

Resurrection of Jesus

The **resurrection of Jesus** (Biblical Greek: ἀνάστασις τοῦ Ἰησοῦ) is the Christian belief that God raised Jesus on the third day^[note 1] after his crucifixion, starting – or restoring^{[web 1][note 2]} – his exalted life as Christ and Lord.^[web 2] According to the New Testament writings he was firstborn from the dead, ushering in the Kingdom of God.^{[1][web 2]} He appeared to his disciples, calling the apostles to the Great Commission of proclaiming the Gospel of eternal salvation through his death and resurrection,^[note 3] and ascended to Heaven.

For the Christian tradition, the bodily resurrection was the restoration to life of a transformed body powered by spirit,^[web 3] as described by Paul and the Gospel authors, that led to the establishment of Christianity. For Christians, his resurrection is the guarantee that all the Christian dead will be resurrected at Christ's *parousia* (second coming).^[2] In Christian theology, the death and resurrection of Jesus are the most important events, the foundation of the Christian faith,^[3] as commemorated by Easter.

In secular and liberal Christian scholarship, the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus are explained as visionary experiences^{[4][5][6]} that gave the impetus to the belief in the exaltation of Jesus^[7] and a resumption of the missionary activity of Jesus' followers.^{[4][8]}



Resurrection of Jesus Christ (Kinnaird Resurrection) by Raphael, 1502

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Jewish–Hellenistic background

Jewish

In Judaism, the idea of any resurrection at all first emerges clearly in the 2nd-century BC Book of Daniel, but as a belief in the resurrection of the soul alone.^[9] Josephus tells of the three main Jewish sects of the 1st century AD, that the Sadducees held that both soul and body perished at death; the Essenes that the soul was immortal but the flesh was not; and the Pharisees that the soul was immortal and that the body would be resurrected to house it.^[10] Of these three positions, Jesus and the early Christians appear to have been closest to that of the Pharisees.^[11] Steve Mason notes that for the Pharisees, "the new body is a special, holy body," which is different from the old body, "a view shared to some extent by the ex-Pharisee Paul (1. Cor. 15:35ff)."^[12]

The evidence from Jewish texts and from tomb inscriptions points to a more complex reality: for example, when the 2nd century BC author of the Book of Daniel wrote that "many of those sleeping in the dust shall awaken",^[13] he probably had in mind a rebirth as angelic beings (metaphorically described as stars in God's Heaven, stars having been identified with angels from early times); such a rebirth would rule out a

bodily resurrection, as angels were believed to be fleshless.^[14] There was in fact a plethora of opinion regarding the afterlife within Second Temple Judaism, ranging from Daniel's heavenly exaltation of disembodied spirits to the more traditional view of a shadowy existence in the underworld.^[15] Within this spectrum, a resurrection of the flesh was a marginal belief.^[16]

Greco-Roman

The Greeks held that a meritorious man could be resurrected as a god (the process of apotheosis), and the successors of Alexander the Great made this idea very well known throughout the Middle East through coins bearing his image, a privilege previously reserved for gods.^[17] The idea was adopted by the Roman emperors, and in the Imperial Roman concept of apotheosis, the earthly body of the recently deceased emperor was replaced by a new and divine one as he ascended into heaven.^[18] The apotheosised dead remained recognisable to those who met them, as when Romulus appeared to witnesses after his death, but as the biographer Plutarch (c. AD 46 – c. 120) explained of this incident, while something within humans comes from the gods and returns to them after death, this happens "only when it is most completely separated and set free from the body, and becomes altogether pure, fleshless, and undefiled".^[19]

Biblical accounts

Paul and the first Christians

The New Testament writings do not contain any descriptions of the moment of resurrection, but rather accounts of the empty tomb and of post-resurrection appearances of Jesus.^[20]

One of the letters sent by Paul the Apostle to one of the early Greek churches, the First Epistle to the Corinthians, contains one of the earliest Christian creeds referring to post-mortem appearances of Jesus, and expressing the belief that he was raised from the dead, namely 1 Corinthians 15:3–8.^{[21][22][23]} The many Pauline references affirming the resurrection include:

- Romans 1:3–4: "...concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord".^[24]
- 2 Timothy 2:8: "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead... this is my gospel for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained...".^[25]
- 1 Corinthians 15:3–7: "...that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures...".^[26]



Five part resurrection icon, Solovetsky Monastery, 17th century



Resurrection of Christ, Noël Coypel, 1700, using a hovering depiction of Jesus

[3] For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures,^[note 4] [4] and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures,^[note 1] [5] and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. [6] Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. [7] Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. [8] Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.^[36]

In the Jerusalem *ekklesia* (Church), from which Paul received this creed, the phrase "died for our sins" probably was an apologetic rationale for the death of Jesus as being part of God's plan and purpose, as evidenced in the scriptures. For Paul, it gained a deeper significance, providing "a basis for the salvation of sinful Gentiles apart from the Torah."^[37] The phrase "died for our sins" was derived from Isaiah, especially 53:4-11,^[38] and 4 Maccabees, especially 6:28–29.^{[30][note 4]} "Raised on the third day" is derived from Hosea 6:1-2.^{[33][32]}

Come, let us return to the Lord;
for he has torn us, that he may heal us;
he has struck us down, and he will bind us up.
After two days he will revive us;
on the third day he will raise us up,
that we may live before him."^[note 1]

Paul, writing to the members of the church at Corinth, said that Jesus appeared to him in the same fashion in which he appeared to the earlier witnesses.^[39] In 2 Corinthians 12 Paul described "a man in Christ [presumably Paul himself] who ... was caught up to the third heaven", and while the language is obscure it is plausible that he saw Jesus enthroned at the right hand of God.^[40]

It is widely accepted that this creed predates the Apostle Paul. Scholars have contended that in his presentation of the resurrection, Paul refers to an earlier authoritative tradition, transmitted in a rabbinic style, that he received and has passed on to the church at Corinth.^[note 5] Geza Vermes writes that the creed is "a tradition he [Paul] has inherited from his seniors in the faith concerning the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus".^[42] The creed's ultimate origins are probably within the Jerusalem apostolic community, having been formalised and passed on within a few years of the resurrection.^[note 6] Hans Grass argues for an origin in Damascus,^[43] and according to Paul Barnett, this credal formula, and others, were variants of the "one basic early tradition that Paul "received" in Damascus from Ananias in about 34 [AD]" after his conversion.^[44]

Gospels and Acts

All four gospels contain passages in which Jesus is portrayed as predicting the coming resurrection, or contain allusions that "the reader will understand";^{[45][46]} and three climax with his posthumous appearances after having been crucified (Mark in the original short ending does not). The moment of resurrection itself is not described in any of the gospels.

