

## **The Resurrection of Jesus III**

**By Greg Rangel**

Does it make a difference to believe in the resurrection of Jesus? This question was asked last week in our last article. The answer is a definite yes. It will determine where one will spend eternity.

Even though there were more than five hundred witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus, there are still many today that fail to believe that Jesus arose from the dead. They give such arguments like, 'the disciples stole his body,' and, 'Jesus did not really die, he swooned while he was on the cross and his disciples thought he died.' Another argument that people usually use is, 'it was not Jesus who was on the cross. It was someone else.'

As we examine those arguments that are put forth against the resurrection of Jesus, we see that they are built on a straw-man foundation. That is, the arguments have no logic or solid reasoning behind them.

Let us deal first with the most common argument, which is, 'the disciples stole his body.'

This argument actually began with the Jews themselves. In Matthew 28:11-15 says; "Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."

Even though this argument was fabricated by the Jews after hearing that Jesus did rise from the dead, many people are still using this argument and believing in it. Prior to the resurrection the Jews had placed Roman soldiers by the tomb of Jesus so that the disciples would not come and take his body during the night (Matthew 27:63-66).

It is very ridiculous to believe that His disciples stole his body for the following reasons. First, the disciples were not valiant and powerful men to go and steal the body of Jesus. When Jesus was buried, the Bible says that the disciples were hiding due to being afraid of the Jews. John 20:19 says; "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

How could this group of eleven who abandoned Jesus after he got arrested stand up to a Roman guard which usually would be over one hundred soldiers? It is impossible. But let us suppose, just for the sake of argument, that they all of a

sudden received boldness to go and fight with over one hundred Roman soldiers who were trained to kill at a moment's notice. Well, as soon as they arrive to the tomb they see these soldiers guarding it. How could they take on so many soldiers? Again for argument sake, if the disciples fought with the soldiers, how come not one of them got killed? And why didn't the soldiers mention that the disciples fought with them?

So let us suppose that these eleven disciples overcame the one hundred plus soldiers. After their heroic battle they encounter a problem. The stone was too big for them to move. Supposing they moved the stone all by themselves after killing one hundred soldiers, and as they get the body of Jesus then they encounter a major problem indeed. How could they convince the world that Jesus arose from the dead without any proof? It was Thomas the Apostle that said in John 20:25 "...Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

If the disciples stole the body of Jesus, then why dedicate their life and their death to a lie? Why suffer decapitation, torture, being cut in two, having their feet fried in olive oil, being eaten alive by wild animals, and crucified upside down? Why were they going to die for a lie? Also, if they stole His body, surely His body would have been produced at some point.

**Pastor Greg Rangel is the Pastor of Edification Calvary Chapel in Harlingen TX. You may reach him via email at [gregrangel@msn.com](mailto:gregrangel@msn.com). You can also get more information of his studies at [edificationcalvarychapel.org](http://edificationcalvarychapel.org).**