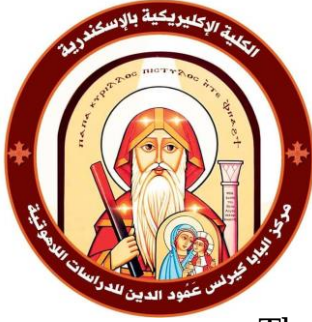




Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate
The Family of Alexandria Seminary College Graduates
Pope Cyril The Pillar of Faith Center for Theological Studies

In the Name of the Holy Trinity, One God Amen.

“Certainty of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection” Course

Lecture 5

Logical Evidence to the Death and Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ – By: Father Benjamin EL Muharraky

Introduction:

In the beginning, every bird has two wings: a bird can't fly with only one. Faith and reason are the two wings, that through them, man comprehends the Science of Theology. Our studies in the Physical Faculties depend on the mind but the Theological Sciences are Metaphysical Sciences (metaphysics-what is beyond nature), they are above all thinking; even though they are not against reason, but they are above reason. The mind, in itself, is a gift from God. The mind was presented to man according to his creation in God's own image and the breath of life that he earned from God. Man accepted what distinguished him from animals, he accepted strength, including the mental strength that makes him in the image of God and the faith, which is also a gift from God.

† **“For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”** Those are two gifts man lives by; if we ask, which precedes the other, faith or reason? The answer is faith.

St. Peter the Apostle said: **“Also we have come to believe and know”** (mental knowledge). Faith is instinctive in man. Your little son and daughter go happily with you to church even though they're not even at the age of realization, they fast with us and get upset when we break our fast. Your little son kneels happily in front of the Altar exactly as you do. You are your child's wing that he relies on and accepts any facts of faith you help him keep when he is young. The new generation memorizes

more than us; they memorize parts of the Holy Bible, the Agpeya, the Psalmody. The truths of faith are essentially Divine Revelations (God's Revelations).

Truths of faith depend on God's Revelations. When St. Peter confessed that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God, this confession was not a product of his mind, but it was a Heavenly Revelation. ***"Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar- Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 16:17).***

It's faith, but where does faith stand when it comes to the mind? When we say logical Biblical evidence, then there are two sides together. No one can say that Jesus Christ is the Lord except by the Holy Spirit - declarations of faith, yet how does the mind react to this? The two serve each other, faith serves the mind; it stops at a certain stage where the mind cannot comprehend. Father Cyril teaches us the Holy Trinity, giving us rational evidence about the Holy Trinity.

Does this mean that I contained the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity in my mind? No, The Holy Sacrament of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Sacrament of the Incarnation, the Holy Sacrament of Redemption, the Holy Sacrament of Unity; the Holy Sacraments are beyond reason but not against reason. When we study rational evidence, it is said to you as an example: "Your son is a believer, he was raised in the church, and when he goes to the University, he is exposed to some inquiries, he returns skeptical. What is the real issue?" Hence, he needs some rational proofs in order not to be afraid, and to be able to answer these inquiries, especially with a non-Christian. In college, what is the purpose of studying Theoretical Theology? When we study it, we are not supposed to study any verses in the Holy Bible, why? Because the study's real goal is to how to talk to a non-Christian, using logical evidence, philosophical evidence, how to open a path with him, how to talk to him until his heart opens. Rational evidence supports faith so that it isn't subjected to fear. The skeptical person understands the basics of faith and can comprehend the blessings of faith. Therefore, logical evidence aims to establish a dialogue, especially with the non-Christian.

One scientist says: "Faith protects the mind from every experience of distrust. In addition, faith protects the mind from skepticism, hence, the proof of the faith foundation, interpretation of the truth of faith through similarity, should be studied. When I speak, for example: The Priesthood ranking – three, and the Angelic ranking are also three. When we speak of the world of Angels, it is according to the case of Theoretical Theology.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "No one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." (Matthew 11:27).

St. Paul the Apostle also says: "and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit." (1Corinthians 12:3).

Therefore, God is the source to the Science of Theology, and though uses the mind, yet doesn't depend on it, but rather help each other; as St. Augustine said: I believe so that I may make sense of things. However, his source to his teachings is God's Revelation, hence, the Science of Theology doesn't make mistakes as Philosophy.

Father Jiovanni says: There is no flying with one wing: Faith comes with instinct alone, and who doesn't have true knowledge in faith, faith which is more common and widespread among believers...has his literal certainty and validity.