Jesus is described as the "firstborn from the dead," *prōtotokos*, the first to be raised from the dead, and thereby acquiring the "special status of the firstborn as the preeminent son and heir."^{[1][web 2]} His resurrection is also the guarantee that all the Christian dead will be resurrected at Christ's *parousia*.^[2]

After the resurrection, Jesus is portrayed as proclaiming "eternal salvation" through the disciples (Mark 16:8), and subsequently called the apostles to the Great Commission, as described in Matthew 28:16–20,^[47] Mark 16:14–18,^[48] Luke 24:44–49,^[49] Acts 1:4–8,^[50] and John 20:19–23,^[51] in which the disciples received the call "to let the world know the good news of a victorious Saviour and the very presence of God in the world by the spirit."^[52] According to these texts, Jesus says that they "will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you",^[53] that "repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in [the Messiah's] name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem",^[54] and that "[i]f you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained".^[55]



Germain Pilon (French, d. 1590),
Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Marble,
before 1572

The Gospel of Mark ends with the discovery of the empty tomb by Mary Magdalene, Salome, and "Mary the mother of James". A young man in a white robe at the site of the tomb announced to them that Jesus has risen, and instructed them to "tell Peter and the disciples that he will meet them in Galilee, 'just as he told you'" (Mark 16).^[56] It says that Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene, then to two followers outside Jerusalem, and then to the eleven remaining Apostles, commissioning them to spread "the good news" (often referred to as "The Great Commission"), saying: "The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned."^[57]

In Matthew, Luke and John, the resurrection announcement is followed by appearances of Jesus first to Mary Magdalene then to other followers. The Gospel of Matthew describes a single appearance in Galilee, Luke describes several appearances in Jerusalem, John mentions appearances in both Jerusalem and Galilee. At some point, these appearances ceased in the early Christian community, as reflected in the Gospel-narratives: the "Acts of the Apostles" says that "for forty days he had continued to appear to them".^[58] The Gospel of Luke describes Jesus ascending to heaven at a location near Bethany.^[59]

In the Gospel of Matthew, an angel appeared to Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb, telling her that Jesus is not there because he has been raised from the dead, and instructing her to tell the other followers to go to Galilee, to meet Jesus. Jesus then appeared to Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" at the tomb; and next, based on Mark 16:7, Jesus appeared to all the disciples on a mountain in Galilee, where Jesus claimed authority over heaven and earth, and commissioned the disciples to preach the gospel to the whole world.^[60] Matthew presents Jesus's second appearance as an apotheosis (deification), commissioning his followers to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you."^[47] In this message, the end-times are delayed, "to bring the world to discipleship."^[61]

In the Gospel of Luke, "the women who had come with him from Galilee"^[62] come to his tomb, which they find empty. Two angelic beings appeared to announce that Jesus is not there, but has been raised.^[63] Jesus then appeared to two followers on their way to Emmaus, who notify the eleven remaining Apostles, who respond that Jesus has appeared to Peter. While they were describing this, Jesus appeared again, explaining that he is the messiah who raised from the dead according to the scriptures, "and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem."^{[64][65]} In Luke–Acts (two works from the same author) he then ascended into heaven, his rightful home.^[65]

In the Gospel of John, Mary Magdalene found the tomb empty, and informed Peter. She then saw two angels, after which Jesus himself appeared to her. In the evening, Jesus appeared to the other followers, followed by another appearance a week later.^[66] He later appeared in Galilee to Peter, Thomas, and two

other followers, commanding Peter to take care of his followers.^[67]

In Acts of the Apostles, Jesus appeared to the apostles for forty days, and commanded them to stay in Jerusalem^[68] after which Jesus ascended to heaven, followed by the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the missionary task of the early church.^[69]

Extra-biblical references to Christian belief in Jesus' resurrection

In the *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus says that, according to Christians, "He appeared to them spending a third day restored to life, for the prophets of God had foretold these things and a thousand other marvels about him."^[70] However, this reference to the resurrection is widely believed to have been added by a Christian interpolator and that, while Josephus had indeed referenced to Jesus, he had not mentioned his resurrection.^[71] Within the non-canonical literature of Gospel of Peter, there is a retelling of the resurrection of Jesus.^[72]



The three Marys at the Tomb of Christ (1470) at the west portal of Konstanz Minster, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Historicity and origin of the resurrection of Jesus

The historicity and origin of the resurrection of Jesus has been the subject of historical research and debate, as well as a topic of discussion among Christian theologians and critics of Christianity.^[73] The accounts of the Gospels, including the empty tomb and the appearances of the risen Jesus to his followers, have been interpreted and analyzed in diverse ways, and have been seen variously as historical accounts of a literal event, as accurate accounts of visionary experiences, as non-literal eschatological parables, and as fabrications of early Christian writers, among various other interpretations. One hypothesis, for example, that Jesus did not die on the cross, that the empty tomb was the result of Jesus' body having been stolen, or, as was common with Roman crucifixions, that Jesus was never entombed. Post-Enlightenment historians work with methodological naturalism, which precludes them from establishing miracles as objective historical facts.^{[74][75]}

According to R. A. Burridge, the majority consensus among biblical scholars is that the genre of the Gospels is a kind of ancient biography and not myth.^[76] E. P. Sanders argues that a plot to foster belief in the Resurrection would probably have resulted in a more consistent story.^{[77][78]}

Physical or spiritual resurrection

Paul and the Gospels

Both Ware and Cook argue, primarily from Paul's terminology and the contemporary Jewish, pagan and cultural understanding of the nature of resurrection, that Paul held to a physically resurrected body (*sōma*), restored to life, but animated by spirit (*pneumatikos*) instead of soul (*psuchikos*), just like the later Gospel accounts.^{[79][web 5]} The nature of this resurrected body is a matter of debate. In 1 Corinthians 15:44,^[80] Paul uses the phrase "spiritual body" (*sōma pneumatikos*^[web 6]), which has been explained as a "Spirit-empowered body,"^{[79][web 5][web 7]} but also as a "celestial body," made of a finer material than the flesh.^{[81][web 7][note 7]} In the Epistle to the Philippians Paul describes how the body of the resurrected

Christ is utterly different from the one he wore when he had "the appearance of a man," and holds out a similar glorified state, when Christ "will transform our lowly body," as the goal of the Christian life – "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Corinthians 15:50), and Christians entering the kingdom will be "putting off the body of the flesh" (Colossians 2:11).^{[82][83]} Paul opposed the notion of a purely spiritual resurrection, as propagated by some Christians in Corinth, which he addresses in 1 Corinthians.^[81] The developing Gospel-tradition emphasized the material aspects to counter this spiritual interpretation.^[84]

Paul's views of a bodily resurrection went against the thoughts of the Greek philosophers to whom a bodily resurrection meant a new imprisonment in a corporeal body, which was what they wanted to avoid – given that for them the corporeal and the material fettered the spirit.^[85]

