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Cruci-fiction and Resuscitation, the Greatest Hoax in the History of Humanity

The last week was the "Resurrection Week" here on the campus, and I was appalled by the insensitivity and intrusiveness with which those calling themselves Christians behaved, particularly toward all people of the truly monotheistic religions as Judaism and Islam. Even though I have known the real secular origins of Christianity (in fact Paulianity, because Christianity is not based on Christ's teaching but on Paul's theology), I never spoke up even to my Christian friends out of respect for their feelings and I was afraid of hurting them, however misleading and contradictory to Christ's teachings their Paulian dogmas were. Now, seeing that a similar respect for other faiths is quite unknown to many "Christians" on campus, I feel it is time to speak up in defense of truth, and of those, who being bombarded by all the relentless Paulian propaganda quietly bore it.

Have you ever wondered why so many biblical experts are so skeptical about Jesus' "resurrection" and why even a growing number of Christian scholars and theologians are heard saying that his resurrection is no so central to Christianity as Jesus' sermons and all that he taught? Interestingly, most (not all) pastors who should be a bridge between the scholars and the lay people have denounced any research which would cast even a shadow of doubt on their flocks, and for a very good reason. Miracles attract superstitious folk like sugar water attracts bees, and popularity, as well as preachers' salaries are directly proportional to the sizes of their flocks. Not surprisingly, ministries as TBN, Benny Hinn and others belong to the most prospering businesses in the country. Apparently, those people in charge of today's Christianity have never opened up their Bibles where it reads: "No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." Those involved in biblical research, however, seldom have such a conflict of interest as they are interested in facts and reality rather than in politics. And knowledge of reality does not contradict God, but ignorance does. Since preachers have often failed to inform the people of what really happened in events surrounding the so called "resurrection," I will make an attempt to give the most possibly accurate picture. Our information source will be the four surviving gospels even though they have been carefully selected by the Church from a pool of "a multitude of gospels" (according to Irenaeus) tens, possibly hundreds. The rest of them have been systematically burned over the centuries, often along with their owners called the heretics, because they did not fit the official state-required dogmas. The four surviving gospels were edited and corrected over time to best fit the doctrines worked out earlier by Paul. But for any knowledgeable and truth-loving person, it is still relatively easy to see what actually happened those 2000 years ago.

First of all, the popular myth that Jesus was attempted to be crucified because he made himself the Son of God is not true. That was just an excuse. Other men were called by this title, among them Adam (Lk 3, 38), Israel (Exod. 4, 22), Solomon (1 Chron. 22, 10), and there was nothing blasphemous about someone using it. The true reason why Jesus had to "go" is found in Mt 23, 1-36. It is the same reason why Giordano Bruno, John Hus, or Joan of Arc had to burn, namely neither got along with the ruling elite of their day. Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites, blind guides and whitewashed tombs, and even worse, people listened to him.

The real trouble for the Pharisees came when they led Jesus to Pontius Pilate. According to the Roman law, Pilate saw in Jesus an innocent man, he refused to support their political vengeance, and he tried to free him. Moreover, his wife sent a message to him not to execute this "righteous man," because she "suffered much in a dream today because of him." (Mt 27, 19) Superstitious as all Romans were, Pilate was afraid of this bad omen, and he kept refusing to execute him. But the tables turned when the Pharisees shouted: "If you release him, you are not a friend of Caesar." (Jn 19, 12) In other words, "If you do not do what we want, we will badmouth you before Caesar." Blackmail, simple and outrageous, yet very effective, as Pilate knew well that such an accusation, however untrue, could jeopardize his career, so he reluctantly gave him up to be crucified. After which Jesus was led up to Golgotha, crucified at noon (Lk 23, 44) or shortly after noon (Jn 19, 14) and is said to have expired at three o'clock in the afternoon. (Lk 23, 46)

When Joseph of Arimathea asked for Jesus' body, Pilate was amazed that Jesus had already died, and for a very good reason. Death by crucifixion came very slowly, typically in two days. Strong individuals lasted for three days, whereas the physically weak expired in about one day. Pilate knew well that after three hours on the cross, Jesus could not have been dead. However, feeling bad about condemning an innocent man by being blackmailed and still fearing his wife's bad dream, he conceived a brilliant idea. In order to speed up death of the crucified, he ordered the soldiers to break the legs of both criminals (upon which death by suffocation came within an hour), but not those of Jesus. Instead, we are told in Jn 19, 33 that "when they (soldiers) came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust a lance into his side..." How