Yet this simple faith is susceptible to the following:

- 1- He is more easily overcome with fear as if he had his own reasons, as he is unable to examine his inner truth by exposing it to the truth of the outer events.
- 2- He is unsuccessful in maintaining a going conversation with a non-Christian in a faith topic, as those people only admit to the truth of the outer events and the mind is what proclaims to them.

The Scholar Thomas Aquinas says: Faith protects the mind from every experience of distrust in its ability, and urges it to open to bigger outlooks, reviving in it the search to fundamentals. When Implementation in the way of the mind occurs in a framework in the relationship between God and man, it makes the work more powerful.

Faith alone doesn't help the mind, as also the mind, with its own means, can do something crucial for faith, presenting 3 services whom the Scholar Thomas Aquinas in his comment on his Book "About the Trinity":

1. Proof to the foundations of faith.
2. Interpretation to the facts of faith by analogy.
3. Refuting the objections raised against the religion.

Examples of objections is the Death of our Lord Jesus Christ, do we say that this was due to fainting or spiritual appearances or rather real ones; hence, we need rational proofs.

It is important to base our studies on faith and reason together, especially in our time, as the current materialistic thinking has increased in Preparatory and Secondary classes (Junior High, and High School classes); we find more inquiries than before. St. John Chrysostom says in his interpretation of the Epistle to the Romans: [the era where the less aspect of faith, the more questions will arise].

The whole history of Theology is in fact the exercise of this thought in effort, which demonstrates the clarity of faith, its details, its inner harmony, its rationality, and its ability to promote the good in man. The validity of Theological reasoning and its

actual cognitive meaning rest on the value of the Theological language, which is in the first place, according to the Scholar Thomas Aquinas; the language of Analogy. Thus, the distance between God the Creator, and His creatures has no end; yet the difference is always bigger than the analogy. Though, with all the differences between the Creator and the creature, there is a similarity in between, it allows us to speak of God in limited human words.

The Resurrection is our hope, so whenever we look at the empty Tomb, it is always a witness and a confirmation to the truthfulness of the Resurrection; hope is revived within us once again, and strength runs in our veins, derived from the efficacy of the Holy Sacraments within us from which we obtain the merits of the Holy Blood of our Lord, the Crucified; overcoming death which will no longer have power over us, but as the Book of Revelation says: ***“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”*** (Revelation 20:6).

The Resurrection is the foundation of Christianity, as our teacher St. Paul the Apostle says: ***“And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.”*** (1Corinthians 15:14). Therefore, Satan tries in every way to distract our minds from it, not leaving us the opportunity to enjoy it.

However, the fact of the Crucifixion, Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is logically proven, and here are some of the evidence pertaining to this:

(1) The incident of the Crucifixion, Death, and Resurrection is preceded by prophecies that were fulfilled literally in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of which:

† ***“For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.”*** (Psalm 22:16-17).

† ***“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”*** (Zechariah 12:10).

† ***“Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.”*** (Isaiah 53:12).

† ***“Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.”*** (Psalm 31:5).

† ***“And they made His grave with the wicked—But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.”*** (Isaiah 53:9).

† *“O Lord, You brought my soul up from the grave; You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.” (Psalm 30:3).*

† *“But You, O Lord, be merciful to me, and raise me up, That I may repay them.” (Psalm 41:10).*

† *“After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight.” (Hosea 6:2).*

That is, it is not an issue of invention in its time; it is not an illusory or an imaginary, unreal topic. If this is the case, then it is considered an idea born of days, but the Old Testament is preceded by many prophecies which have been completely fulfilled in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ; a proven, declared, and obvious truth.

In the Old Testament, we find that the revelation is compatible with history; this is evidence of credibility. In Theoretical theology, there is inner truth and outer truth. The Holy Bible contains both, and there is a difference between the two, for the Holy Bible contains sayings of Satan, where the serpent spoke with Eve. This speech is an external truth because it is an act, but its content is not of internal truth.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said, “Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” What our Lord Jesus Christ said is an outer truth, and its content is true, for it is an inner truth. Therefore, this is a rational proof to the existence of God, and that God gives revelation, and the revelation is truly fulfilled historically, and this is true of God’s Words and the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ’s Death and Resurrection.

