https://thegreatsecretofislam.files.wordpress.com/2021/10/the-creation-of-islam-by-the-caliphs-odon-lafontaine.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. page 38

<sup>25</sup> <https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/hijazi-script/m0c0xbm?hl=en>

<sup>26</sup> See pages 3, 25 on this Powerpoint by Odon Lafontaine: <https://thegreatsecretofislam.files.wordpress.com/2021/10/the-creation-of-islam-by-the-caliphs-odon-lafontaine.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. page 22.

<sup>28</sup> For example here: [https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/oskar/cross\\_kaaba.html](https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/oskar/cross_kaaba.html)

At the time of writing there is a horrific war going on in Europe between Ukraine and Russia! On a regular basis we are being confronted with horrible, unbelievable images of atrocities. Did you know that it is only one of currently 22 ongoing wars in 2022?<sup>29</sup> About 135 major conflicts have occurred previously in world history, starting only from 1300 BC when records began.<sup>30</sup> In addition there are ongoing struggles in our own hearts and between ourselves and God. While mankind has been able to fly to the moon and send unmanned missions even beyond, it has not made any progress in taming its own outrageous selfishness.

Now contrast our miserable, shameful state with God and his perfect attributes of holiness, purity, justice and love. As history shows, our good deeds are not changing our hearts. Neither will they be able to pay off our debts before him. Do we really think God would admit us into heaven in such a hopeless state? Although he is merciful, the unchanging One would have to change some of his other flawless standards to exercise mercy. That is impossible. To believe that God made us weak does not help our cause either. If that were the case, why does he punish us in hell for what we cannot help doing?

The Bible teaches us that we have not always been slaves to sin. It started with Adam and Eve rebelling against the commandment of God who loved them in paradise. The result was death and separation. As we have seen so far, the love of God calls for restoration of our relationship with him but the justice of God demands punishment which only God himself can deal with. He has chosen to do that via the concept of sacrifice found in four stories written in both the Bible and the Quran:

**-Adam and Eve (Hawa):** When they sinned and discovered they were naked, a horrible shame and fear entered into their lives. They tried to cover themselves with leaves. God gave them garments of animal skin, pointing to the first sacrifice that deals with the devastating result of sin. (Genesis 3:7, 21) Men's effort to do good deeds (symbolised by the leaves) to cover their shame and fear caused by sin was not enough from God's perspective. In the Quran too God gives them 'clothing to cover their shame.' (Surah 7, Al Araf, verse 26). Shame only comes as a result of sin. Where there is no actual, consciously committed sin there is no shame, hence small children do not mind being naked.

**-Cain and Abel (Habil and Kabil):** God accepted the animal sacrifice of Abel but rejected the sacrifice of crop made by Cain. (Surah 5, Al Maida, verse 27, Genesis 4:3-7)

**-Abraham (Ibrahim):** God provided an animal as a sacrifice instead of the son (Surah 37, Al Saffat, verse 107, Genesis 22). It cannot have been a simple act of worship on Abraham's part because the Quran says, 'we ransomed him with a mighty sacrifice.' Compared with the son who is much more valuable than an animal, the latter must have been called 'mighty' because it symbolically pointed to a perfect sacrifice to come in the future.

**-Moses (Musa):** He was commanded by God to sacrifice animals for the absolute certain forgiveness of sins of the people of Israel (Numbers 19:1-10). This story is alluded to in Surah 2, Al Baqara, verses 67-74. The Jewish Temple is also mentioned in Surah 17, Surah Al-Isra, verses 1-7. Daily sacrifices of animals for the forgiveness of sins were central to it according to the Torah. Surah 5:44 mentions Jewish priests. One of their main tasks was to sacrifice animals for the forgiveness of sins.

The fifth story is clearly taught in the Bible only. Without it, however, the previous four stories are incomplete:

**-Jesus (Isa):** As mentioned already, animal sacrifices in the Torah (Old Testament) are less valuable than human beings. They only pointed to the perfect and sinless sacrifice to come. An illustration may help to understand this better: It is a bit like a cheque (=animal sacrifice) which guarantees money (=Jesus and his death). Once it is paid, the cheque becomes obsolete. Jesus died on behalf of all people in the world to take away the sins, shame, fear and guilt of all those who repent and believe in him (John 1:29, Mark 10:45). God confirmed his work by raising Jesus back to live on the third day and up to Him about forty days later (Acts 1:3, 1 Cor 15).

Since Muslims are asked in the Quran to believe in the previous books from which we just explained God's way to forgive mankind, do you believe in it? If not, please consider Surah 2, Al-Baqarah, 107: "Whatever message We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than that or the like thereof..." What could possibly be

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<sup>29</sup> <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-currently-at-war>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/list-of-wars-2031197>

better than to receive instantly and absolutely certain forgiveness of sins, restoration from shame to honour, release from fear and guilt and power for a life in obedience to God? All this has been promised in the previous Scriptures to all who truly repent and believe in God's way.

He is not interested in our feeble, even religious attempts "to better ourselves". He does not want us to have only a transactional<sup>31</sup>, self-centred, performance-based relationship with him that says: "I am nice to you if you are nice to me." Instead, he offers us a transformational relationship, built on his own sacrificial, grace filled love for others shown in Jesus. Imagine being loved and to love like that! It is possible only in the power<sup>32</sup> of God by submitting to him when we receive the Good News described above!

## Conclusion

Should not the well-established facts of the death and resurrection of Jesus make us all take his statements seriously and act on them anew? Especially so, in view of the seven mentioned "nails in the coffin of Islam"<sup>33</sup> and the present chaos in this world? Jesus alone promises:

*"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die. (John 11:25)*

Why don't you get a Bible and start reading it? For example, in the Gospel of John. You can also do it online.<sup>34</sup> The world's complete bestseller has been available in 717 different languages since the beginning of 2022. The New Testament has been translated into another 1582 languages.<sup>35</sup> Excerpts and stories of the Bible are available in an additional 1196 languages. Those who cannot read are also catered for. They can listen to or watch the Bible in over 6000 languages.<sup>36</sup>

If you would like to give your life to Jesus or have questions and comments please write to: [Oskar1@live.co.uk](mailto:Oskar1@live.co.uk)

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<sup>31</sup> More details on "fol:low/ Be Loving", devotional Youversion Bible app, 12.04.22 2022, R.P.C., <https://www.rpc.me/>

<sup>32</sup> John 13:34, "Love one another as I (Jesus) have loved you", is only possible in his power: Phil. 2:13, Col. 1:27, 29.

<sup>33</sup> These are arguments against Islam mentioned on pages 1-3. At least six nails are needed to secure the lid of a coffin: <https://www.casketbuildersupply.com/pages/build-your-own-coffin>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1&version=NIV>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.wycliffe.org.uk/about/our-impact/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://globalrecordings.net/en>