

# Man Rises From Grave

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Jerusalem was rocked yesterday by claims that a man had risen from the dead. Following a stirring speech by Peter, a fisherman from Galilee, over 3,000 people were convinced enough to become followers of Jesus of Nazareth, executed by the Roman authorities over seven weeks ago. Could there be some truth in this story? I decided to investigate.

I spoke to Peter himself who told me: “We followed Jesus for three years and the things he taught and the miracles he did convinced us that he was the promised Messiah. When he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, we thought he was about to take the city from the Romans.”

However, their hopes were dashed when Jesus was – unjustly, his followers would say – arrested, tried, condemned and finally executed by crucifixion. His disciples fled for their lives and were still in hiding on the third day, when some women went to the tomb to embalm the body. Peter introduced me to Mary, a well-to-do woman, who told me:

“When we got there, the stone had been rolled away. Jesus’ body was gone, though the grave clothes were still there. We ran to tell Peter, and he and John came to see for themselves. After they had gone, I saw a man. At first I thought he was the gardener but I was crying so much I couldn’t see properly. When he called my name I realised that it was Jesus! He had risen from the dead! I could hardly believe it, but he was real.”

Peter took up the story again. “Later that day, we were in a locked room when Jesus appeared. We thought he was a ghost, but he asked for some



Scene of the alleged ‘rising from the dead’ of Jesus of Nazareth.

fish and ate it, so we knew he was really alive. That wasn’t the only time we saw him: he showed Thomas the nail holes in his hands and feet and the spear mark in his side. Other people saw him too: on one occasion 500 at once!”

Clearly, these people believe they saw Jesus alive after his death. But how did they know he was really dead? I found the Roman centurion who supervised the crucifixion. He told me, “I know a dead man when I see one, but just to be sure I had a soldier pierce him with a spear. Blood and water came out. That only happens when they’ve died.”

Nicodemus, a high ranking Jewish official, said: “My friend and I buried him. I tied the grave clothes myself. If he had still been alive, we would have known.”

It has been suggested that the disciples may have stolen the body themselves. The three soldiers sent to guard the tomb claim that this happened while they were asleep. I wondered how they knew that if they

were asleep! According to another soldier these three “...were splashing around a lot of money afterwards. I reckon somebody paid them to give you that story. If that lot dropped off on duty they wouldn’t be here to tell the tale.”

So, the facts I discovered are that Jesus was killed, he was dead, his tomb was empty, and people saw him alive afterwards. But the biggest question is this: what does it all mean? Some of the new followers told me, “It means he really was the Messiah, God’s Son! His death has taken our sins away and his resurrection proves that everything he said and did was true! He has promised that anyone who believed will eventually be resurrected to live forever.”

Surely, this is and will remain the biggest question in history. If this man Jesus really rose from the dead, we must take him seriously, and even think about becoming his followers. I know I want to find out more about him.

What about you?