(2) Testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself before the Crucifixion:

The Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ was not a sudden event to accept doubt in its truth, but rather announced it our Lord Jesus Christ several times in His conversations with the Disciples. It was not in secret but rather announced to everyone, and it was not a hoax, but a fact, which include:

† *On the Feast of Transfiguration: Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded them, saying, “Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.” (Matthew 17:9).*

† *After the declaration of St. Peter, the Apostle to our Lord Jesus Christ, saying: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16).*

“From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.” (Matthew 16:21).

† *During the time when our Lord Jesus Christ was walking with His Disciples in Galilee: “Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of*

Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.”
(Matthew 17:22-23).

† *In His last journey up to Jerusalem, He told His Disciples: “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again.”*
(Matthew 20:18-19).

† *In His speech regarding His Sancturary Body: “Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”* (John 2:19).

† *In His speech regarding being the Good Shepherd: “No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”* (John 10:18).

† *Four days before the resurrection of Lazarous: “Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.””* (John 11:25).

† *On the way to the cross He said to His disciples: “But after I have been raised, I will go before you into Galilee.”* (Mathew 26:32)

The Lord Jesus Christ prophesized about His crucifixion, and His prophecies were completely fulfilled, therefore, His prophecy about the Resurrection must be fulfilled as well; furthermore, the prophecies of the Old Testament is a proof of truthfulness, and their complete fulfilment is an evidence to the credibility of the case.

(3) The witnesses:

The four Gospels talk about the Crucifixion, Death, and the Resurrection:

All of them talk about the truthfulness of the Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (St. Mathew – St. Mark – St. Luke – St. John – St. Peter – St. Paul). We find that their testimonies are concordant despite being totally independent from each other.

➤ **Testimony of the Historians:**

The Case of the Death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Holy Cross and His resurrection, is an affirmed case by historical documents:

It is not in the interest of the Jews or the Greek to testify for the Resurrection, as both wished to demolish Christianity, so the presence of the Jews or Romans' testimonies mean that they couldn't deny the truth. If Jesus Christ hadn't resurrected, the Jews and Romans would have brought the dead Body of our Lord Jesus Christ and displayed Him in front of the people, as a solid undoubtfull proof for invalidation of the disciples' claim to His Resurrection.

The same case in the resurrection of Lazarus after four days and rotting; and that's a proof of our Lord Jesus Christ's Divinity as He said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life", and the life is only owned by God. The Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself. Therefore, the resurrection of Lazarus cannot be denied as it is an evident truth declared in front of people.

- 1- The texts of the trial and the dialogue that occurred between our Lord Jesus Christ and Pilate the Roman Ruler, also the texts of the dialogue that took place between our Lord Jesus Christ and the Jewish leaders in Sanhedrim Council; as our Lord Jesus Christ was tried by religious and civil trials, in front of Annas and Caiaphas, Sanhedrim Synagogue, in front of Herod then Pilate and He returned back again to Herod and all the documents that prove this was recorded. The trial of our Lord Jesus Christ lasted for a whole night and part of the next day, and it was in the presence of the Jewish leaders and Sanhedrim Council which is the highest religious authority at the time of Jesus Christ. All this occurring on that huge hill known in history by [hill of Golgotha] (those texts are present in the beginning of the Katamares as well as in the nation's records and the civil records).
- 2- The British researcher **Frank Morrison** wrote in his book "**Who rolled the stone?**" the story of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ and His resurrection through the legal mind which aimed to refute the Christian allegations, yet his study was neutral/unbiased. He studied in the Law books, Archaeological sites, and all fact. All of this brought Morrison to results he himself didn't expect. Thus, instead of the book being refuted to the legend of the Crucifixion as he thought, research came as a blatant evident document in the face of the cynical naysayers.
- 3- The sayings of the eye witnesses and their names among the names of those who attended the trial, like the false witnesses, and the details of incidences/events that happened before the Crucifixion, during it and those events which followed; all are supported by proofs that is beyond doubt, as **Werner Keller** affirmed in his book "**The Bible As History**" that [the details of the trial and issuing of the verdict and the Crucifixion (mentioned) in the four Gospels were reviewed by a number of researchers with scientific accuracy, resulting in confirmation of the incidents and their historical facts' credibility with all of their details. In addition, the main accusation witnesses against Jesus Christ were subjected indirectly to an investigation. Moreover, the place where the verdict was issued was discovered by the archeological excavations. The different incidents in the context of the trial could be verified from the resources and recent researches].