James Dunn notes that there is a great difference between Paul's resurrection appearance, and the appearances described in the Gospels. Where "Paul's seeing was visionary [...], 'from heaven'," in contrast, the Gospel-accounts have a "massive realism" to them.^[86] Dunn contends that the "massive realism" [...] of the [Gospel] appearances themselves can only be described as visionary with great difficulty – and Luke would certainly reject the description as inappropriate.^[86] According to Dunn, most scholars explain this as a "legendary materialization" of the visionary experiences, "borrowing the traits of the earthly Jesus."^{[87][note 8]} Yet, according to Dunn, there was both "a tendency away from the physical [...]" and a reverse tendency towards the physical.^[91] The tendency towards the material is most clear, but there are also signs for the tendency away from the physical, and "there are some indications that a more physical understanding was current in the earliest Jerusalem community."^[92]

The empty tomb

The empty tomb and the post-resurrection appearances are never directly coordinated to form a combined argument.^[93] While the coherence of the empty tomb-narrative is questionable, it is "clearly an early tradition."^[93] Géza Vermes rejects the literal interpretation of the story, as being proof of the resurrection,^[94] and also notes that the story of the empty tomb conflicts with notions of a spiritual resurrection. According to Vermes, "[t]he strictly Jewish bond of spirit and body is better served by the idea of the empty tomb and is no doubt responsible for the introduction of the notions of palpability (Thomas in John) and eating (Luke and John)."^[95]

According to Raymond E. Brown, the body of Jesus was buried in a new tomb by Joseph of Arimathea in accordance with Mosaic Law, which stated that a person hanged on a tree must not be allowed to remain there at night, but should be buried before sundown.^[96]

New Testament historian Bart D. Ehrman rejects the story of the empty tomb; according to Ehrman, "an empty tomb had nothing to do with it [...] an empty tomb would not produce faith."^{[97][note 9]} According to Ehrman, the empty tomb was needed to underscore the physical resurrection of Jesus,^[84] but is it doubtful that Jesus was buried by Joseph of Arimathea.^[99] Ehrman argues that it is unlikely that a member of the Sanhedrin would have buried Jesus;^[100] crucifixion was meant "to torture and humiliate a person as fully as possible," and the body was left on the stake to be eaten by animals;^[101] criminals were usually buried in common graves;^[102] and Pilate had no concern for Jewish sensitivities, which makes it unlikely that he would have allowed for Jesus to be buried.^[103] To support his claim, Ehrman quotes the works of Martin Hengel about crucifixion in 1st century Judea.^[104]

British New Testament scholar Maurice Casey took a middle position on the matter: he argues that Jesus was indeed buried by Joseph of Arimathea, but in a tomb for criminals owned by the Sanhedrin. He therefore rejects the empty tomb narrative as legendary.^[105]

The English theologian and historian N. T. Wright, however, emphatically and extensively argues for the reality of the empty tomb and the subsequent appearances of Jesus, reasoning that as a matter of history both a bodily resurrection and later bodily appearances of Jesus are far better explanations for the rise of Christianity than are any other theories, including those of Ehrman.^[106] Dale Allison has also argued for an empty tomb, that was later followed by visions of Jesus by the Apostles and Mary Magdalene.^[107]

Significance in Christianity

Foundation of Christian faith

In Christian theology, the death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus are the most important events, and the foundation of the Christian faith.^{[3][108][note 10]} The Nicene Creed states: "On the third day^[note 1] he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures".^[109] According to Terry Miethe, a Christian philosopher at Oxford University, the question " 'Did Jesus rise from the dead?' is the most important question regarding the claims of the Christian faith."^[110] According to John R. Rice, a Baptist evangelist, the resurrection of Jesus was part of the plan of salvation and redemption by atonement for man's sin.^[111] Summarizing its traditional analysis, the Catholic Church states in its Catechism:

Although the Resurrection was an historical event that could be verified by the sign of the empty tomb and by the reality of the apostles' encounters with the risen Christ, still it remains at the very heart of the mystery of faith as something that transcends and surpasses history.^{[112][113]}

For Christians, including some scholars, the resurrection is taken to have been a concrete, material resurrection.^[114] According to N. T. Wright in his book *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, "There can be no question: Paul is a firm believer in bodily resurrection. He stands with his fellow Jews against the massed ranks of pagans; with his fellow Pharisees against other Jews."^[115] According to New Testament scholar Gary Habermas, "Many other scholars have spoken in support of a bodily notion of Jesus' resurrection."^{[web 3][note 7]} According to Craig L. Blomberg, there are sufficient arguments for the historicity of the resurrection.^[116]

Principal of spiritual and future resurrection

According to the Roman Catechism of the Catholic Church, the resurrection of Jesus causes and is the model of the resurrection of all the dead, as well as the cause and model of repentance, which the catechism calls "spiritual resurrection."^[117]



Right wing of the winged triptych at the Church of the Teutonic Order, Vienna, Austria. The artwork depicts Christ's crucifixion and burial (left), and resurrection (right).

First *ekklēsia*

The belief in the resurrection by Jesus' early followers formed the proclamation of the first *ekklēsia* (lit. "assembly").^{[118][119]} The appearances reinforced the impact Jesus and his ministry had on his early followers,^[120] and interpreted in a scriptural framework they gave the impetus to Christ-devotion^[121] and the belief in the exaltation of Jesus.^{[7][122]} Jesus' death was interpreted in light of the scriptures as a redemptive death, being part of God's plan.^[123] The appearances also led to the resumption of the missionary activity of Jesus' followers,^{[4][8]} with Peter assuming the leadership role in the first *ekklēsia* (which formed the basis for the Apostolic succession).^{[124][125]}

Exaltation and Christology

Christ-devotion

The New Testament writings contend that the resurrection was "the beginning of His exalted life"^{[126][note 11]} as Christ and Lord.^{[128][web 2]} Jesus is the "firstborn of the dead," *prōtotokos*, the first to be raised from the dead, and thereby acquiring the "special status of the firstborn as the preeminent son and heir."^{[1][web 2]} According to Beale,

"Firstborn" refers to the high, privileged position that Christ has as a result of the resurrection from the dead [...] Christ has gained such a sovereign position over the cosmos, not in the sense that he is recognized as the first-created being of all creation or as the origin of creation, but in the sense that he is the inaugurator of the new creation by means of his resurrection.^[web 2]

Hurtado notes that soon after his death, Jesus was called Lord (*Kyrios*), which "associates him in astonishing ways with God."^[129] The term Lord reflected the belief that God had exalted Jesus to a divine status "at God's 'right hand'."^[130] The worship of God as expressed in the phrase "call upon the name of the Lord [*Yahweh*]" was also applied to Jesus, invoking his name "in corporate worship and in the wider devotional pattern of Christian believers (e.g., baptism, exorcism, healing)."^[131]

According to Hurtado, powerful religious experiences were an indispensable factor in the emergence of Christ-devotion.^{[132][note 12]} Those experiences "seem to have included visions of (and/or ascents to) God's heaven, in which the glorified Christ was seen in an exalted position."^{[133][note 13]} Those experiences were interpreted in the framework of God's redemptive purposes, as reflected in the scriptures, in a "dynamic interaction between devout, prayerful searching for, and pondering over, scriptural texts and continuing powerful religious experiences."^[136] This initiated a "new devotional pattern unprecedented in Jewish monotheism," that is, the worship of Jesus next to God,^[137] giving Jesus a central place because his ministry, and its consequences, had a strong impact on his early followers.^[138] Revelations, including those visions, but also inspired and spontaneous utterances, and "charismatic exegesis" of the Jewish scriptures, convinced them that this devotion was commanded by God.^[139]

