



The Empty Tomb: Jesus Beyond The Grave

By Robert M. Price

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Did Jesus rise from the dead? Although 19th- and early 20th-century biblical scholarship dismissed the resurrection narratives as late, legendary accounts, Christian apologists in the late 20th century revived historical apologetics for the resurrection of Jesus with increasingly sophisticated arguments. A few critics have directly addressed some of the new arguments, but their response has been largely muted. The Empty Tomb scrutinizes the claims of leading Christian apologists and critiques their view of the resurrection as the best historical explanation.

The contributors include New Testament scholars, philosophers, historians, and leading nontheists. They focus on the key questions relevant to assessing the historicity of the resurrection: What did the authors of the New Testament mean when they said Jesus rose from the dead? What historical evidence is needed to establish the resurrection? If there is a God, why would He resurrect Jesus? Was there an empty tomb? What should we make of the appearance stories? Apart from historical evidence, is belief in the resurrection justified?

The Empty Tomb provides a sober, objective response to arguments offered in defense of Christianity's central claim.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This uneven and sometimes obscure collection of essays takes up the gauntlets thrown by contemporary Christian apologists like Craig Blomberg, Peter Kreeft and William Lane Craig and argues that a physical resurrection of Jesus Christ is so unlikely as to be impossible. (As Price puts it, there is "implicit absurdity" in the "notion that Jesus is still alive, after two thousand years, in the personal, individual-consciousness mode intended by evangelical apologists.") The essayists, all of whom are male, previously published these articles in academic journals (most notably the *Journal of Higher Criticism*), mostly within the past five years. The fact that these essays originated in academic niche periodicals and seem largely unchanged means that these are often inaccessible works that demand prior knowledge of specialized philosophical debates. Michael Martin's essay on the improbability of resurrection, for example, jumps right into proving his case by applying Bayes's Theorem without even bothering to explain what that theorem is, and Evan Fales's piece on "Reformed Epistemology and Biblical Hermeneutics" is clearly directed at the Ivory Tower, not the person in the pew. Price's own contributions (the introduction and two essays) are more accessible than his peers', but can also be polemical and mean-spirited, as when he calls Blomberg "a PR man for Bill Bright and his various agendas." However, several essays make excellent points about holes in Christian apologists' arguments; Richard Carrier's discussion of the "spiritual body of Christ," for instance, challenges Christians' tendency to imagine a monolithic worldview among first-century Jews.

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From the Publisher

Library Journal Reviews, April 15, 2005

Did the Resurrection actually take place? This is the central question that Price (editor, *Journal of Higher Criticism*) and Lowder (cofounder, *Internet Infidels*) pose in their essay collection. Written in response to recent works by Wolfhart Pannenberg, William Lane Craig, Murray J. Harris, and others who offered a defense of the Resurrection on historical and logical grounds, the essays probe the following: What is the most reasonable way to understand the appearance stories? Why would a God resurrect Jesus? Is the Resurrection theologically necessary? Is there enough historical evidence to make the Resurrection plausible or convincing? Did the "Empty Tomb" really take place? To such questions, the answer is in the negative or is rendered in a nontheistic manner. Interestingly, contributors include not only philosophers, historians, and major nontheists but also New Testament scholars who view the Resurrection as a later church development. Well argued and well written, the essays are certain to stimulate further insight and reflection for both theists and nontheists. As Price states in the introduction, the book contains "important issues of interest equally to traditional believers, skeptics, and critical theologians." Recommended for academic libraries.-John Jaeger, Dallas Baptist Univ.,TX

About the Author

Robert M. Price, Ph.D. (Selma, NC), professor of scriptural studies at the Johnnie Colemon Theological Seminary, is the editor (with Jeffery Jay Lowder) of *The Empty Tomb: Jesus Beyond the Grave* and the *Journal of Higher Criticism*. He is also the author of *Top Secret: The Truth Behind Today's Pop Mysticism*; *The Paperback Apocalypse: How the Christian Church Was Left Behind*; *The Reason-Driven Life: What Am I Here on Earth For?*; *The Incredible Shrinking Son of Man*; and *Deconstructing Jesus*; among other works.

Jeffery Jay Lowder is the cofounder and past president of *Internet Infidels, Inc.*, an international coalition of

nontheists dedicated to promoting and defending a naturalistic worldview on the Internet.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Deborah Ryan:

Typically the book *The Empty Tomb: Jesus Beyond The Grave* has a lot of information on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of profit. The book was published by the very famous author. McDougal makes some research previous to write this book. This specific book very easy to read you can get the point easily after reading this book.

Michael Davis:

The Empty Tomb: Jesus Beyond The Grave can be one of your basic books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this reserve has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in vocabulary, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to place every word into pleasure arrangement in writing *The Empty Tomb: Jesus Beyond The Grave* but doesn't forget the main place, giving the reader the hottest in addition to based confirm resource facts that maybe you can be one among it. This great information can easily drawn you into new stage of crucial thinking.

Michael Marchant:

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Laura Bradberry:

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