4- It was mentioned in the Talmud version that was published in Amsterdam in 1943 (Alhagda) on page 42 that: [Jesus Christ was crucified one day before Passover. Before the execution of the verdict on Him, and for forty whole days, a herald came out calling: “(Jesus) will be murdered as He practiced magic and tempted Israel to abandon their faith, so whoever wants to defend Him and show empathy toward Him step forward.” However, no one stepped forward to defend Him on the night of the Passover, and who would dare defend Him? Wasn’t He a corrupter as it was also mentioned by the Prophets that someone like Him, **“you shall not consent to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him, but you shall surely kill him to.” (Deuteronomy 13:8-9).** That’s a testimony from the Jews themselves proving validity of His death].

5- Flavius Josephus, the famous Jewish Historian (37-97 or 100 A.D.)

He mentioned in his book *“The Histories”* between the years 90-95 A.D., a paragraph about the crucifixion Jesus Christ. In the year 1972, an Arabic manuscript was published; scientists suggest that it was a precise translation of the original text, mentioned in it: [At that time, a wise man named Jesus lived, if you can call Him a man as He made great miracles. He was a competent teacher and people received His teachings with joy, hence, He attracted many people from the Jews and the Greek; this man was the Christ. Pontius Pilate sentenced Him to be crucified according to the accusation of the great man among us (referring to the high priest), but those who loved Him from the beginning didn’t leave Him as He appeared to them alive on the third day. The Prophets and Saints have previously talked about Him regarding those matters and thousands of other wonderful things, even until now His Christian followers are still present]. The testimony of Josephus preceded the testimony of the majority of idolatrous historians; if we take into consideration that Josephus was famous for being objective among his colleagues, and he dealt with such historian event through the Jewish data, that proves to us that such text is a determinable entrusted text.

(4) The Resurrection is the absolute, acceptable solution to the empty Tomb:

(Matthew 28:6, Mark 16:6, Luke 24:6 and John 20:1-2):

The empty Tomb is clear evidence to the truth of the Resurrection. Our Lord Jesus Christ rose and withdrew from the Holy Shrouds and left them empty. The Holy Shrouds were in the form of a shape surrounding the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Joseph and Nicodemus had shrouded Him in it, along with the pouring quantities of spices. As for the head, a handkerchief was placed on It separate from the Holy Shrouds. Hence, when our Lord Jesus Christ rose, he withdrew from within the linen cloths, leaving the Holy Shrouds empty.

St. John the Preacher says: ***“Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed.” (John 20:3-8).*** What did St. John see to believe? He did not see our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, but he saw the appearance of the empty Holy Shrouds and the handkerchief thrown away from the Holy Shrouds. He realized by his spiritual sense that our Lord Jesus Christ had risen and he believed according to the shape of the Holy Shrouds that our Lord Jesus Christ rose before he saw Him, and this is what Saint Cyril the Great said: [Although the two disciples had not yet met Jesus Christ risen from the dead, they inferred His Resurrection from the way the Holy Shrouds were placed].

By carefully reading the story in the Holy Bible, you will find that the Tomb in which the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ was placed was heavily guarded by the Roman soldiers, and the Jews told Herod: ***“Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.” (Matthew 27:64-66).*** It has also been sealed with a very large stone. If, as some claim, our Lord Jesus Christ had not died, but was only in a state of weakness or fainting, then the presence of the soldiers and the great stone would have prevented His escape. Likewise, He would have prevented any rescue attempt by His followers, and that would negate the issue of fainting. If the soldiers were sleeping and the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ were trying to rescue Him, would they have not heard the sound of the stone rolling? Furthermore, the enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ would never have thought of stealing His Body because the missing Body from the Tomb would confirm the truthfulness of the Resurrection.

Although none of the writers of the Holy Bible has ever tried to prove the case of Death and Resurrection, as it is an obvious fact to them, yet at the same time, **it provides decisive evidence for the fact of His Death and Resurrection. (Matthew 28:1-20, Mark 16:1-20, Luke 24:1-53 and John 20:21).** The reality of the Resurrection is also confirmed by what was mentioned in the Book of Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1:1-11) This is in addition to the fact that the Biblical text is confirmed by historical documents and excavations.

[Stole it]

- Do all the guards sleep during guard time?
- The Roman soldiers are distinguished by their diligence and order?
- Who informed them who stole the body while they were sleeping?