Ehrman notes that both Jesus and his early followers were apocalyptic Jews, who believed in the bodily resurrection, which would start when the coming of God's Kingdom was near.^[140] According to Ehrman, "the disciples' belief in the resurrection was based on visionary experiences,"^[6] arguing that visions usually have a strong persuasive power, but also noting that the Gospel-accounts record a tradition of doubt about the appearances of Jesus. Ehrman's "tentative suggestion" is that only a few followers had visions, including Peter, Paul and Mary. They told others about those visions, convincing most of their close

associates that Jesus was raised from the dead, but not all of them.^[note 14] Eventually, these stories were retold and embellished, leading to the story that all disciples had seen the risen Jesus.^[141] The belief in Jesus' resurrection radically changed their perceptions, concluding from his absence that he must have been exalted to heaven, by God himself, exalting him to an unprecedented status and authority.^[7]

Low and High Christology

It has long been argued that the New Testament writings contain two different Christologies, namely a "low" or adoptionist Christology, and a "high" or "incarnation Christology."^[142] The "low Christology" or "adoptionist Christology" is the belief "that God exalted Jesus to be his Son by raising him from the dead,"^[143] thereby raising him to "divine status."^[web 9] The other early Christology is "high Christology," which is "the view that Jesus was a pre-existent divine being who became a human, did the Father's will on earth, and then was taken back up into heaven whence he had originally come,"^{[web 9][144]} and from where he appeared on earth. The chronology of the development of these early Christologies is a matter of debate within contemporary scholarship.^{[145][146][147][web 10]}

According to the "evolutionary model"^[148] c.q. "evolutionary theories,"^[149] as proposed by Bousset, followed by Brown, the Christological understanding of Christ developed over time, from a low Christology to a high Christology,^{[150][151][152]} as witnessed in the Gospels.^[146] According to the evolutionary model, the earliest Christians believed that Jesus was a human who was exalted, c.q. adopted as God's Son,^{[153][154][155]} when he was resurrected,^{[152][156]} signaling the nearness of the Kingdom of God, when all dead would be resurrected and the righteous exalted.^[157] Later beliefs shifted the exaltation to his baptism, birth, and subsequently to the idea of his eternal existence, as witnessed in the Gospel of John.^[152] Mark shifted the moment of when Jesus became the son to the baptism of Jesus, and later still Matthew and Luke shifted it to the moment of the divine conception, and finally John declared that Jesus had been with God from the beginning: "In the beginning was the Word".^[155]

Since the 1970s, the late datings for the development of a "high Christology" have been contested,^[158] and a majority of scholars argue that this "High Christology" existed already before the writings of Paul.^[142] This "incarnation Christology" or "high Christology" did not evolve over a longer time, but was a "big bang" of ideas which were already present at the start of Christianity, and took further shape in the first few decades of the church, as witnessed in the writings of Paul.^{[158][web 11][web 9][web 12]}

According to Ehrman, these two Christologies existed alongside each other, calling the "low Christology" an "adoptionist Christology, and "the "high Christology" an "incarnation Christology."^[142] While adoptionism was declared heresy at the end of the 2nd century,^{[159][160]} it was adhered to by the Ebionites,^[161] who regarded Jesus as the Messiah while rejecting his divinity and his virgin birth,^[162] and insisted on the necessity of following Jewish law and rites.^[163] They revered James the brother of Jesus (James the Just); and rejected Paul the Apostle as an apostate from the Law.^[164] They show strong similarities with the earliest form of Jewish Christianity, and their specific theology may have been a "reaction to the law-free Gentile mission."^[165]

In the "pre-existence" Christology, Christ's resurrection and exaltation was a restoration of the exalted status he already had, but had not grasped at, as described in Philippians 2:6-11.^{[166][web 1][note 2]}

Redemptive death

Jesus' death was interpreted as a redemptive death "for our sins," in accordance with God's plan as contained in the Jewish scriptures.^{[167][note 4]} The significance lay in "the theme of divine necessity and fulfillment of the scriptures," not in the later Pauline emphasis on "Jesus' death as a sacrifice or an expiation

for our sins."^[168] For the early Jewish Christians, "the idea that Messiah's death was a necessary redemptive event functioned more as an apologetic explanation for Jesus' crucifixion"^[168] "proving that Jesus' death was no surprise to God."^{[169][note 15]}

Call to missionary activity

According to Dunn, the appearances to the disciples have "a sense of obligation to make the vision known."^[171] Helmut Koester states that the stories of the resurrection were originally epiphanies in which the disciples were called to a ministry by the risen Jesus, and at a secondary stage were interpreted as physical proof of the event. He contends that the more detailed accounts of the resurrection are also secondary and do not come from historically trustworthy sources, but instead belong to the genre of the narrative types.^[4] Biblical scholar Géza Vermes argues that the resurrection is to be understood as a reviving of the self-confidence of the followers of Jesus, under the influence of the Spirit, "prompting them to resume their apostolic mission." They felt the presence of Jesus in their own actions, "rising again, today and tomorrow, in the hearts of the men who love him and feel he is near."^{[8][note 16]} According to Gerd Lüdemann, Peter convinced the other disciples that the resurrection of Jesus signaled that the end-times were near and God's Kingdom was coming, when the dead who would rise again, as evidenced by Jesus. This revitalized the disciples, starting-off their new mission.^{[174][175][web 13]}

Leadership of Peter

Peter claimed forcefully that Jesus appeared to him,^{[176][141]} and legitimised by Jesus' appearance he assumed leadership of the group of early followers, forming the Jerusalem *ekklesia* mentioned by Paul.^{[176][125]} He was soon eclipsed in this leadership by James the Just, "the Brother of the Lord,"^{[177][178]} which may explain why the early texts contain scarce information about Peter.^{[178][note 17]} According to Gerd Lüdemann, Peter was the first who had a vision of Jesus,^[174] noting that Peter and Mary both had appearance-experiences, but arguing that the tradition of Mary's appearance is a later development, and her appearance probably was not the first.^{[180][note 14]}

According to Christian proto-orthodoxy, Peter was the first to whom Jesus appeared, and therefore the rightful leader of the Church.^[176] The resurrection forms the basis of the Apostolic succession and the institutional power of orthodoxy, as the heirs of Peter,^[182] to whom Jesus appeared, and is described as "the rock" on which the church will be built.^[176] Though the Gospels, and Paul's letters, describe appearances to a greater number of people, only the appearances to the Twelve Apostles count as lending authority and Apostolic succession.^[183]

