

# **BEHOLD THE MAN**

## **Annotated Script and Guide**

This little guide is intended to help a study leader get the fullest value from the DVD *Behold the Man*. As such it includes the text of the script and a few notes and discussion points which might be useful for a group leader or presenter.

The script is a faithful transcription. Therefore it does not read as a smooth and polished work. The hesitations and grammatical changes of ordinary speech are captured in it.

You will also find that from time cues are occasionally indicated next to the name of person speaking in the right hand column in order to help you locate particular scenes more quickly.



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Julius Caesar was the first Roman emperor. Just as Christians are named for Christ, so the Caesars were named for Julius. A bust of Caesar exists, he is mentioned in ancient histories and wrote the boastful *Gallic Wars*. The oldest extant copy of this work dates from 900 hundred years after his death, whereas the oldest copy of a Gospel, the Rylands Manuscript, dates to 90 years after Christ's death and resurrection. The earliest copies of histories that mention Caesar are also from rather late dates.

Michael Green wrote *Who Is this Jesus?* Among the books David Flusser has written are *Jesus* (2001) and *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (1988). For an article by Jacob van Bruggen in English, see "Lord's Prayer and textual criticism: response." *Calvin Theological Journal*. 17:88-97 Apr 1982.

Tacitus was a Roman historian who flourished around 100 A.D. Only portions of his *Annals* and *Histories* survive, and none in very early manuscripts. Nero was a cruel Caesar who died in 68 A.D. Among his many despicable acts was the murder of his equally wicked mother. She is said to have asked the executioner to strike her in the womb for bearing such a monster.

## BEHOLD, THE MAN - TEXT OF THE SCRIPT

MICHAEL GREEN 0:00

If you're open to evidence at all, the evidence for the existence of Jesus is stronger than for any other ancient historical person. Much stronger, for instance, than for **Julius Caesar**.

And you don't change the whole era of human history over a mythical figure. It happened over a historical person.

NARRATOR

In this program we shall journey back into history and will seek to answer three important questions about Jesus:

- Did He really exist?
- Was He just a human being or more than this?
- Did He really rise from the dead?

We will be guided on our journey with the help of three gifted scholars

*Michael Green* from England. He wrote several books on Jesus and His teachings and gives lectures throughout the world.

The American scholar *Steven Notley* is based in Israel and assisted the Jewish professor **David Flusser** with his publications on the Jewish identity of Jesus.

The Dutch scholar *Jacob van Bruggen* wrote many books, commentaries and papers on Jesus and His contemporaries.

We go first to Rome. Soon after the Christians had spread the Gospel to Rome the Romans were confronted with people with a different life style—who didn't worship the traditional Roman gods. Then the Romans took notice and Roman authors like the historian started to write more about Christians than about Christ.

Indeed, as **Tacitus** describes the later periods of the Caesars when Christianity has spread to Rome. Christians have become a political issue.

In 64 AD, for instance, the cruel Emperor **Nero** had burned down Rome and blamed the Christians for it.

Then Tacitus is well informed about the founder of Christianity. He wrote: "To erase the rumour that he himself had lit the fire he blamed innocent people who were hated by many Romans and

who were known as Christians... He punished them harshly. Christ, their founder, had been executed under the rule of Tiberius Caesar by Governor Pontius Pilate... For the time being, this impious superstition had been erased... However, it sprang up again, both in Judea and in the City of Rome."

Josephus' dates are close to Christ's. He was born shortly after the resurrection, ca. 37 A.D. and died around 95 A.D. His writings consist of *The Jewish War* (a history of the revolt against Rome that led to the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. and *Antiquities of the Jews*, which is a history of the Jews that often paraphrases the Bible.

The Jewish writer Flavius **Josephus** was one of Jesus' contemporaries.

JACOB VAN BRUGGEN 3:00

We are here in Rome in front of the Colosseum which was built between 80 - 95 AD. This is where Roman citizens used to watch their sports and games. Did they know about Jesus? I don't think so; not much, anyway.