(5) The seal bears witness to the truthfulness of the Resurrection:

A. T. Robertson comments: [The seal was placed in the presence of the Roman soldiers who were assigned to guard the Roman coat of arms, which represents the power and influence of Rome].

D. D. Haddon says: [The door cannot be opened without the breaking of the seal; this constitutes a gruesome crime against the owner of the seal]. The seal was broken when the stone was rolled and the person or persons who do not dare break the seal will be responsible to the local governor and his representatives. In fact, breaking the Roman seal at the time of our Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection was something everyone feared.

With our Lord Jesus Christ, who entered the womb of the Virgin Mary without breaking her virginity, He came out of the Tomb without rolling of the stone and entered the attic, where the disciples were, with the doors closed.

(6) The Roman Guards bear witness to the Resurrection:

When we approach the topic of (the Roman guards), we must have resort to “The Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities” composed by Dr. William Smith which gives us various information. Maniples (a subdivision of the Roman army) consisted of 60 or 120 soldiers: [Fully equipped... and assigned to a specific squad, which is two sets of guards. Each group consists of four men assigned to guard, some of them stand in front of the tent, others behind it among the horses. We note here that the guard group always consists of four individuals. One of them is appointed as a guard. As for the rest, they enjoy a certain kind of rest, but they must be on guard at the first sign of imminent danger].

Thomas Thorburn tells us that: [The soldiers on guard were in a real trouble. After the stone was pushed aside from its place and the seal was broken, they are now facing a military trial. (Soldiers can't claim that they were asleep, as they know that the only punishment for sleeping while being on guard duty is death, and it is a punishment that happens repeatedly)].

(7) Our Lord Jesus Christ's appearances after the Resurrection: Our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to many witnesses after the Resurrection everyday and for 40 days...

The Marys and disciples didn't expect our Lord Jesus Christ's appearance and Resurrection despite His miracles; and their unexpectation is a proof of His divinity and the truthfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection.

† He appeared to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9):

When Mary Magdalene was crying, our Lord Jesus Christ showed Himself to her, and talked to her: *“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” (John 20:15).* It didn't cross her mind that the person talking to her, is the same person who had been buried in front of her eyes three days ago. Our Lord Jesus Christ said to her, *“Mary!” She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher).” (John 20:16).* Therefore, she realized, even confirmed, that He is the Christ Himself. Surely, His voice was familiar to her, as she: *“Told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.” (John 20:18).*

† To some of the female Disciples (Matthew 28:9).

† To St. Peter (1 Corinthians 15:5).

† To the two Disciples who were going to Emmaus (Luke 24:15-31).

† To the ten Apostles; this time they touched our Lord Jesus Christ and felt Him. He ate in front of them to prove to them that they aren't seeing a revelation but seeing the risen Jesus Christ indeed. (Luke 24:36-43).

† He showed Himself to the eleven Apostles including St. Thomas, who wasn't there the previous time that our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to the Apostles; that's why St. Thomas suspected and didn't believe until our Lord Jesus Christ appeared. St. Thomas was with them (John 20:21-28).

† He showed Himself to seven of the Disciples who were fishing at the Galilee Sea (John 21:1-24).

† He showed Himself to the eleven Apostles in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-17).

† He showed Himself to five hundred of the believers (1 Corinthians 15:6); perhaps this appearance occurred at the same time when He showed Himself to the eleven Apostles in Galilee.

† Then He appeared to St. James (1 Corinthians 15:7).

† He showed Himself to the eleven Disciples at the Mount of Olivet at the time of Ascension (Acts 1:2-9).

† Then, He showed Himself to Saul of Tarsus when he was an enemy to Christians as he was on his way to Damascus to persecute them (Acts 9:1-5).

This cloud of so many witnesses support without any doubt, the truthfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection from the dead as a historical solid truth.

