

Resurrection of Jesus: Theological Insights

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is fundamental to Christian belief and theology, serving as a cornerstone that underpins the entire framework of Christian doctrine. Its significance extends far beyond a mere historical event, shaping core beliefs about redemption, sin, salvation, and the nature of God.

In this paper, we will delve into the logical ramifications of the hypothetical scenario in which Jesus never resurrected. By employing syllogistic reasoning, we aim to shed light on the profound implications this scenario would have on Christian theology. From a Muslim perspective, the following reasoning is presented not as an endorsement of Christian theology, but as an internal examination of its own claims. Using the Bible as Christians understand it, this chain of syllogisms shows that their entire doctrine rests on the historical and theological reality of the resurrection. If that claim is uncertain, the very foundations of Christianity collapse by its own standard — a vulnerability Islam does not share.

Syllogisms

- **If Jesus never resurrected, redemption is not complete** (1 Corinthians 15:17). Without the resurrection, the foundational basis for the completion of redemption is undermined, as Christ's victory over death is essential for the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan.
- **If redemption is not complete, redemption is not accepted** (Romans 4:25). The acceptance of redemption hinges on its completeness, which is intrinsically tied to the reality of Jesus' resurrection. Without his resurrection, there is no assurance of justification and reconciliation with God.
- **If redemption is not accepted, we are still sinners** (Romans 3:23). The failure to accept redemption perpetuates the state of sinfulness, depriving individuals of the transformative power of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection in their lives.
- **If we are still sinners, there is no life after death** (Hebrews 9:27). The consequence of sin is spiritual death, leading to eternal separation from God. Without the hope of resurrection through Christ, there is no assurance of life beyond the grave.
- **If there is no life after death, preaching is in vain** (1 Corinthians 15:14). The Christian proclamation of the gospel is predicated on the hope of resurrection and eternal life in Christ. Without the reality of Jesus' resurrection, preaching loses its transformative power and becomes devoid of meaning.
- **If preaching is in vain, Jesus lied against God** (John 14:6). Jesus' claim to be the way, the truth, and the life includes the promise of resurrection and eternal life for believers. If this promise is nullified by the absence of Jesus' resurrection, it calls into question the truthfulness of his words.
- **If Jesus lied against God, Jesus lied by God** (John 8:40). According to the gospels, Jesus claimed his message came directly from the Father. If the

resurrection promise is false, then the claim that this teaching was divinely sourced is also false.

- **If Jesus lied by God, Jesus lied** (John 14:6). Any falsehood attributed to Jesus undermines his credibility as the Son of God and the embodiment of truth. Without the veracity of Jesus' resurrection, his claims lose their authority and reliability.
- **If Jesus lied, God remains dead** (Romans 6:9). In Christian theology, the resurrection is God's decisive act of conquering death. Without it, there is no demonstration of divine victory, implying a failure to fulfill His covenant promises.
- **If God remains dead, people worship a dead God** (John 11:25-26). The worship of God is grounded in the reality of his living presence and power. Without the assurance of resurrection, worship becomes futile and idolatrous, directed towards a deity who is incapable of granting eternal life.
- **If people worship a dead God, there is no advent of Jesus** (John 14:6). The incarnation of Jesus as the Son of God is inseparable from his role as the resurrected Lord. Without the reality of resurrection, the advent of Jesus loses its significance as the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan.
- **If there is no advent of Jesus, there is no hope** (John 11:25-26). The hope of salvation and eternal life is anchored in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Without his advent, humanity remains trapped in the despair of sin and death, devoid of the promise of redemption.
- **If there is no hope, Jesus is not the very truly Son of God** (Romans 1:4). The resurrection of Jesus vindicates his identity as the Son of God, demonstrating his victory over sin and death. Without this victory, Jesus' claim to divine sonship loses its validity and authority.
- **If Jesus is not the very truly Son of God, the Trinity will be in jeopardy** (1 John 5:7). The doctrine of the Trinity affirms the eternal relationship between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The denial of Jesus' divine sonship undermines the unity and coherence of the triune Godhead.
- **If the Trinity will be in jeopardy, Jesus is not the Messiah** (1 John 2:22). The Messiahship of Jesus is intricately linked to his identity as the Son of God and the second person of the Trinity. Without this identity, Jesus' claim to be the Messiah loses its theological foundation and significance.
- **If Jesus is not the Messiah, the Devil triumphs** (1 John 3:8). The defeat of Satan and the powers of darkness is accomplished through the redemptive work of Christ, culminating in his resurrection. Without the victory of resurrection, the Devil retains his hold over humanity, thwarting God's plan of salvation.
- **If the Devil triumphs, there will be no Christianity** (Acts 11:26). The establishment and propagation of the Christian faith are contingent upon the defeat of evil and the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Without the reality of resurrection, Christianity loses its theological basis and *raison d'être*.
- **If there is no Christianity, neither Good Friday nor Easter have redemptive meaning** (Matthew 27:32–56; Mark 16:1–8). The crucifixion and its commemoration only have significance in light of the resurrection; without it, they become tragic historical moments devoid of hope.
- **If there is no Easter, there will be no forgiveness of sin** (Acts 13:38-39). The forgiveness of sin is made possible through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Without the reality of resurrection, there is no assurance of redemption and reconciliation with God.

- **If there is no forgiveness of sin, there will be no judgment** (Romans 14:10-12). The promise of judgment and accountability before God is inseparable from the offer of forgiveness and salvation in Christ. Without the reality of resurrection, there is no basis for divine judgment and justice.
- **If there is no judgment, there will be no union with Christ** (Romans 6:5). The hope of union with Christ in his death and resurrection is foundational to Christian identity and eschatological expectation. Without the reality of resurrection, there is no assurance of participation in the new life and fellowship with Christ.

It is worth noting that historians and textual critics—including Christian scholars—have long recognised contradictions in the resurrection narratives. The Gospels differ on who went to the tomb, whether there was one angel or two, and where and to whom Jesus first appeared. These discrepancies raise serious questions about the reliability of the event, especially given that the earliest gospel (Mark) ends abruptly without a resurrection appearance in its oldest manuscripts (Mark 16:8). If the event cannot be historically established, the logical chain above collapses under its own weight.

Conclusions

The syllogisms presented here, drawn from the Christian scriptures themselves, outline the far-reaching consequences of denying or disproving Jesus' resurrection within Christian theology. They reveal how, in the Christian doctrinal framework, the resurrection functions as the keystone: remove it, and the entire structure—redemption, forgiveness, divine sonship, and the hope of eternal life—collapses under its own weight. This logical chain therefore exposes an inherent fragility in Christian belief, where a single disputed historical claim determines the survival of the entire faith.

From a Muslim perspective, this vulnerability is unnecessary. The Qur'an affirms that Jesus was neither crucified nor killed, but was raised up by God (Qur'an 4:157–158), fulfilling his prophetic mission without the theological burden of death and resurrection. Salvation in Islam does not hinge on one historical event, but on continuous submission (*islām*) to God and adherence to the guidance of His messengers. In this light, the resurrection dilemma becomes an internal Christian problem, one that Islamic teaching resolves by upholding both the honour of Jesus and the coherence of God's plan. These syllogisms, therefore, not only demonstrate the centrality of resurrection in Christian thought but also underscore the contrast with Islam's more robust and historically independent foundation.