In the same period, around 96 AD, and in the same city a Jew wrote a book on the history of the Jewish people. When he was writing about Pontius Pilate he informed the people that were gathered in this Colosseum on Jesus, who had worked miracles and who was teaching religious truths. And he said: "He was Christ."

MICHAEL GREEN

What this man is doing, is very important to understand. He was a Jewish commander in the disastrous war from 66 - 70 AD. The Romans smashed the Jews to pieces and pulled Josephus out of a cave on the end of a hook. And this man, rescued from death, went to live in Rome and he was desperately keen to make the Romans happy about the Jews. So all the difficult stuff he left out. But in one passage he refers to Jesus. And it's a fascinating passage.

NARRATOR

"In this period, there came a man called Jesus; He was a wise man. He worked miracles and taught people who were eager to learn about truth. He gathered many followers, both Jewish and Greek. He was Christ. Handed over by Jewish notables, He was condemned to the cross by Pilate. His followers, however, kept to His teachings. On the third day, He reappeared to them, alive. The godly prophets had foretold these and other miraculous things about Him. The movement of the Christians, named after Him, still exists."

JACOB VAN BRUGGEN

Josephus doesn't mean to say that He was the Messiah;

The existence of Pilate is attested in ancient sources outside the Bible, including an archaeological inscription. For a full study of this man and an analysis of his motivations, read Paul L. Maier's brilliant historical novel, *Pontius Pilate*.

The “godly prophets” referred to by Josephus were Old Testament writers such as Isaiah, Malachi and Daniel.

*Buddha* means “The Enlightened.” A lecturer may not believe the Buddha was truly enlightened, but that is his title and so the lecturer uses it. In the same way, Josephus did not believe Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Christ, but uses the title to ID Him.

This refers to Herod the Great, King of Israel from 74 B.C. to ca. 1 A.D. He built the temple, which the Romans destroyed in 70 A.D.

Aramaic was a widely-spoken language in the first century. Closely related to Hebrew, we know from the gospels that Jesus spoke this language at least some of the time.

Josephus, being Jewish, didn’t believe that. He just calls these people Christians. When he says that He was Christ he explains that Christians, who were not popular in Rome were named after Christ, who had lived, taught and worked miracles in Palestine.

You may compare it to a lecture on Siddhartha, given in modern Europe. When the lecturer eventually explains that he was **Buddha** you will realize that he was the founder of Buddhism. That’s how it works: Christians will introduce you to Christ.

#### NARRATOR

Some sceptics believe that this passage is too good to be true. They think the text has been manipulated. However, this has not been proven to date.

#### MICHAEL GREEN

If there are some interpolations in it it still is a remarkable document. It’s still saying that Jesus was miraculous. It still says that He claimed to be the Son of God even if it’s a cynical comment.

It’s still saying...it’s still alluding to the resurrection. It’s still saying what a powerful force His disciples are. So I don’t think anybody can really get round this ancient testimony of Josephus, if they’re going to be fair to the text.

#### NARRATOR

6:50

Josephus’ elaborate books on Jewish history also inform us about people who are mentioned in the Bible stories about Jesus such as King **Herod**, Pontius **Pilate**, **John the Baptist** and even **James**, Jesus’ brother, whom Josephus refers to as “the brother of Jesus, the alleged Christ.”

We don’t know what Jesus looked like. He was a Jew whose mother tongue was **Aramaic**. Artists over the centuries have felt compelled to set forth their image of what he might have looked like

#### DUTCH ARTIST

Well, it’s just a start, but I’m quite satisfied with it. We know some of His characteristics, though not physically. We know that He was a Jewish man, about thirty years old. We can be positive that His eyes were not blue. He must have been a charismatic person for He kept his

Little was written about Christ in the first century (that we know of) apart from the books of the Bible. Since the second century, however, Christ is the most written about figure in all of history.

*Discussion point: Do you think miracles are possible? Why or why not?*

Bruggen's point is that despite information technology and libraries, there is much we don't know and we have sometimes lost sight of important truths and significant ways of knowing truth that were possessed by earlier generations.

