




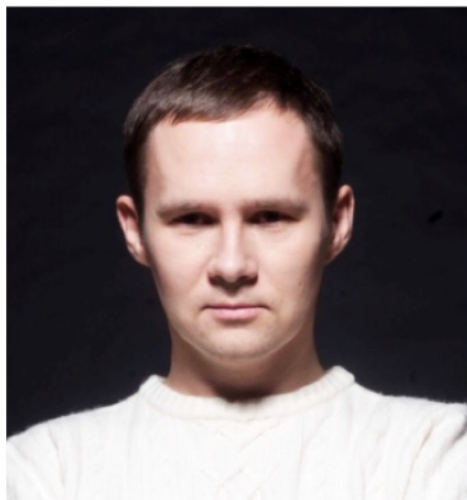
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*Here Are 3 Totally Solid Reasons To Believe Jesus Came Back From The Dead, But I Don't Believe Them Because I'm Not A Weak-Minded Moron*

By Darryl Mann  
*Freethinker, blogger*



It's that time of year again—sheeple everywhere are celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus. Religious simpletons who choose to regurgitate the blind faith their parents hammered into their skulls when they were children are gathering in church buildings and worshipping their magic sky fairy who has "come back from the dead."

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# Easter: Myth, Hallucination, or History?

EDWIN M. YAMAUCHI

That the Easter faith in the Resurrection of Christ is the core of Christianity can hardly be denied. Whether that conviction is rooted in myth, in hallucination, or in history has often been debated. Some have maintained that the Resurrection of Christ is a myth patterned after the prototypes of dying and rising fertility gods. Others argue that subjective visions of the risen Christ were sufficient to convince the disciples that their leader was not dead. Even those who do not doubt the historicity of Christ's life and death differ as to how the Resurrection may be viewed historically. Let us examine the evidences for these alternatives.

## Easter as Myth

### A. Dying and Rising Fertility Gods

John H. Randall, emeritus professor of philosophy at Columbia University, has asserted: "Christianity, at the hands of Paul, became a mystical system of redemption, much like the cult of Isis, and the other sacramental or mystery religions of the day" (*Hellenistic Ways of Deliverance and the Making of the Christian Synthesis*, 1970, p. 154). Hugh Schonfield in *Those Incredible Christians* (1968, p. xii) has declared: "The revelations of Frazer in *The Golden Bough* had not got through to the masses.... Christians remained related under the skin to the devotees of Adonis and Osiris, Dionysus and Mithras."

The theory that there was a widespread worship of a dying and rising fertility god-Tammuz in Mesopotamia, Adonis in Syria, Attis in Asia Minor, and Osiris in Egypt-was propounded by Sir James Frazer, who gathered a mass of parallels in part IV of his monumental work *The Golden Bough* (1906, reprinted in 1961). This view has been adopted by many who little realize its fragile foundations. The explanation of the Christian Resurrection by such a comparative-religions approach has even been reflected in official Soviet propaganda (cf. Paul de Surgy, editor, *The Resurrection and Modern Biblical Thought*, 1966, pp. 1, 131).

In the 1930s three influential French scholars, M. Goguel, C. Guignebert, and A. Loisy, interpreted Christianity as a syncretistic religion formed under the influence of Hellenistic mystery religions. According to A. Loisy ("The Christian Mystery," *Hibbert Journal*, X [1911-12], 51), Christ was "a saviour-god, after the manner of an Osiris, an Attis, a Mithra.... Like Adonis, Osiris, and Attis he had died a violent death, and like them he had returned to life...."

### B. Reexamination of the Evidences

A reexamination of the sources used to support the theory of a mythical origin of Christ's resurrection reveals that the evidences are far from satisfactory and that the parallels are too superficial.

In the case of the Mesopotamian Tammuz (Sumerian Dumuzi), his alleged resurrection by the goddess Inanna-Ishtar had been assumed even though the end of both the Sumerian and the Akkadian texts of the myth of "The Descent of Inanna (Ishtar)" had not been preserved. Professor S. N. Kramer in 1960 published a new poem, "The Death of Dumuzi," that proves conclusively that instead of rescuing Dumuzi from the Underworld, Inanna sent him there as her substitute (cf. my article, "Tammuz and the Bible," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXIV [1965], 283-90). A line in a fragmentary and obscure text is the only positive evidence that after being sent to the Underworld Dumuzi may have had his sister take his place for half the year (cf. S. N. Kramer, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 183 [1966], 31).

... was identified by later writers with the Phoenician Adonis, the beautiful youth beloved of Aphrodite. According to Jerome, Hadrian desecrated the cave in ... birth by consecrating it with a shrine of Tammuz-Adonis. Although his cult spread from Babel to the Greco-Roman world, the worship of

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"I have tried to show that theories attributing the Resurrection of Christ to the borrowing of mythological themes, to hallucinations, or to alternative explanations of the empty tomb are **improbable** and are also **inadequate** to explain the genesis and growth of Christianity."

TEN THINGS YOU  
MUST KNOW ABOUT  
THE RESURRECTION  
OF JESUS, ALL FROM  
ONE CHAPTER

I CORINTHIANS 15

**1. Christ died for us  
and rose again as anticipated  
by the scriptures**

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and . . . He was buried, and . . . He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."  
(1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

**2. Jesus verified his resurrection  
by large public appearances**

"After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep."  
(1 Corinthians 15:6)

**3. Because Christ has risen, we are not still in our sins or despair**

**“If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.”**

**(1 Corinthians 15:17)**

**4. Because Christ has risen, our afflicted lives are not pathetic**

**“If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.”**

**(1 Corinthians 15:19)**

**5. We who trust Christ will be raised from the dead at Christ's second coming**

“Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life.”

(1 Corinthians 15:22-23)

**6. Christ already reigns over the universe**

“For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death.”

(1 Corinthians 15:25-26)



## 7. Our resurrection body will be imperishable, glorious, powerful, and spiritual

"Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies."

(1 Corinthians 15:42-44)

## 8. Death now has no sting and will be swallowed up in victory

"But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:54-55)

## 9. Christ suffered for sin and satisfied the law for us

“The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:56-57)

10. Therefore, do huge amounts of Christ-exalting work because all of it counts for eternity!

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.