

Easter

Sermon Series Notes

Easter 2015

Danny Hodges – SE3410

Intro: The “Swoon Theory.” Swoon: To faint; It is the theory that Jesus did not really die, but rather swooned. Early proponents of this theory include German [Karl Friedrich Bahrdt](#), who suggested in around 1780, that Jesus deliberately feigned his death, using drugs provided by the physician [Luke](#) to appear as a spiritual [messiah](#) and get Israel to abandon the idea of a political messiah. In this interpretation of the events described in the Gospels, Jesus was resuscitated by [Joseph of Arimathea](#). Around 1800, [Karl Venturini](#) proposed that a group of supporters dressed in white — who were, with Jesus, members of a “secret society” — had not expected him to survive the crucifixion, but heard groaning from inside the tomb, where Jesus had regained consciousness in the cool, damp air. They then frightened away the guards and rescued him.

A third rationalist theologian, [Heinrich Paulus](#), wrote in works from 1802 onwards that he believed that Jesus had fallen into a temporary coma and somehow revived without help in the tomb. [Mirza Ghulam Ahmad](#), the founder of the [Ahmadiyya](#) Muslim Movement, proposed a theory in his 1899 book *Jesus in India*^[1] that Jesus traveled to India after surviving the [crucifixion](#).

Ernest Brougham Docker (1920, *If Jesus Did Not Die on the Cross*)

[Robert Graves](#) and Joshua Podro (1957, *Jesus in Rome*)

[Hugh J. Schonfield](#) (1965, *The Passover Plot*)

[Donovan Joyce](#) (1972, *The Jesus Scroll*)

Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and [Henry Lincoln](#), in their 1982 book *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, speculated that [Pontius Pilate](#) was bribed to allow Jesus to be taken down from the cross before he was dead. Holger Kersten (1994, in *Jesus lived in India*)

David Mirsch (2011, "The Open Tomb: Why and How Jesus Faked His Death and Resurrection").

Read Romans 1:1-4. Verse 4 “appointed” = “defined” or “declared.” In other words, his resurrection proves that he is indeed the “Son of God.”

I Cor. 15:1-4 These would have been OT Scriptures; See Luke 24:44

- Gen.3:15 And I will put enmity (hatred) between you and the woman, and between your offspring (seed) and hers. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.
- Gen.12:3...all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.
- Gen.21:5 Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

- Gal.3:16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ.
- Gen.22:1-18 (Mt Moriah/Calvary)
- Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-15 (context is John 3:16)
- Psalm 16:10... you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.
- Psalm 22:16 they have pierced my hands and my feet.
- Psalm 22:18 They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.
- Isa.53:9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.
- Isa.53:12...he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.
- Hosea 6:2 After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence.
- Matt.12:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

I Cor.15:5-8 The eyewitness accounts of the resurrection are quite compelling, especially when we consider the skeptical nature of Jesus’ key disciples at the news that Jesus was alive; See Mark 16:9-11; Luke 24:11, 25; John 20:24-29.

Some say Christ never really died on the cross (The “swoon theory”)

Jesus was up all night prior to his crucifixion, and that after going through the most stressful time of his earthly life. In the Garden of Gethsemane he experienced hematidrosis, a rare condition when someone sweats blood. It most commonly occurs during times of extreme fear or anxiety, such as is often experienced when a person is facing death. A small net-like structure of tiny [blood vessels](#), known as capillaries, surrounds the [sweat glands](#). It is possible for these blood vessels to rupture when a person is faced with an extremely stressful situation, causing blood to exit the body through the sweat glands. Read Luke 22:43-44. Jesus was so weak and badly beaten they forced a man named Simon to carry his cross (Luke 23:26).

After being nailed to the cross, Jesus hung there for six hours. Then the Jewish leadership asked Pilate to take the bodies down from the crosses before sundown, because at sundown Passover began, where each family would slay the Passover lamb at twilight. The bodies on the crosses would defile their holy feast. So Pilate ordered some soldiers to break the legs of those crucified. Here is the record: Read John 19:31-34. Crucifixion typically resulted in death through one of two ways. The first way was hypovolemic shock. The prolonged rapid heartbeat resulting from this kind of shock can cause fluid to gather in the area around the heart. This is called pericardial effusion. The second way death often occurred during crucifixion was due to asphyxiation. This simply means the person is unable to breathe in enough oxygen to survive. Crucifixion victims typically had to pull their weight up with their hands or wrists that were nailed to the crossbeam along with pushing up with the feet or ankles that had another nail through them. Over time, the ability to push up to breathe would end and oxygen flow would be restricted. Asphyxiation can also result in the buildup of fluid around the heart. The flow of blood of blood and water was the result of the spear rupturing the pericardial sack (clear sign of death).

Jesus was embalmed by two men before being placed in the tomb (Read John 19:38-42). So if Jesus did not die, you have to ignore all the evidence to the contrary, and then believe that he somehow, as brutally injured as he was, took off the 75 lbs. of embalming materials, then rolled the huge stone from the entrance to the tomb, and of course sneak past the Roman guards.

A few years ago three doctors wrote an article in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Let me read a bit of this article: "Clearly, the weight of historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted and supports the traditional view that the spear, thrust between his right rib, probably perforated not only the right lung but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured his death. Accordingly, interpretations based on the assumptions that Jesus did not die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge."

Some say that the disciples stole Jesus' dead body from the tomb and created the greatest hoax of history.

Matt.28: 12 When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, 13 telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.'

Matt.27: 62 The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. 63 "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' 64 So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first." 65 "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." 66 So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

If the disciples stole Jesus' body, they would have had to get by the elite Roman Guard, a four to sixteen man security force where four men at a time were placed in front of what they were guarding, while the other twelve slept in a semi-circle in front of them with their heads pointed in. Every four hours they rotated shifts.

If the disciples stole the body, it means they were then willing to put themselves and their families through threats from the supreme court, beatings, imprisonment, and even death, all for a hoax.

Some say the Jewish authorities stole the body; If that were the case, when the disciples began to proclaim that Jesus was alive, the authorities would have produced the body to prove their claims false.

You gotta work really hard and ignore some pretty compelling evidence to believe that Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead.

Why is it so important to believe that Jesus rose from the dead? See I Cor.15:12-17.

If I am still in my sins, I am DEAD.

Adam & Eve (Gen.2:16-17)

Matthew 8:21-22 "...Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Eph.2:1 As for you, you were **dead** in your transgressions and sins...

Read John 8:21-24

Note I Cor.15:4

John 5:24 Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

Eph.2:4-5 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.

Col.2:13 When you were dead in your sins...God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us *all* our sins.