Jesus, too, called people to *really* hear and listen. For example, see John 10:22-39.

The four followers alluded to are the authors who wrote the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

audience enthralled. Perhaps He had a penetrating look that made people listen to Him. So I think His authority stems from both His words and His appearance.

#### NARRATOR

Apart from the Bible stories, **little has been written** about Jesus. It may be little, but it's there. In our search for the historical Jesus, we have to rely on four biographies written by four of His followers.

One of them, called Luke, is conspicuous for his solid and historical approach. "In those days, Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. The first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria."

The text continues with the story of Jesus' birth His miracles, His crucifixion and resurrection. Wondrous stories, which seem to clash with our modern ideas.

#### JACOB VAN BRUGGEN

Why should our view of the world be the only reliable one? Why aren't we open to **truths** that come from another time and another world? It would be very prejudiced if we stick to our own views and don't realize that our views might be just as curious to those people as their views will be to us.

#### STEVEN NOTLEY

I think at times when we try to lift the words of Jesus outside of their culture outside of their historical and cultural setting we can be in danger of misunderstanding what He was trying to communicate. That's where it's important for the historian to try to read the words in context, to hear.

I tell my students the challenge in studying Jesus is to hear, to listen with first century ears and twentieth century hearts. It's not just dry history; for myself as a Christian, these are issues of faith. But I first need to listen with a first century ear to hear as those who sat on that mount and heard Jesus teach. To hear as they would have heard.

#### NARRATOR

The four followers of Jesus, who have described His life give an individual and corresponding account of His character His teachings and the world in which He lived.

*Criticism* is the literary analysis of a text, especially the text of the Bible. Higher criticism, often hostile to the Bible, focuses on the sources of texts and tries to determine their date, authorship, and place of composition. It is important to remember that many theories have risen, held sway and then fallen before the facts. Textual criticism endeavors to establish the original version of a text.

In the Bible we have two biographies apparently written by eye-witnesses (Matthew and John), one by an investigative reporter (Luke) and one by an associate of an eyewitness (Mark, an associate of Peter).

Attestation: to bear witness, give testimony

Multiple Attestation: when independent observers or sources give similar accounts

But how reliable are these biographies?

MICHAEL GREEN

The text has been **critically** examined for 250 years. And it survives now more strongly than it has ever been.

JACOB VAN BRUGGEN

People often ask: Are these four historical biographies in the Bible really **reliable**?

I can imagine the question. We have to take a serious look at the age of the texts. The Gospels according to Matthew and John were written by apostles. Recently, there have been some doubts about this but a recent study has shown that the titles above the very oldest texts date back to the end of the first century.

These two Gospels were indeed written by the apostles Matthew and John. There are not so many other **eyewitness accounts** in history. Where else would you get your information from?

Secondly, it's remarkable that they didn't embellish the history. Writers often tend to embellish their stories. There are two examples which show that they themselves come off badly.

Firstly, Jesus says He will suffer and die; but Peter says: "I don't want You to." Peter sticks to his point, and so do the others.

Secondly, these biographies say that the disciples were often quarreling over who would be the most important among them.

If a writer wants to embellish a story, he would leave out these things. But this didn't happen, which shows that they took it seriously, even though they themselves would come off badly.

MICHAEL GREEN

Scholars are keen on what they call "the criterion of **multiple attestation**." That means to say, that if you've got an event that is attested in all Gospels written independently, that is highly likely to be accurate.

And of course, the main things about Jesus are attested in all

Theology: the knowledge or science of God

Theologian: one who studies what can be known about God or engages in reasoning about God

those Gospels. Indeed, there's an astonishing harmony in the picture of Jesus that emerges from these four writers.

NARRATOR 13:55

**Theologians** are still writing books full of interpretations that continually enhance our understanding of Jesus.

STEVEN NOTLEY

A lot of times, scholars outside of this land, Christian scholars, are more interested in the theological elements to the story. And in essence, they read the story through a theological prism rather than reading the record as a historical biography with the end result that out of it comes a theology. But there's a certain ordering of approach.