Paul – participation in Christ

The appearance of Jesus to Paul convinced him that Jesus was the risen Lord and Christ, who commissioned him to be an apostle to the Gentiles.^{[184][185][186]} According to Newbigin, "Paul presents himself not as the teacher of a new theology but as the messenger commissioned by the authority of the Lord himself to announce a new fact – namely that in the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus God has acted decisively to reveal and effect his purpose of redemption for the whole world."^[187] The teachings of the apostle Paul form a key element of the Christian tradition and theology. Fundamental to Pauline theology is the connection between Christ's resurrection, and redemption.^[188] In 1 Corinthians 15:13–14, 15:17, and 15:20–22, Paul writes:

If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain [...] If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile [...] But Christ really has been raised from the dead. He is the first of all those who will rise. Death came because of what a man did. Rising from the dead also comes because of what a man did. Because of Adam, all people die. So because of Christ, all will be made alive.^{[189][190]}

The *kerygma* of 1 Corinthians 15:3 states that "Christ died for our sins."^[note 4] The meaning of that *kerygma* is a matter of debate, and open to multiple interpretations. Traditionally, this *kerygma* is interpreted as meaning that Jesus' death was an atonement or ransom for, or propitiation or expiation of, God's wrath against humanity because of their sins. With Jesus' death, humanity was freed from this wrath.^{[191][web 14][note 18]} In the classical Protestant understanding, which has dominated the understanding of Paul's writings, humans partake in this salvation by faith in Jesus Christ; this faith is a grace given by God, and people are justified by God through Jesus Christ and faith in Him.^[192]

More recent scholarship has raised several concerns regarding these interpretations. According to E. P. Sanders, who initiated the so-called "New Perspective on Paul", Paul saw the faithful redeemed by participation in Jesus' death and rising. Though "Jesus' death substituted for that of others and thereby freed believers from sin and guilt," a metaphor derived from "ancient sacrificial theology,"^{[web 16][note 19]} the essence of Paul's writing is not in the "legal terms" regarding the expiation of sin, but the act of "participation in Christ through dying and rising with him."^{[193][note 20]} According to Sanders, "those who are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death, and thus they escape the power of sin [...] he died so that the believers may die with him and consequently live with him."^[web 16] Just as Christians share in Jesus' death in baptism, so they will share in his resurrection.^[194] James F. McGrath notes that Paul "prefers to use the language of participation. One died for all, so that all died."^[195] This is not only different from substitution, it is the opposite of it."^[web 4]

Paul insists that salvation is received by the grace of God; according to Sanders, this insistence is in line with Judaism of ca. 200 BC until 200 AD, which saw God's covenant with Israel as an act of grace of God. Observance of the Law is needed to maintain the covenant, but the covenant is not earned by observing the Law, but by the grace of God.^[web 20]

Church Fathers – atonement

The Apostolic Fathers, discussed the death and resurrection of Jesus, including Ignatius (50–115),^[196] Polycarp (69–155), and Justin Martyr (100–165). The understanding of the Greek Fathers of the death and resurrection of Jesus as an atonement is the "classic paradigm" of the Church Fathers,^{[197][198]} who developed the themes found in the New Testament.^[199]

During the first millennium AD, the ransom theory of atonement was the dominant metaphor, both in eastern and western Christianity, until it was replaced in the west by Anselmus' satisfaction theory of atonement.^[200] The ransom theory of atonement says that Christ liberated humanity from slavery to sin and Satan, and thus death, by giving his own life as a ransom sacrifice to Satan, swapping the life of the perfect (Jesus), for the lives of the imperfect (humans). It entails the idea that God deceived the devil,^[201] and that Satan, or death, had "legitimate rights"^[201] over sinful souls in the afterlife, due to the fall of man and inherited sin.

The ransom theory was first clearly enunciated by Irenaeus (c. 130–c. 202),^[202] who was an outspoken critic of Gnosticism, but borrowed ideas from their dualistic worldview.^[203] In this worldview, humankind is under the power of the Demiurg, a lesser God who has created the world. Yet, humans have a spark of

the true divine nature within them, which can be liberated by gnosis (knowledge) of this divine spark. This knowledge is revealed by the Logos, "the very mind of the supreme God," who entered the world in the person of Jesus. Nevertheless, the Logos could not simply undo the power of the Demiurg, and had to hide his real identity, appearing as a physical form, thereby misleading the Demiurg, and liberating humankind.^[203] In Irenaeus' writings, the Demiurge is replaced by the devil, while Justin Martyr had already equated Jesus and the Logos.^[203]

Origen (184–253) introduced the idea that the devil held legitimate rights over humans, who were bought free by the blood of Christ.^[204] He also introduced the notion that the devil was deceived in thinking that he could master the human soul.^[205]

Late Antiquity and early Middle Ages

Following the conversion of Constantine and the Edict of Milan in 313, the ecumenical councils of the 4th, 5th and 6th centuries, that focused on Christology, helped shape the Christian understanding of the redemptive nature of resurrection, and influenced both the development of its iconography, and its use within Liturgy.^[206]

Belief in bodily resurrection was a constant note of the Christian church in antiquity. Augustine of Hippo accepted it at the time of his conversion in 386.^[207] Augustine defended resurrection, and argued that given that Christ has risen, there is resurrection of the dead.^{[208][209]} Moreover, he argued that the death and resurrection of Jesus was for the salvation of man, stating: "to achieve each resurrection of ours, the savior paid with his single life, and he pre-enacted and presented his one and only one by way of sacrament and by way of model."^[210]

The 5th-century theology of Theodore of Mopsuestia provides an insight into the development of the Christian understanding of the redemptive nature of resurrection. The crucial role of the sacraments in the mediation of salvation was well accepted at the time. In Theodore's representation of the Eucharist, the sacrificial and salvific elements are combined in the "One who saved us and delivered us by the sacrifice of Himself". Theodore's interpretation of the Eucharistic rite is directed towards the triumph over the power of death brought about by the resurrection.^[211]

The emphasis on the salvific nature of the resurrection continued in Christian theology in the next centuries, e.g., in the 8th century Saint John of Damascus wrote that: "... When he had freed those who were bound from the beginning of time, Christ returned again from among the dead, having opened for us the way to resurrection" and Christian iconography of the ensuing years represented that concept.^[212]

Present-day

Lorenzen finds "a strange silence about the resurrection in many pulpits". He writes that among some Christians, ministers and professors, it seems to have become "a cause for embarrassment or the topic of apologetics".^[213] According to Warnock, many Christians neglect the resurrection because of their understandable preoccupation with the Cross.^[214]

Easter

Easter (or Easter Sunday) is the preeminent Christian feast that celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, and, according to Susan J. White, "is clearly the earliest Christian festival."^[215] According to James Dunn, "In Easter we celebrate man become God [...] that in the death and resurrection of Christ God has broken the

stranglehold of human selfishness, has proved the enduring and conquering strength of divine love."^[216] According to Thorwald Lorenzen, the first Easter led to a shift in emphasis from faith "in God" to faith "in Christ".^[213] According to Raymond Harfgus Taylor, "focuses upon the consumation of the redemptive act of God in the death/resurrection of Jesus Christ."^[217]

Easter is linked to the Passover and Exodus from Egypt recorded in the Old Testament through the Last Supper and crucifixion that preceded the resurrection. According to the New Testament, Jesus gave the Passover meal a new meaning, as he prepared himself and his disciples for his death in the upper room during the Last Supper. He identified the loaf of bread and cup of wine as his body soon to be sacrificed and his blood soon to be shed. 1 Corinthians 5:7 states, "Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast – as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed";^[218] this refers to the Passover requirement to have no yeast in the house and to the allegory of Jesus as the Paschal lamb.^[219]

In Christian art



The Chi Rho with a wreath symbolizing the victory of the Resurrection, above Roman soldiers, c. 350 AD.

