

# EASTER

## Matthew 28:11-15 – The Lie That Proves The Resurrection

March 31, 2024

### 1. How have people tried to explain away the resurrection?

- A. The Swoon Theory
- B. The No-Burial Theory
- C. The Hallucination Theory
- D. The Earthquake Theory
- E. The Impersonation Theory
- F. The Delirious Woman Theory
- G. The Evaporated Body Theory
- H. The Theft Theory

*Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can." So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard. Matthew 27:65–66 (ESV)*

*While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.*

*Matthew 28:11–15 (ESV)*

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me." Matthew 28:1–10 (ESV)

While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. Matthew 28:11 (ESV)

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.' Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can." So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard. Matthew 27:62–66 (ESV)

He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. Matthew 27:42 (ESV)

And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers... Matthew 28:12 (ESV)

*And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." Matthew 28:12–14 (ESV)*

**2. How did the Jewish leaders try to explain away the resurrection?**

- A. Bribe the soldiers to lie.**
- B. Get the soldiers to spread the lie.**
- C. Protect the soldiers.**

So they took the money and did as they were directed....  
Matthew 28:15a (ESV)

...And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.  
Matthew 28:15b (ESV)

- A. It was still being told 25 years later when Matthew wrote his gospel.
- B. Justin Martyr noted this was still being told 100 years later.

"You, the Jews, selected men and sent them into all the world proclaiming that a certain atheistic and lawless sect had arisen from one Jesus, a Galilean deceiver whom we crucified but His disciples stole Him by night from the tomb and deceived men by saying He had risen from the dead and ascended into heaven," (Tyrpho, 108)

**3. Does it make sense that the disciples stole the body?**

- A. How would the soldiers know the disciples stole the body if they were asleep?**
- B. How does an entire unit of Roman soldiers fall asleep while the disciples steal the body?**
- C. Why did the Jewish leaders bribe the soldiers?**

#### 4. What evidence supports the resurrection?

##### A. Jesus' brothers

*Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.  
1 Corinthians 15:7 (ESV)*

##### B. Jesus' enemies

##### C. The disciples changed from cowards to courageous.

##### D. Many Jews began worshipping Jesus as God.

##### E. Sunday became the day of worship.

#### 5. What does the resurrection mean for you?

##### A. Jesus offers to forgive all my sins.

*And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. 1 Corinthians 15:17 (ESV)*

##### B. Jesus offers eternal life.

*Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.  
1 Corinthians 15:18 (ESV)*

### Applications

- If you have not trusted Jesus to forgive your sins, know Jesus is alive! Pray to Him in your heart, ask Jesus' death on the cross to pay for your sins, and then ask Jesus to be in charge of your life. The Jesus who is alive will save and change you!
- If you already know Jesus, remember today that the evidence of Jesus' resurrection is solid! It is only those who refuse to examine the evidence, like the chief priests, who will not find enough to believe.