One thing that Flusser did and I hope that I was able to help and assist him was looking at Jesus as a person in history who came with a very distinctive message a very distinctive self awareness of His role in God's acts in history and out of that provides a foundation for us to look back in terms of questions at least for me myself, as a Christian...to look back at that historical foundation and say: Is there a credible foundation for the essence of my faith?

And I think the answer, the end result, at least for me as a Christian is: yes.

NARRATOR

If there were passports 2000 years ago Joseph and Maria, and their child Jesus, would have had a Jewish passport. Or perhaps a Roman document, mentioning that they were Jewish. In those days, Palestine was just a minor province of the Roman Empire.

STEVEN NOTLEY

I think that, if we ask the question of the importance of the Jewishness of Jesus, we come to the very seat, the very foundations and the cornerstone of our faith, and that is that "The Word became flesh and dwelled among us." That Jesus came, was sent by God into the midst of the Jewish nation. And that sovereign act of God was no accident.

And if we miss that point...if we say: Well, God's sovereign act to send His Son in the first century in the land of Israel, in the midst of the Jewish nation is an accident...I think we miss some things about the truth God has done in our midst.

Francis Schaeffer, to make Genesis more real to contemporaries, reminded them it took place in "space and time." The same is true of Christ's existence. It happened in a real historical context which added to its meaning.

For example, the Dead Sea scrolls have helped us understand how Jews were thinking in Christ's day.

*Discussion point: Have you ever had difficulty understanding a writing from another time or place?*

Although women were important to Jesus, his sisters are not named. Women were not highly regarded in ancient near East culture and the genealogies we have in the Bible rather infrequently name women.

Jesus announced that He was the Messiah to a Samaritan woman. Some other women in His circle were Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward and the sisters Mary and Martha.

In Mark 3:20-21 we are told Jesus' brothers came to take Him home thinking He was out of His mind.

Jesus is reported to have read publicly from scripture at least once (Luke 4:17) and quoted scripture so often that we must believe he read and memorized a great deal of it.

That God in the fullness of time sent His Son as a Jew. And that message is communicated in a Jewish fashion.

And again, unless we read that message and understand Jesus within the context of Jewish **history** we hear His message as a Jew communicating that message for the most part to other Jews. And we are listening from the outside.

We sometimes can misunderstand the content of that message. So I think it's very very important, even for myself as a non Jew to try to read that message and to try to come to grips with the Jesus of history within the context of Jewish history and Jewish culture and Jewish life. It's only then, I think, that I can really clearly understand what Jesus was trying to communicate to His followers to those who heard Him in this land.

NARRATOR 17:15

The name "Jesus" is a common Greek term for the Hebrew name "Joshua" which literally translated means "salvation" or "redemption". In Jesus' days, this name was pronounced as "Jeshoa" or "Jeshua."

The names of Jesus' brothers were: James, Jude, Simon and Jossi. "Jossi" is a diminutive of "Joseph", which was the name of Jesus' father.

His mother Mary was called in Hebrew: "Miriam". The names of His two **sisters** are unknown which is not surprising in ancient patriarchal Judaism.

Jesus respected women. **Women** play an important part in His biography.

Although Joseph and Mary knew that they would have a special baby they have never understood Jesus until His death. Also His brothers thought that He was **insane**. Jesus' followers never hid this fact, but gave a straight account of it.

Jesus is often and wrongly considered to be **illiterate**. The fact that people usually addressed Him as "rabbi" shows that He was familiar with Judaic law. Jesus was not a studied Pharisee. Yet He was well informed about the Holy Scriptures.

The description in the Gospels of Jesus as a carpenter uses the word *tekton*, which can include builders and stoneworkers. Nazareth was within walking distance of the Galilean capital of *Sepphoris*, where much building occurred during Jesus' time, so he conceivably could have done much work there.