(8) What assures the Truth of the Resurrection from the dead, the association of this to the change of the Disciple's behavior:

At first, they were afraid, hiding in the attic; the doors not just closed but **“being shut”**, (being shut means they put a huge wooden pillar behind the door from the inside so no one can enter); they didn't expect the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead (Luke 24:1-11). After the Resurrection, we see them full of courage; they went out to spread the Gospel all over the world. Hence, is there any other logical explanation for that other than their true experience to the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Risen?

a- The Disciples' courage:

What if our Lord Jesus Christ hadn't risen? Every disciple would have gone back to his own village and profession as how it was in the beginning, yet we see signs of joy and strength shown on them in the third day after the Death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Disciples' evangelism, especially in the early years of their service, was among the Jewish groups who witnessed the Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ, knew well of His Resurrection, yet no one among the Jews or even the High Priests and the Pharisees who plotted against our Lord Jesus Christ, dared to negate the Disciples' speech or accuse them of lying. We find, St. Peter the Apostle, standing in Jerusalem at the 50th day after the Holy Resurrection, just a few metres away from the place of our Lord Jesus Christ's Crucifixion, confronting the Jews powerfully and firmly addressing them saying: ***“But you denied the Holy One and the Just,... and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.”*** (Acts 3:14-15). He also said: ***“Him (meaning Christ) , being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death.”*** (Acts 2::23).

The faith of many skeptics; for example, our teacher St. Paul the Apostle, who confessed that he was a persecutor to the Church of God, yet after he met our Lord Jesus Christ the Risen, St. Paul the Apostle turned from a persecutor of Christianity to its greatest defender. Like so many earlier Christians, St. Paul suffered from poverty, persecution, beating, imprisonment, even execution for the sake of his faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and His Resurrection.

b- The martyrdom of the Disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ:

The martyrdom of our Lord Jesus Christ's Disciples (except for the beloved St. John), their devotion to the Christian faith to this extent, we even see them setting the truth of the Resurrection their main pillar of faith. We find our teacher St. Paul the Apostle saying: ***“If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith***

is also empty.” (1Corinthians 15:14). It's not normal for a man to sacrifice his life for a lie or a legend, but for a truth they have touched, witnessed and preached with.

(9) Devoting the Day of Sunday (the first day of the week) for worshipping:

To the Jews, Saturday was the day of worshipping according to the fourth commandment (Exodus 20: 8-11), yet the earlier Christians (many of them were of Jewish origin), used to gather on the first day of the week to worship and break bread (Acts 20:7, 1Corinthians 16:2). This Change only happened to honor the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, which took place on Sunday, as it's the foundation of the new life, the eternal life. As St. Ignatius of Antioch said: [Sunday is the day when our life rose through our Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection).

(10) The Church Fathers, since the first centuries are completely certain and have complete faith in the truthfulness of the Resurrection:

† We find that **St. Clement the Roman** in his first letter, speaks about our Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection which is evidence to our resurrection, and says: [Let us consider my beloved, how the Lord continually shows us proofs of the future resurrection, of which our Lord Jesus Christ was the first fruit through His Resurrection from the dead. Let us meditate my beloved, the resurrection which is you can find a place for at any time; for day and night declare to us a resurrection. The night sinks to sleep so that the day may arise; the day departs so that the night may come. Let us behold the fruits of the earth, how the sowing of grain takes place. The sower goes forth, and casts the seeds into a dry, naked, slowly deteriorating ground; yet the mighty care of our Lord raises it up again from its decay]. (24:1-4)

Then, **St. Clement** gives a symbolic legend, to prove the reality of resurrection by using a bird (Phoenix) which lives for 50 years. When its life almost comes to an end, it builds itself a casket of incense, myrrh, and other fragrances, and when the time is fulfilled, it enters and dies. As the flesh decays, a certain kind of worm comes and feeds on the dead bird, bringing forth feathers. Later, it passes by Egypt, and one day flies over the altar of the sun, becoming what it once was, alive again. (Chapter 25). He also says, assuring the Resurrection, [The Apostles carried the annunciation of the Heavenly Kingdom approaching, after they derived their knowledge from our Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection]. (42:3)

† **St. Ignatius** of Antioch says: [I believe and am convinced that after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, He was in the Holy Flesh. Didn't He come to St. Peter and who was with him and said to them, "Take hold of Me, touch Me and see that I

am not a bodiless spirit]. (Izmir 1:1-3). In the same message he says, [Pay attention to the Prophets and above all to the Holy Bible which declared and announced to us the pain and suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ]. (Izmir 7:2)

† **St. Polycarp** says: [“For whosoever does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, is an antichrist” (1 John 4:3) and whosoever does not confess the testimony of the Holy Cross, is of the devil and who mocks God according to his desires and says that there is no Resurrection or Judgement, then he is the firstborn of the devil]. (7:1)

St. Polycarp also assures the faith in Jesus Christ’s Resurrection and His second coming, so he says: [Believe in He who raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and gave Him glory, 1 Peter 1:21 and seated Him on the right of His throne and subjected all that is in Heaven and earth to Him, He who every spirit serves. 1 Peter 3:22; Philippians 2:10 He comes as the Judge of the living and the dead. Acts 17:31 God will require His blood of those who do not believe in Him, He will raise us up as well]. (2:1)

† **Athenagoras the Philosopher** wrote Apologetics to defend 3 famous cases and presented them Markous, the Emperor as well as the Christian Books and the Resurrection of the Dead.

