



RESURGENCE

The Tomb of Christ – Empty

Peter Jones

A Discovery Channel movie claims that the limestone boxes with the names of two Mary's, Joseph, Jesus and the "Judah, son of Jesus" discovered in 1982 in Jerusalem actually contain the DNA of Jesus, his parents and his "wife" Mary and his child.

A. ARCHEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

1. According to Joseph Zias, an Israeli archeologist, within a two mile radius of this tomb in Talpiyot there are 70 graves/ossuaries with the name Jesus and 2 with the name Jesus son of Joseph; 48% of women at that time had the name Mary/Miriam;
2. this was a middleclass family and the family of Jesus was poor;
3. the family tomb would more than likely be in Nazareth.
4. Where are the other family members, James, Simon and the sisters?

B. DNA EVIDENCE

1. The DNA evidence is not shared by "Jesus" and "Mary (Magdeloene?)" proving that they "must" be married. But this "Mary" could have been an adopted child or a close family friend.
2. Is "Judah, son of Jesus" the offspring of the biblical Jesus? There is absolutely no other corroborating evidence and all the other purely speculative theories and legends, like the *Da Vinci Code* or those of the author Laurence Gardner, put the "son" far from Jerusalem, establishing the royal houses of Europe.
3. It is most unlikely that the Magdelene should be buried in Jerusalem since her death in old age in southern France figures prominently in early European tradition. Indeed, I have seen the ossuary in which some of her bones are reputedly kept in Vezeley Cathedral near Auxerre in central France. This is where any DNA testing needs to be done.

C. THEOLOGICAL EXPLANATION FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

Into this spiritual and demographic "multicultural" void gallops militant Islam-armed with both faith and babies.

1. If these are the remains of Jesus, then biblical Christianity falls, as the apostle Paul willingly grants in 1 Corinthians 15:14: "If Christ is not raised then our preaching is in vain...we are still in our sins (v.17)."
2. The biblical account claims that Jesus only spent a part of three days in a tomb. You can get his body into another tomb only if you take the age old position, now adopted by James Tabor, a professor of religious studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte who said on national TV that while literal interpreters

- of the Bible say Jesus' physical body rose from the dead, "One might affirm resurrection in a more spiritual way in which the husk of the body is left behind."
3. In the founding texts of the Christianity, the resurrection body is described not as a brand new, spiritual entity, but as the earthly body transformed, "the perishable, mortal body" putting on the imperishable, immortal form" with no husk left behind.
 4. Spiritual resurrection is the invention of the ancient Gnostics and modern liberals, both of whom have rejected the biblical Creator. Paul speaks of those who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already (spiritually) happened (2 Timothy 2:17-18). The body is not a husk, as Gnostics would say, not a mere prison house of the soul. (On the Gnostic Jesus, see my book, *Stolen Identity: The Conspiracy to Re-Invent Jesus*). The body is a good creation of the transcendent Creator.
 5. The first public sermon of the Christian movement, given a few weeks after the crucifixion and a mile from the tomb of Jesus (Acts 2:22-31), was all about tombs! ...*God raised Jesus, because it was not possible for him to be held by (death)*. Peter goes on to cite Psalm 16's prediction that the Messiah's flesh would not see corruption. He adds that David the psalmist was not talking about himself because *the patriarch David... both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day*. Peter implicitly invites his hearers to go check the tomb and the psalmist's DNA! The whole argument depends upon the fact, in contradistinction from David, that the bones of Jesus were not in his tomb.

D. THE EMPTY TOMB: HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN IT HISTORICALLY?

There were no bones in the tomb of Jesus because the tomb and even the grave clothes were empty (John 20:6-9). How is that explained historically?

If the Jewish or Roman authorities had taken the body, they could have reproduced it in order to silence this bothersome movement. They did not, so they could not;

If the apostles had stolen the body, then they were guilty of an unconscionable fraud. The New Testament cites numerous witnesses (at least 500) all in on the hoax! Later many died excruciating deaths. Not one of them broke under torture. This defies belief.

The most historically satisfactory but unsettling answer is the one Paul gives: *in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead* (1 Corinthians 15:20).

CHRISTOS KURIOS: CHRIST IS LORD.