*Discussion point: Can you describe some occasions on which Jesus quoted scripture? For example, at his temptation.*

A humanist, in the best sense, the sense which is meant here, is a person concerned with what humans are capable of and have achieved; someone with a heart for human welfare. A more typical use of the word is in defining a scholar who considers man the measure of all things and human reason the ultimate arbiter of reality. Such humanism is usually anti-religion or accepts only a non-supernatural religion.

In those days, many Pharisees practised a certain trade. **Carpenters** were held in high esteem. People often sought their advice to solve a problem.

#### STEVEN NOTLEY

In my studies of the historical Jesus, I've come to appreciate His genius. His profound genius, His profound understanding of the Scriptures and how He carefully crafted it and worked with it to really exhibit a tremendous genius and express His ideas. How He would so connect passages of Scripture together that had identical words in them, like a Jewish sage would have done but in a brilliant fashion.

It is said that He understood the Scriptures intimately knew them by heart, worked with them like His contemporaries.

But again, every now and then when I'm studying Jesus and looking at Him in the context of His contemporaries not from a position of faith, but really from a position of scholarship I see Jesus' way of handling it.

Really...He takes it to another step, another level.

There's a certain element of this genius, particularly when it comes...with His concern with humanity. You could almost think of Jesus as a **humanist**.

He was very much concerned with the element of human frailty with our human tendencies to judge, to be overcritical with one another.

Jesus instead responded and challenged His contemporaries to be very careful that we should see each other as God sees us that we extend the same mercy to each other as God extends to us.

And the way that He communicates that, the way that He structures it...He does it in a very ingenious fashion.

And you can really only come to grips with it by hearing Jesus' voice in the midst of the voices of the first century. And when you do that and you hear how Jesus fits so much within the historical setting of His time you can also hear Jesus' own distinctive voice...His own distinctive

*Discussion point: What are some ways in which Jesus challenged his contemporaries? How about driving the money changers from the temple? Healing on the Sabbath? Denouncing greed and hypocrisy.*

*Discussion point: How much are people influenced by testimonial advertisements they see on TV or in magazines? How would someone's testimony of a miracle be the same or different?*

*Discussion point: If miracles are pointers, what was Jesus implying when He walked on water? Stilled the storm? Turned water into wine?*

contribution.

So on a human level, I very much see Jesus as a genius. A very provocative thinker, one who challenges His contemporaries in the things of the faith.

JACOB VAN BRUGGEN 21:25

In His days, Jesus was particularly known as “The Great Healer” which is not surprising, for He did supernatural things. He healed all the sick, without exception.

He cast out all evil spirits, even from the deaf and dumb. He even raised people from the dead.

People living in the 21st century, often tend to doubt these things. Did it really happen?

If you had lived in the first century, you wouldn't have had the chance to doubt. You would have met too many people who had been healed by Him. So Jesus' opponents in Jerusalem had to come up with something better. They explained His miracles in a negative way. They said He didn't come from God, but from Beelzebub, the devil.

Yet this didn't stop people bringing their sick relatives to be healed by Jesus. The special thing was, that He did it for free. He asked only one thing, that you would trust Him: only faith.

MICHAEL GREEN

He did the miracles for two main reasons: partly compassion, to show the love of God in action and partly, I think, to allow people through the actual miracle...to see who He was.

For instance, when He healed the blind man, He wanted to show people that He was the one who could give spiritual vision. When He raised Lazarus from the dead He wanted to show that He could give a new life. When He fed all those people in the wilderness He wanted to show that He was the true sustenance of life.

So all of those miracles are pointers. They are claims in action as to who Jesus is.

NARRATOR

The Pharisees had a lot of difficulty with Jesus' miracles.

The fullest account of the paralyzed man occurs in Luke 5:16-26.

Galilee was a region North of Jerusalem, held in contempt because of a large mixture of pagan settlements which lowered its religious tone.

*Discussion point: Have you ever known someone who got miffed because they thought they were important but were ignored? How do you think they felt?*

But they couldn't speak against it. Only after Jesus had healed a paralysed man and He had said that his sins had been forgiven, they accused Him of blasphemy. After all, only God could forgive sins.

