

23V05 – Resurrection of Jesus as a Historical Problem

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me today for an @ the PUNLA coffee table.

I would like to share with you an article I read by N.T. Wright “*Christian Origins and the Resurrection of Jesus: The Resurrection of Jesus as a Historical Problem*”. I to share this with you as a potential resource that at least some of you might be interested in.

Let’s pray. Heavenly Father please guide our discussion today. Help me to stay out of the way, so you can use me. If I say anything wrong, please don’t let them remember my errand words but remember what you want them to hear regardless of my words. We trust you and we know you have promised the wisdom we need to understand your word in the Bible. Help us to let the Holy Spirit lead us and guide us. Bless our time together and I pray all these things in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Okay the article is titled “*Christian Origins and the Resurrection of Jesus: The Resurrection of Jesus as a Historical Problem*” written by N.T. Wright. N.T. Wright begins his article explaining that this article is the first of a three part series. This particular article focuses on the “big picture of Christian origins” which can only be explained by a bodily resurrection of Jesus. Professor Wright introduces us to historical arguments from two perspectives. On one hand, the first-century Judaism and on the other first-century Christianity. He proposes the challenge to his reader to ask the question, how or what would cause a first-century person of Judaism to suddenly shift their perspective to that of first-century Christianity.

In the first section of the article, he provides us with a historical perspective on second-temple era Jewish beliefs about life after death and resurrection. Wright stresses the wide ranging perspectives that were most prevalent in the first-century. These ranged widely from the Sadducees who denied any post-mortem existence to the Pharisees who affirmed the future bodily resurrection. Wright also stresses that first-century views of Jewish people including life after death as a purely disembodied soul in some sort of blissful state. Wright’s point was that there was a spectrum of perspectives on a future resurrection. What was apparent was that every first-century Jew would have understood resurrection to be life after death in a full re-embodiment . Additionally, second temple ear jews believed that any resurrection would be part of a future time when God restored His reign on earth presumably in the form of a restored national Israel.

The second part of the article describes the origins of Christianity as a historical puzzle. Christianity was simultaneously a kingdom-of-God movement, a messianic movement, and a resurrection movement. Each of these movements contrasted with what a second-temple Judaism would have expected. The second-temple era Jew viewed the kingdom of God as God’s liberation of Israel. Yet the first-century Christian taught that the kingdom of God had come through the crucified Messiah Jesus. Wright asks the question, what on earth would cause first-century Jews, like Peter and Paul, to change

their perception so drastically to a concept that had never been held before. Next was the first century Jew's view of the Messiah. The historical evidence shows that the Jews expected the Messiah to be a conqueror to defeat the pagans and reestablish the reign of YHWH to Zion, which did not happen. Yet, Christians declared that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, even though he was killed by the pagans. Last, Wright addresses the resurrection, and how Christian story of the resurrection of Jesus was in direct conflict with any second-temple Jewish concept of resurrection.

Let's Pray

Father God, thank you for giving us the resources and sources to answer these tough questions. We know you know all things. When we see how things fit perfectly in your plan. Wow. Only with God is this possible Thank you for giving us the Holy Spirit to guide us and help us. Help us to open the Bible and look into history to answer our questions. I pray these things in your name Lord Jesus, Amen

Okay. I did like this article. Although the content could have been presented in a much more concise manner. A sixteen page journal article was a little much for the point being shared. However, Wright's approach shows that the origins of Christianity were only plausible if Jesus was actually bodily resurrected after he died. This contrast between second-temple Jewish perspective and the first-century Christian was a very compelling historical argument for the resurrection of Jesus.

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table today, I hope you'll join us again.

If you liked the message, please share the link with a friend. Send me comments, my email should be on the screen.

Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.