In the Catacombs of Rome, artists indirectly hinted at the resurrection by using images from the Old Testament such as the fiery furnace and Daniel in the Lion's den. Depictions prior to the 7th century generally showed secondary events such as the Myrrhbearers at the tomb of Jesus to convey the concept of the resurrection. An early symbol of the resurrection was the wreathed Chi Rho (Greek letters representing the word "Khristos" or "Christ"), whose origin traces to the victory of emperor Constantine I at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312, which he attributed to the use of a cross on the shields of his soldiers. Constantine used the Chi Rho on his standard and his coins showed a labarum with the Chi Rho killing a serpent.^[220]

The use of a wreath around the Chi Rho symbolizes the victory of the resurrection over death, and is an early visual representation of the connection between the Crucifixion of Jesus and his triumphal resurrection, as seen in the 4th-century sarcophagus of Domitilla^[221] in Rome. Here, in the wreathed Chi Rho the death and Resurrection of Christ are shown as inseparable, and the Resurrection is not merely a happy ending tucked at the end of the life of Christ on earth. Given the use of similar symbols on the

Roman military banner, this depiction also conveyed another victory, namely that of the Christian faith: the Roman soldiers who had once arrested Jesus and marched him to Calvary now walked under the banner of a resurrected Christ.^[222]

The cosmic significance of the resurrection in Western theology goes back to Saint Ambrose, who in the 4th century said that "The universe rose again in Him, the heaven rose again in Him, the earth rose again in Him, for there shall be a new heaven and a new earth".^{[223][224]} This theme developed gradually in the West, later than in the East where the resurrection had been linked from an earlier date to redemption and the renewal and rebirth of the whole world. In art this was symbolized by combining the depictions of the resurrection with the Harrowing of Hell in icons and paintings. A good example is from the Chora Church in Istanbul, where John the Baptist, Solomon and other figures are also present, depicting that Christ was not alone in the resurrection.^[224] The depiction sequence at the 10th-century Hosios Loukas shows Christ as he pulls Adam from his tomb, followed by Eve, signifying the salvation of humanity after the resurrection.^[225]

Gallery of art

For a commons gallery see: [Resurrection gallery](#)



Resurrection of Christ, by [Hans Memling](#), 15th century



Resurrection, by [Giordano](#), after 1665



Resurrection, by [Hans Multscher](#), 1437



Resurrection, by [Dieric Bouts](#), c. 1450–1460



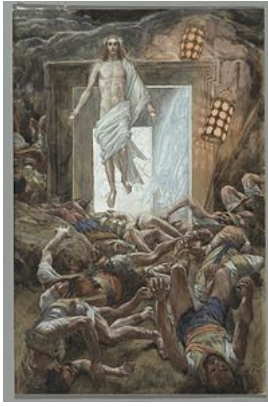
Der Aufgestanden, by [Lucas Cranach](#), 1558



Resurrection, by [Piero della Francesca](#), 15th century



The Resurrection of Christ, by [Alonso López de Herrera](#), c. 1625



The Resurrection (La Résurrection) – James Tissot, c. 1890, Brooklyn Museum



Resurrection of Jesus, by Anton von Werner, Berlin Cathedral



Stained glass depiction with two Marys, Lutheran Church, South Carolina



Women at the empty tomb, by Fra Angelico, 1437–1446

Relics

The resurrection of Jesus has long been central to Christian faith and appears within diverse elements of the Christian tradition, from feasts to artistic depictions to religious relics. In Christian teachings, the sacraments derive their saving power from the passion and resurrection of Christ, upon which the salvation of the world entirely depends.^[226]

An example of the interweaving of the teachings on the resurrection with Christian relics is the application of the concept of "miraculous image formation" at the moment of resurrection to the Shroud of Turin. Christian authors have stated the belief that the body around whom the shroud was wrapped was not merely human, but divine, and that the image on the shroud was miraculously produced at the moment of resurrection.^{[227][228]} Quoting Pope Paul VI's statement that the shroud is "the wonderful document of His Passion, Death and Resurrection, written for us in letters of blood" author Antonio Cassanelli argues that the shroud is a deliberate divine record of the five stages of the Passion of Christ, created at the moment of resurrection.^[229]



Secondo Pia's 1898 negative of the image on the Shroud of Turin has an appearance suggesting a positive image. It is used as part of the devotion to the Holy Face of Jesus.

Views of other religions

Groups such as Jews, Muslims, Bahá'ís, and other non-Christians, as well as some liberal Christians, dispute whether Jesus actually rose from the dead. Arguments over death and resurrection claims occur at many religious debates and interfaith dialogues.^[230]

Judaism

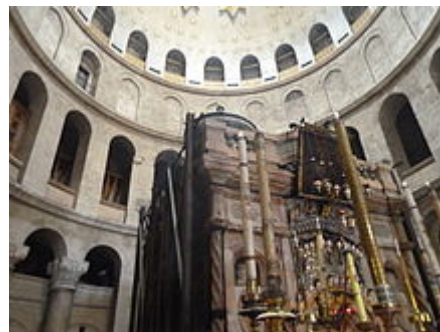
Christianity split from Judaism in the 1st century AD, and the two faiths have differed in their theology since. According to the *Toledot Yeshu*, the body of Jesus was removed in the same night by a gardener named Juda, after hearing the disciples planned to steal the body of Jesus.^{[231][232]} However, *Toledot Yeshu* is not considered either canonical or normative within rabbinic literature.^[233] Van Voorst states that *Toledot Yeshu* is a medieval document set without a fixed form which is "most unlikely" to have reliable information about Jesus.^[234] The Blackwell Companion to Jesus states that the *Toledot Yeshu* has no historical facts as such, and was perhaps created as a tool for warding off conversions to Christianity.^[235]

Gnostics

Some Gnostics did not believe in a literal physical resurrection. "For the gnostic any resurrection of the dead was excluded from the outset; the flesh or substance is destined to perish. 'There is no resurrection of the flesh, but only of the soul', say the so-called Archontics, a late gnostic group in Palestine".^[236]

Islam

Muslims believe that 'Īsā (Jesus) son of Mariam (Mary) was a holy prophet with a divine message. The Islamic perspective is that Jesus was not crucified and will return to the world at the end of times. "But Allāh raised him up to Himself. And Allāh is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise".^[237] The Quran says in Surah An-Nisa [Ch 004: Verse 157] "And because of their saying, 'We killed Messiah 'Īsā, son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allāh', – but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared so to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts".^[238]



A rotunda in Church of the Holy Sepulchre, called the Anastasis ("Resurrection"), which contains the remains of a rock-cut room that Helena and Macarius identified as the burial site of Jesus.