#### JACOB VAN BRUGGEN

It's a striking fact that many miracles had been done in this area. In the middle of nowhere. Why? Because Jesus, as a healer, had not settled down. As God's preacher, He wanted to teach each Sabbath in a different synagogue. So in order to profit from His power and authority, people had to approach Him while He was on the way. And so they did.

Jesus might have been regarded as a marginal figure. In Jerusalem they said: It may be supernatural, but it's so provincial. Jesus was just a **Galilean**. Only if you saw the overall picture of Jesus' life, you would understand. For the time being, on a modest scale, Jesus was showing who He really was.

#### NARRATOR

"And news about Him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised Him."

Many persons searching for the historical Jesus are only looking for the man Jesus, not for the miracle worker. But Jesus' biographies put a strong emphasis on the miracles He did. Time and again, they mention the many sick people healed by Him.

#### JACOB VAN BRUGGEN

The trouble started, when He started to teach with authority in the synagogues. He didn't refer to the rabbis, He just said: "I tell you." The problem was that He said it as if He were God Himself. Some accepted this, others didn't.

That's why, up to our time, you can't mention two names in a synagogue: The name of the Almighty (blessed be His name) and the name of the Man from Nazareth, who came in the Name of the Almighty.

#### STEVEN NOTLEY 26:36

The whole question of Jesus' divinity, of course, is a question of language. The way that Jesus expresses His own understanding of His divine person. I personally think that

Seated at the right hand:  
see Matthew 26:64.

Jesus does see Himself as the Son of God. He talks about Himself as being seated at the **right hand of God**. The language of that, in the language of first century Judaism, is a very very very high, very elevated way of speaking about Himself.

So I have to answer that question, saying: Yes, Jesus does see Himself as divine, as having a divine element, being the Son of God.

#### NARRATOR

It is often thought that Jesus wanted to found a new religion that had no relationship with Judaism at that time.

#### MICHAEL GREEN

No, Jesus did not start a new religion. Jesus was constantly teaching...if you read the Gospels, it's all about the **Kingdom of God**.

#### STEVEN NOTLEY

There are some fine examples of where understanding something of the Jewish background brings light to Jesus' words. One of the best examples is the question: Should people in the state pay taxes to Caesar?

That was no simple question. That was probably one of the most contentious issues of His day— whether they should acknowledge the sovereignty of the Roman Empire.

Jesus asked for a coin, raised up the coin and said: Whose image is on this coin? Of course, it had the image of Caesar. He said: Give unto Caesar, that which has Caesar's image on it.

Now His answer implies also a Jewish understanding about humanity, that we bear the image of God. If I can answer like this: Give unto Caesar that which has Caesar's image on it...and give unto God that which has God's image upon it.

Jesus is not the only one in His day who talks about that profound truth that we bear the image of our Maker. And Jesus uses that background to respond to a very very difficult question that was presented to Him.

The Kingdom of God is found within all who submit to God's conditions now. In that sense it is within us. See Luke 17:21

*Discussion point: In what sense are people made in the image of God?*

Matthew 23:37-39 and Luke 13: 34-35 refer to the occasions on which Jesus sorrowed over Jerusalem. Luke 19:41-44 shows him weeping on another occasion.

In older translations, this reads, "Behold the Man!"— the phrase from which the name of this DVD derives.

The Dome of the Rock is a Muslim mosque built upon the spot where the Jewish temple once stood.

### JACOB VAN BRUGGEN

At the end of His work on earth, Jesus arrives at Jerusalem. The Bible says that He was crying. He **cried** and said: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem how often I have longed to gather your children as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" This sounds like a sob.

### NARRATOR

Jesus' followers were quite embarrassed, when He told them that He had to go to Jerusalem, where He would suffer and die. They wanted to prevent this. Then He said that one of them would betray Him and another one, His apostle Peter, would disown Him.

But He also foretold His resurrection from the dead and His second coming, later, at the end of time. They wrote down their doubts, misunderstanding and unbelief.

When the high priest asked Jesus during the interrogation: Are you the Messiah? Jesus answered: "From now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God." With these words, He acknowledged His divinity which meant His own death warrant.