can one see that a person is dead without a careful close inspection of signs of life as heartbeat and breathing? How many times are people pulled from water, fires, car wrecks who appear to be dead, but then are "resurrected"? And if the soldier saw that Jesus was dead, why the lancing? No reason for it. Moreover, Romans never lanced the crucified. If the soldier did not get special orders from Pilate and if he was only a bit suspicious that Jesus was alive (as he had all reasons to be), he would have broken Jesus' legs like anyone else's, no preferential treatment. It seems that the lancing observed only by a mysterious anonymous witness (Jn 19, 35) which appears only in John's gospel was the author's initiative to correct the previously written three gospels which did not document any such lancing. Those earlier gospels were most likely attacked by the contemporary skeptics requiring a proof of Jesus' death who knew well that a crucified man could not die in such a short time. Similarly, when Matthew and Luke were independently editing the earlier Mark's gospel, they knew that its contemporary critics pointed out that the Messiah must come from David's line, and Mark did not mention Jesus' genealogy. So each made up his own list of names. In Matthew, there are 25 names between David and Joseph, Mary's husband, starting with Solomon, whereas in Luke there is a completely different list of Jesus' ancestors containing 40 names and starting with a different David's son Nathan.

Thus, Jesus was taken off the cross after approximately three hours by Joseph of Arimathea and was buried on his property "in his new tomb that he (Joseph) had hewn in the rock" (Mt 27, 60) Why there? Why didn't Joseph bury Jesus into the ground as most people were buried, but instead he put him into his own tomb? Because in the ground Jesus would have certainly suffocated. Moreover, Joseph knew that he would be able to reuse the tomb in the future. Then he (Joseph) "rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed." What happened next? Nothing? No. What would you do in Joseph's place knowing Jesus had only been on the cross for three hours and had not his legs broken? Exactly what Joseph did. Once dark settled, he took several of his servants and unrolled the stone to get Jesus out. According to all expectations, Jesus was alive, so Joseph got him out and rolled the stone back. Only the next day did the Pharisees realize their mistake and asked Pilate to guard the tomb (Mt 27, 62-66), by which time Jesus was safely resting in Joseph's house.

Next, we are told that after Sabbath was over (on Sunday morning) women came to the tomb. Why? To anoint the body with spices as Mk 16, 1 says? No! It is not a Jewish custom to open graves and anoint corpses which have already been buried and which have been fermenting for two days! Moreover, such practices, known from the pagan Egyptians were abominable to Jews. Instead, the women, who were also present at the crucifixion scene knew how shortly Jesus had been on the cross and that his legs were not broken, and they were curious to see what happened to him. They found the stone rolled away and burial clothes inside. Even though the gospels slightly differ in what happened next, Mark and John agree that Jesus first appeared to Mary and that she thought him to be a gardener. Now, do resurrected bodies look like gardeners? No! But Jesus was disguised as a gardener so well that it even took Mary a while to recognize him, even though she knew him well. On another occasion, he even walked with his disciples (Lk 24, 13-31) to none of whom he looked like a resurrected person, but as a perfectly normal stranger. Now why in the world would Jesus walk around so well disguised if he really was resurrected? He would not have to be afraid of the Jewish authorities, because a resurrected person cannot be killed again. However, he would have to be afraid and he would have to be disguised if he was merely resuscitated and the Pharisees found out.

Now the most important problem: If Jesus came "as a sacrifice for the sins of humanity," he certainly would have wanted his own nation to know the "good news," because in Mt 15, 24 he says: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Would not showing himself to everyone be the best way to make his compatriots believe in his "resurrection" instead of hiding himself in disguise? However, Jesus never came to be "sacrificed for the sins of mankind," and those who call themselves Christians would have never come up with such a monstrosity if they knew the meaning of the verse: "It is mercy that I desire and not sacrifice." Moreover, according to Jesus, forgiveness comes from being merciful to others (Mt 6, 12-15) and salvation from doing God's will (Mt 7, 21-23 and Mk 10, 17-22), not from a sacrifice, least of all of an innocent man.

What is left? Perhaps quoting Paul, the thirteenth self-appointed apostle and the real founder of Christian theology with which he replaced Christ's teaching: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain..." Indeed, for a person with a sensation-thirsty faith relying only on spectacular tabloid-style miracles, such a faith may now be over. To a person who is interested in worshipping the Only Undivided God, for which Jesus set an excellent example, this may only be the beginning.

Daniel Grohol

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THE BATTALION SPORTS

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Thursday • April 11

Sonics on verge of going boom

SEATTLE (AP) — The coach is fuming. The players are embarrassed and puzzled.

"Our beginnings have stunk the last three or four games," Seattle coach George Karl said. "Why our minds are de-energized at this time is a concern."

