

## Jesus' Resurrection - Were The Apostles Deceived?

The lives of the twelve Apostles as well as those of Paul and James provide clear evidence they were convinced Jesus really returned from the dead, but perhaps they were deceived. They believed it to be true, but had they been fooled?

Over the centuries there have been several variations of this notion, usually known as the swoon theory. All have been abandoned or died a quiet death. The general idea is that Jesus survived the cross and was later revived. His appearances to the disciples were therefore not miraculous, as he never died in the first place.

The theory comes in different flavors, some include:

- The Passover Plot (1965). According to its author, Hugh Schonfield, Jesus was a deceiver who carefully plotted His career as Israel's Messiah. Working closely with accomplices Lazarus and Joseph of Arimathea, He planned His survival of the cross. While on the cross, Joseph arranged to have Jesus given a drink to appear dead. On Saturday, Jesus was then removed from the grave and revived.
- The Jesus Scroll (1964). Donovan Joyce in 1964 asserted to have been told of a now lost scroll that might have been written by Jesus at the age of 80. He suggests that Jesus never died on the cross, but plotted with the guards, that after being drugged He was pronounced dead. In the tomb, a doctor, assisted by Joseph of Arimathea (Jesus' uncle) nursed Jesus back to health. As Jesus recovered, He paid one last visit to His disciples and then lived as a monk at Qumran. Jesus married Mary Magdalene, fathered at least one son, and fought the Roman army at Masada, where He died.
- Holy Blood, Holy Grail (1982). This account claims that Jesus was drugged to make Him appear dead. Pilate was bribed to the body's removal from the cross alive. The Essenes (yes, they are part of this as well) then laid His body in the grave of Joseph of Arimathea (a relative of Jesus). Jesus revived and went to France, together with His secret wife Mary Magdalene (remember, this book also inspired Dan Brown's The DaVinci Code), Joseph and Lazarus (Jesus' brother-in-law). There, Jesus and Mary's children start a secret royal bloodline.

These accounts are a great illustration of Occam's razor. How many more wild fantasies have to be invented to explain away the facts? How much better does the resurrection fit the events? The swoon accounts all assume that Jesus was administered some kind of drug to make Him look dead, and a number of unlikely accomplices helped him escape death and revive in the tomb. However, how wild are these speculations? Even with these speculative props, how could Jesus fool the other people at the crucifixion? How could He convince the Jews and Roman soldiers that He was dead when only drugged? And lastly, even for a moment, suppose He swooned, think about the shape Jesus would have been in. He was flogged and had been nailed to a cross for several hours. Even if still alive, Jesus would have been in desperate need of serious medical help. If He would have appeared to the disciples in this shape, they would have not believed for a second this was a glorious resurrection, instead they would have immediately realized that somehow Jesus had survived the crucifixion and needed immediate medical attention.

### About the Author

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