Pilate had Jesus flogged and said: "Here is the man!"

### NARRATOR

Immediately after Jesus' death, the veil of the temple was torn. Darkness came over all the land, the earth shook and the rocks split.

### MICHAEL GREEN 30:47

There was indeed an earthquake and there are still signs of it in the very centre of Jerusalem, under the Dome of the Rock.

Secondly, the veil of the temple was ripped in half from the top to the bottom. That was a 60 foot curtain, that kept people out of the most holy place called the Holy of Holiest by the Jews.

If you ripped that from the bottom to the top that might have been a human action: "Say, come on, let's go to the Holy of Holiest." But it was ripped from top to bottom.

And Josephus, to go back to him, tells us that the lintels of

the temple were cracked and that some fell down. This was all the result of the earthquake.

But it's God ripping the veil apart so that people can now go into the presence of God. That's what the meaning of the cross is—that when Jesus died on the cross and took responsibility for the badness of the whole world, that made Him unique. Nobody else had ever done that.

#### NARRATOR

Jesus was buried in a new tomb, close to the place of His execution. Despite a heavy round rock that sealed the opening of the tomb and despite the guards posted by the state the tomb turned out to be empty on the third day.

*Discussion point: The tomb was not empty. Examine the gospel accounts of Jesus' resurrection. What other beings and evidences in the tomb showed that Jesus was raised?*

#### JACOB VAN BRUGGEN

An empty tomb on the morning of the first Easter Day? Fortunately, it wasn't. That could have meant that somebody had removed the body.

But the tomb was not empty. Two disciples, Peter and John had observed this on the very first Easter morning.

They were alarmed by reports of the women and went to take a look what had happened. They ran to the tomb and John outran Peter. He's standing in front of the tomb, takes a look inside, sees the strips of linen lying there, and he feels reassured: it's all right. Then Peter arrives.

Peter enters the tomb and is startled by what he sees in there. Jesus' body had been wrapped in a big linen cloth starched with some 35 pounds of ointment. This is what he sees: The burial cloth was put aside. This cloth had been wrapped around Jesus' head. So the cover that had contained the body was opened and empty. Peter is astonished; he calls John, who enters the tomb as well. John says: Then I believed that Jesus was alive.

#### NARRATOR

During the 40 days following His death, Jesus appeared to hundreds of people. David Flusser and Steven Notley, working at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, have examined these testimonies of Jesus' appearance.

#### STEVEN NOTLEY

The whole question of the historicity of the resurrection...I have to answer the question the other way, or challenge the

If the accounts were all identical, it would suggest collusion between the writers.

*Philology* is the study of languages (especially ancient languages) and the texts written in them.

*Discussion point. Why is it significant that the church began when it did? Would a church have begun had Jesus not risen from the dead?*

question the other way...

There's nothing within the story that would make me question its essential historical elements, the facts of the story.

Sure, in terms of telling the story, there are different perspectives. You would expect from eyewitnesses not to tell an identical account. In fact, the differences give strength to the veracity of the account itself. But the essential elements, there's nothing in the text that would make me suspect it.

We have at least three, four accounts within the Gospels as well as the testimonies of others that we read about in the New Testament that are attesting to the essential fact of the resurrection. Again, there's nothing about the accounts themselves...I mean, in terms of trying to read the text **philologically**...to look at how a story tells history...to try to unpack where a story is biased, where it has its own tendencies...there's nothing in the account that would make me question or doubt the veracity of the account, when they attest to the essential, historical fact that Jesus rose from the dead.

MICHAEL GREEN                  35:48

The Christian Church started at that time. Not before, not afterwards, it started then.

These people were a terrified bunch, locking themselves into a room until the news of the resurrection reached them. And then they went all over the Roman world and, in a very short space of time, had got Christian communities all over the Mediterranean basin.

STEVEN NOTLEY

We're walking here on the...really the main street of Jerusalem in the first century, right next to the great wall, built by Herod the Great, surrounding the temple of the first century.