The SuperSonics thought they would be tuning up for the playoffs about now. Instead, they are searching for answers.

"It's embarrassing to play like this in our biggest game of the year to date," Hersey Hawkins said. "We're so-called pros but we didn't come out like it."

"Our chemistry is off," Nate McMillan said. "We're not playing as a team."

The Sonics' latest round of trouble came Tuesday night, a 99-97 loss to the ailing Lakers. Seattle has dropped three of four games to the Lakers this season, meaning Los Angeles holds the tiebreaker if the teams end the regular season tied.

The Sonics' lead in the Pacific Division has fallen to a half-game over the Lakers. The Houston Rockets, meanwhile, have tightened the West-

ern Conference standings and now own the same record as the Lakers. Utah has the conference's best mark.

Seattle's recent slump recalls the streak in which it lost four of six games before the All-Star break.

Karl, clearly upset with his team's failings of late, held a closed-door meeting with point guard Gary Payton after Tuesday night's loss.

"I still think we're the best team in the West, and I think that we'll prove that in the next nine games," Karl said.

One sign all is not well is Seattle's play at home. During the past three seasons, the Sonics lost just 16 games at

home, including a franchise-best 38-3 last year. They are 27-10 at home this season and both the Jazz and Lakers have swept the Sonics at Key Arena.

On Tuesday night, Nick Van Exel scorched the Sonics for 30 points.

"They didn't look like they were together out there," the Lakers guard said. "They weren't the Sonics team we're used to playing."

Said Karl: "Teams have learned to play small against us and we have to respond but we haven't yet."



Key makes big debut

BALTIMORE (AP) — Jimmy Key pitched six strong innings in his Baltimore debut, and Cal Ripken had three hits, including a homer, as the Orioles defeated the Kansas City Royals 4-2 Wednesday in their weather-delayed opener.

Key allowed no earned runs, four hits and a walk to improve to 7-0 in eight career opening-day starts.

He struck out four and improved his record against the Royals to 13-6 — including 3-0 on Opening Day. Randy Myers, the fifth Baltimore

pitcher, struck out the side in the ninth for the save.

Ripken, playing at third base in an opener for the first time since 1982, saved a run with a sparkling play, doubled twice, homered and walked.

Brady Anderson's RBI single in the seventh made it 4-2.

The Orioles stranded 10 runners against Kevin Appier in the first five innings. He allowed two runs and six hits in five innings, walked five and struck out six.

McCray

Continued from Page 7

He was a member of a national championship relay team and three conference championship relay teams.

"He's what I call the guy that you like to have on the end of your relay," Head Coach Ted Nelson said. "If your teammates can put you in shape to win, he's a guy that can win for you — but those three guys have to get you there. He's a runner that can run with anybody if we can put him in a position to do that."

McCray has rewritten the A&M record books with his individual feats as well. Last season, he broke the 400-meter record — a mark which had stood since the early 1980s. McCray was in position to challenge for a national title in the 400 last season before he was disqualified for an illegal lane change.

"When he got disqualified, he was running really

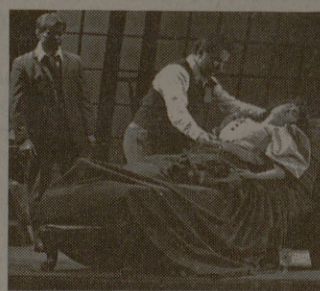
well," Nelson said. "Two weeks before that he set a school record in the 400, which was 40.81. It was one of our oldest records that Leslie Kerr set in 1931. When he was running really well at that time and I felt like he had a chance to win the championship.

"Maybe that's made him a little bit hungrier. He supposed to do well at the NC's (national championships) and didn't, so down the road, maybe that helped him."

For McCray, winning is the only thing he worries about.

"The only thing I can do to ensure that I keep winning is to run fast," McCray said. "Someone once told me that if you just worry about winning, then anything else will just take care of itself."

"Don't run for money and don't run for anything because that only leads to downfalls. I run to win a run to be happy. Running is something that I enjoy as long as I enjoy it, everything else will take care of itself."



It's sort of a 19th-century Friends (with a much better soundtrack).

If you like Ross, Rachel, Phoebe and Chandler, you'll love Mimi, Rodolfo, Musetta and Marcello, four starving Parisian artists and the main characters in Puccini's beloved opera, "La Bohème." Performed by the highly acclaimed New York City Opera National Company, "La Bohème" features lavish sets, beautiful costumes, sumptuous music and English supertitles above the stage. Grab your friends and go see this opera treasure.

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