Islam Ahmadiyya

Ahmadi Muslims believe that, as Jesus is the Messiah to the Children of Israel^[239] his objective was to gather their following. For this reason, Ahmadis believe that Jesus survived the crucifixion, as supported by the Qur'an,^{[240][241][242][243]} as a death on the cross would be a cursed one, supported by the Bible.^[244] This belief is held as Jesus had other "sheep" to tend to.^[245]

After surviving the crucifixion, Jesus and his mother migrated to another land^[246] where he continued his mission.

See also

- [Chronology of Jesus](#)
- [Outline of Jesus](#)
- [Divine Mercy Sunday](#)
- [Dying-and-rising god](#)
- [Tomb of Jesus](#)
 - The ground on which The Church of the Holy Sepulchre stands is venerated by most Christians as Golgotha, the Hill of Calvary, where the New Testament says that Jesus was crucified. This tomb is venerated as the tomb of Christ by the Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox churches, and Oriental Orthodox churches.

- The Garden Tomb, discovered in the 19th century, is considered the actual site of Jesus' grave by some Protestant Christians.
- Talpiot Tomb, discovered in 1980, subject of the controversial 2007 documentary *The Lost Tomb of Jesus*

Notes

1. See *Why was Resurrection on "the Third Day"? Two Insights* (<http://ourrabbijesus.com/articles/resurrection-on-the-third-day/>) for explanations on the phrase "third day." According to Ernst Lüdemann^[32] and Pinchas Lapide, "third day" may refer to Hosea 6:1-2:^[33]

Come, let us return to the Lord;
 for he has torn us, that he may heal us;
 he has struck us down, and he will bind us up.
 After two days he will revive us;
 on the third day he will raise us up,
 that we may live before him.

See also 2 Kings 20:8: "Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the Lord on the third day?""^[34]

According to Sheehan, Paul's reference to Jesus having risen "on the third day [...] simply expresses the belief that Jesus was rescued from the fate of utter absence from God (death) and was admitted to the saving presence of God (the eschatological future)."^[35]

2. EB: "Session at the right hand of the Father was apparently a Christian interpretation of the first verse of Psalm 110. It implied the elevation—or, as the doctrine of preexistence became clearer, the restoration—of Christ to a position of honour with God. Taken together, the Ascension and the session were a way of speaking about the presence of Christ with the Father during the interim between the Resurrection and the Second Advent."^[web 1]
3. **1 Corinthians 15:1-4**: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures".

4. The *kerygma* from 1 Corinthians 15:3–5 refers to two mythologies: the Greek myth of the noble dead, to which the Maccabean notion of martyrdom and dying for one's people is related; and the Jewish myth of the persecuted sage or righteous man, c.q. the "story of the child of wisdom."^[27] The notion of 'dying for' refers to this martyrdom and persecution.^[28] James F. McGrath refers to 4 Maccabees,^[29] "which presents a martyr praying "Be merciful to your people, and let our punishment suffice for them. Make my blood their purification, and take my life in exchange for theirs".^[30] Clearly, there were ideas that existed in the Judaism of the time that helped make sense of the death of the righteous in terms of atonement."^[web 4] See also Herald Gaudi (2018), *The Resurrection: "According to the Scriptures"?* (<https://www.tms.edu/blog/resurrection-according-to-scriptures/>), referring to Isaiah 53,^[31] among others: "[4] Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. [5] But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed [...] [10] Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the Lord shall prosper. [11] Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities."

5. Early creed:

- Neufeld, *The Earliest Christian Confessions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964) p. 47
- Reginald Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives* (New York: Macmillan, 1971) p. 10
- Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus – God and Man* translated Lewis Wilkins and Duane Pribe (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968) p. 90
- Oscar Cullmann, *The Early Church: Studies in Early Christian History and Theology*, ed. A. J. B. Higgins (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966) p. 64
- Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, translated James W. Leitch (Philadelphia: Fortress 1969) p. 251
- Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* vol. 1 pp. 45, 80–82, 293
- R. E. Brown, *The Virginal Conception and Bodily Resurrection of Jesus* (New York: Paulist Press, 1973) pp. 81, 92
- Most Fellows of the Jesus Seminar also concluded that this tradition dates to before Paul's conversion, c. AD 33.^[41]

6. Origins within the Jerusalem apostolic community:

- Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus – God and Man* translated Lewis Wilkins and Duane Pribe (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968) p. 90
- Oscar Cullmann, *The Early church: Studies in Early Christian History and Theology*, ed. A. J. B. Higgins (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966) pp. 66–66
- R. E. Brown, *The Virginal Conception and Bodily Resurrection of Jesus* (New York: Paulist Press, 1973) p. 81
- Thomas Sheehan, *First Coming: How the Kingdom of God Became Christianity* (New York: Random House, 1986) pp. 110, 118
- Ulrich Wilckens, *Resurrection* translated A. M. Stewart (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew, 1977) p. 2

7. According to Christian apologist Gary Habermas, Paul refers to a physical body in 1 Corinthians 15:44 (<https://bible.oremus.org/?passage=1%20Corinthians%2015:44&version=nrsv>). Habermas notes that Paul doesn't use solely the word *pneuma*, but speaks about "spiritual [*pneumatikos*] body [*soma*]". According to Habermas, Paul refers to a physical body, arguing that "Paul says three things in one chapter [of Philippians] that indicates that he's talking about a physical resurrection." The first is that Paul says that he is a Pharisee, implying that he believes in a physical resurrection. The second is that, in Philippians 3:11, Paul says "That I may attain the resurrection of the dead," using the phrase *eks-anastasis* ("εἰς τὴν ἑξανάστασιν") (out-resurrection), "resurrection from out among the dead ones." And third, in Philippians 3:20–21 "He Jesus will change my body to be like His body." Habermas further notes that in Philippians 3:20,21, Paul speaks of a "glorious body" which is resurrected.^[web 8]
8. According to Sheehan, Paul's account of the resurrection is not meant to be taken as referring to a literal, physical rising from the grave.^[88] Paul's understanding of the resurrection, and perhaps Peter's as well, is a metaphorical one, with the stories of Jesus's (figurative) resurrection reflecting his triumphant "entry into God's eschatological presence."^[89] Sheehan:

The word "resurrection" is a metaphor that unfortunately has been taken literally. That's where the confusion begins. In the New Testament the word for "resurrection" means literally "awakening," like waking up your kids in the morning. The New Testament says not that God "resurrected" Jesus from the dead, but that he "awoke" him. Using metaphoric language, the New Testament says God awoke Jesus from the sleep of death and brought him into God's heavenly presence. There's nothing here about an event in space and time. Resurrection doesn't mean coming back to life."^[88]

Sheehan quotes Helmut Koester:

"Resurrection is thus a mythological metaphor for God's victory over the powers of unrighteousness. ... The preaching of Jesus' resurrection was thus the proclamation that the new age had been ushered in": "The Structure and Criteria of Early Christian Beliefs" in Robinson and Koester, *Trajectories*, 223, 224.^[90]

9. In an earlier publication (2003), Ehrman recognized that "Some scholars have argued that it's more plausible that in fact Jesus was placed in a common burial plot, which sometimes happened, or was, as many other crucified people, simply left to be eaten by scavenging animals," but further elaborates by stating that "[T]he accounts are fairly unanimous in saying [...] that Jesus was in fact buried by this fellow, Joseph of Arimathea, and so it's relatively reliable that that's what happened."^[98]
10. 1 Cor 15:12–20 1 Pet 1:3
11. Novakovic quotes C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1:62.^[127]
12. See also Andrew Chester (2007), *Messiah and Exaltation: Jewish Messianic and Visionary Traditions and New Testament Christology*, Mohr Siebeck; and Larry Hurtado (11 December 2012), "Early High Christology": A Recent Assessment of Scholarly Debate (<https://larryhurtado.wordpress.com/2012/12/11/early-high-christology-a-recent-assessment-of-scholarly-debate/>).

13. These visions may mostly have appeared during corporate worship.^[134] Johan Leman contends that the communal meals provided a context in which participants entered a state of mind in which the presence of Jesus was felt.^[135]
14. According to Sanders, "there seems to have been a competition: 'I saw him,' 'so did I,' 'the women saw him first,' 'no, I did; they didn't see him at all,' and so on."^[181]
15. Hurtado cites Green, *The Death of Jesus*, p.323.^[170]
16. Vermes describes are eight possible theories to explain the resurrection of Jesus, concluding that none of these six possibilities "stands up to stringent scrutiny",^[172] and then stating that the resurrection is a "resurrection in the hearts of men."^[173]
17. According to Lüdemann, in the discussions about the **strictness of adherence** to the Jewish Law, the more conservative faction of James the Just took the overhand over the more liberal position of Peter, who soon lost influence.^[178] According to Dunn, this was not an "usurpation of power," but a consequence of Peter's involvement in missionary activities.^[179]
18. Atonement:
 - * Briscoe and Ogilvie (2003): "Paul says that Christ's ransom price is his blood."^[191]
 - * Cobb: "The question is whether Paul thought that God sacrificed Jesus to atone for human sins. During the past thousand years, this idea has often been viewed in the Western church as at the heart of Christianity, and many of those who uphold it have appealed to Paul as its basis [...] In fact, the word "atonement" is lacking in many standard translations. The King James Translation uses "propitiation", and the Revised Standard Version uses "expiation." The American Translation reads: "For God showed him publicly dying as a sacrifice of reconciliation to be taken advantage of through faith." The Good News Bible renders the meaning as: "God offered him, so that by his sacrificial death he should become the means by which people's sins are forgiven through their faith in him." Despite this variety, and the common avoidance of the word "atonement," all these translations agree with the New Revised Standard Version in suggesting that God sacrificed Jesus so that people could be reconciled to God through faith. All thereby support the idea that is most directly formulated by the use of the word "atonement."^[web 15]
19. According to the Jewish Encyclopedia (1906), "The Mishnah says that sins are expiated (1) by sacrifice, (2) by repentance at death or on Yom Kippur, (3) in the case of the lighter transgressions of the positive or negative precepts, by repentance at any time [...] The graver sins, according to Rabbi, are apostasy, heretical interpretation of the Torah, and non-circumcision (Yoma 86a). The atonement for sins between a man and his neighbor is an ample apology (Yoma 85b)."^[web 17]

The Jewish Virtual Library writes: "Another important concept [of sacrifices] is the element of substitution. The idea is that the thing being offered is a substitute for the person making the offering, and the things that are done to the offering are things that should have been done to the person offering. The offering is in some sense "punished" in place of the offerer. It is interesting to note that whenever the subject of Karbanot is addressed in the Torah, the name of G-d used is the four-letter name indicating G-d's mercy."^[web 18]

The Jewish Encyclopedia further writes: "Most efficacious seemed to be the atoning power of suffering experienced by the righteous during the Exile. This is the idea underlying the description of the suffering servant of God in Isa. liii. 4, 12, Hebr. [...] of greater atoning power than all the Temple sacrifices was the suffering of the elect ones who were to be servants and witnesses of the Lord (Isa. xlii. 1-4, xlix. 1-7, l. 6). This idea of the atoning power of the suffering and death of the righteous finds expression also in IV Macc. vi. 27, xvii. 21-23; M. K. 28a; Pesiq. xxvii. 174b; Lev. R. xx.; and formed the basis of Paul's doctrine of the atoning blood of Christ (Rom. iii. 25)."^[web 19]

20. Jordan Cooper: "Sanders sees Paul's motifs of salvation as more participationist than juristic. The reformation overemphasized the judicial categories of forgiveness and escape from condemnation, while ignoring the real heart of salvation, which is a mystical participation in Christ. Paul shows this in his argument in his first epistle to the Corinthians when arguing against sexual immorality. It is wrong because it affects one's union with Christ by uniting himself to a prostitute. Sin is not merely the violation of an abstract law. This participationist language is also used in Corinthians in the discussion of the Lord's Supper wherein one participates in the body and blood of Christ."^[web 20]

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2. Novakovic 2014, p. 153-154.
3. Dunn 1985, p. 53.
4. Koester 2000, pp. 64–65.
5. Vermes 2008b, p. 141.
6. Ehrman 2014, pp. 98, 101.
7. Ehrman 2014, pp. 109–110.
8. Vermes 2008a, pp. 151–152.
9. Schäfer 2003, pp. 72–73.
10. Schäfer 2003, p. 72.
11. Van Voorst 2000, p. 430.
12. Mason 2001, p. 169.
13. Dan 12:2
14. Endsjø 2009, pp. 124–125.
15. Lehtipuu 2015, pp. 31.
16. Endsjø 2009, p. 145.
17. Cotter 2001, p. 131.
18. Cotter 2001, pp. 131, 135–136.
19. Collins 2009, pp. 46, 51.
20. Vermes 2008a, p. 141.
21. 1 Corinthians 15:3–8 (<https://bible.oremus.org/?passage=1%20Corinthians%2015:3–8&version=nrsv>)
22. Neufeld 1964, p. 47.
23. Taylor 2014, p. 374.
24. Romans 1:3–4
25. 2 Timothy 2:8
26. 1 Corinthians 15:3–7
27. Mack 1995, pp. 86–87.
28. Mack 1997, p. 88.
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