We see here the stones of destruction, that were thrown down by the Romans from the wall here, and the destruction of the temple in 70. These stones, to my mind, give us evidence that Jesus' prophecy regarding the destruction of the temple actually came to pass.

See Matthew 24:1-3, Mark 13:1-4 and Luke 21:5-6 for an account of the circumstances that led Jesus to prophesy the destruction of the temple.

### MICHAEL GREEN

The disciples were at that time filled with amazement at the wonderful building of the temple which was one of the great wonders of the world.

Jesus said to them: These stones are not going to remain one on another. They're going to be crashed down. And forty years later, against all expectations, it happened. The Romans flattened the place.

JACOB VAN BRUGGEN AND STEVEN NOTLEY 37:32  
Was it exceptional to destroy a building so completely at that time?

I think the effort that went in with the Roman destruction here is evident of the anger, the emotion, on the part of the Romans, the fury of Jerusalem, the fighting that went on here and Rome throwing the stones down off the side.

Do you really believe that Jesus gave a historical prophecy before it happened?

There's no reason to question it. Jesus isn't the only one, actually. There were a number of people living in the first century who...well, you saw the writing on the wall. They saw that events were headed towards a culmination and destruction of Jerusalem, the temple. A lot of historians don't pay attention to those other prophecies; those other statements and warnings of individuals living in Jesus' day. So I think there's enough evidence to suggest that Jesus' statements have historical reliability.

### MICHAEL GREEN

The Jews by that time were believing that the two really important things for human beings, for Jewish people to do...was the sacrificial system to get through to God...and the temple where you had great closeness to God. And Jesus had to lovingly say: Both of these two things are going to disappear.

There have been no more sacrifices since AD 70. There have been no more priests since AD 70. No more temples since AD 70. It really was the cut off point.

*Discussion point: Can you find some Old Testament prophecies (in Amos, Isaiah, or Hosea, for instance), in which the prophet begins on a grim note but ends with hope or the promise of restoration?*

#### STEVEN NOTLEY AND JACOB VAN BRUGGEN

One of the interesting things is that Jesus concludes His message with that prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem. My reading is that Jesus actually finishes it on a note of hope.

That sort of very typical and rabbinic style and Jewish style...to see these cycles of sin, judgment, and then eventual redemption, the hope of redemption.

If the people of God will beckon to His voice, respond...that there is always this hope of redemption.

And Jesus finishes His prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem with the image of the victory. The budding victory, the hope of future restoration and redemption of the land and of the nation.

So what's your opinion, hope also for Israel or specifically for Israel or also for the whole world or only for the nations without Israel?

I think Jesus' words that He spoke there in that prophecy are particularly focused on the nation of Israel, the people of Israel. I think together with that message of hope is also a message of hope for the world, for the nations.

It's always been a Jewish view that redemption will also bring in and include the nations as well, not just the nation of Israel that they're, in a sense, a light to the nations.

This gives me also hope that an incredible word about His coming back to this world nevertheless will happen. What's your idea?

Look, the second Coming, the *Parousia*, has always been a fundamental part of historic Christian faith. I think, to deny that, is to deny a cornerstone of the hope of the Church, to see the return of Christ; the culmination of God's reign on the earth and to, in a sense, finish that process, that has already begun with the First Coming of Christ.

So standing before the destruction of the second temple the final word is a word of hope and expectation. This is not Jesus' last message. Absolutely.

*Parousia* is a Greek word meaning "presence" in the sense of "coming alongside and remaining with" someone. It is used to describe the Second Coming of Jesus for His own people.

To archaeologists stones can speak volumes, which prompted Paul MacKendrick, professor of classics at the University of Wisconsin, to title a book *The Mute Stones Speak; The Story of Archaeology in Italy*

It's interesting, your message echoes the saying of a first century sage who saw these stones and his disciples began to weep. Looking at them, he said: Don't weep, but rejoice. Because as certainly as God's judgment is seen here, we can also trust in God's message of hope and redemption.

So these stones actually should speak to us and give us confidence that God will bring about full redemption.