He wrote an essay of 25 chapters named “The letter of Athenagoras, the asthenic and Christian Philosopher in the Resurrection of the Dead” to clarify that Jesus Christ’s Resurrection is a sediment to our own.

† **In the letter attributed to Barnabas:** [To be ready for the Eighth Day, referring to Eternity, the beginning of the other World; this is the same as we celebrate, on the Eighth Day when our Lord Jesus Christ resurrected from the dead (Barnabas 15:8)].

† Justin the Martyr says: [If the resurrection was only spiritual, Jesus Christ would have shown in His Resurrection to the dead that only the body dies, and the soul (spirit) lives alone ... He rose in His body that suffered and endured pain to show the Resurrection of His Body? He wanted to assure that as the disciples didn't know whether they should believe that He resurrected in the body or not, they were looking at Him in doubt, He said: **“Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself.” (Luke 24:38-39)**. He let them touch Him and showed them the nails marks on His Hands]. This was a reply to Jehovah's Witnesses Heresy that Jesus rose in spirit without a body, The heresy of slumbering souls.

† The Council of Nicaea in the year 325 was held through the attendance of 318 Bishops from all over the world, where they agreed on the Nicene Creed that says (He rose from the dead on the third day).

† St. Athanasius of Alexandria: [Had the interval between death and resurrection been within the same day, the glory of incorruptibility would have been obscure. So, in order that the body might be shown to be dead, the Word waited one intermediary day, and on the third day showed it to all as incorruptible. So that death might be shown in the body, he raised in on the third day. Yet lest, by raising it up when it had remained for a long time and been completely corrupted, he should be disbelieved, as though he bore not his own but another body—for, because of the length of time, one might distrust what appeared and forget what happened—therefore he waited no more than three days nor put off for long those who had heard from him about the resurrection.

But while the word was still echoing in their ears and their eyes were still expecting and their minds were in suspense, and those who put him to death and witnessed the death of the lordly body were still living upon earth and in the same place, the Son of God himself, after an interval of three days, showed the body which had been dead as immortal and incorruptible; and it was demonstrated to all that the body died not by the weakness of the nature of the indwelling Word, but in order that death might be destroyed in it through the power of the Savior]. (On the Incarnation 26 :3-6)

(11) Archaeological proofs:

1. The empty Tomb which exists untill now:

Jesus Christ rose and left the Tomb empty, it exists untill today and without any dead bone remains. It witnesses Jesus Christ's Resurrection. God arranged that the Emperor Titus invades Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D., the Jews were then scattered, so they didn't have the chance to bury the Tomb and the other Holy remains, as they did to the Holy Cross under the piles of Golgotha and turned it into a waste dump, untill Saint Helena, the mother of King Constantine, came in the third Century. She removed the piles of Golgotha and found the Holy Cross.

Yet, what's the evidence that the Tomb in Jerusalem is that of our Lord Jesus Christ?

- a. This is what we have received regularly from our ancestors; that this is the Tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is certain that those who said so did not choose any tomb, as there are many graves in Jerusalem, yet there are some facts associated with this grave, all of which are quite identical to this tomb precisely.

The Holy Bible says that Joseph of Arimathea: ***“Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before.” (Luke 23:53).*** This is identical to the Tomb of Jerusalem.

- b. The tomb is also archaeologically identical to the types of graves that were at the time of our Lord Jesus Christ: The Holy Bible says in Verse 5 of Chapter 16 of the Gospel according to St. Mark about the ‘Marys’ when they entered the Tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right, and whoever goes to the grave knows that it has a door on the far left, and the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ was on the right side, and this is also identical to the words of the Holy Bible. Hence, if the tomb’s door was on the far-left side, then anyone who would look inside the tomb must look to the right, because there’s a wall on his left side, and this is identical to the tomb that we received from our ancestors as the tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ. This tomb was clearly owned by one of the rich people, because it was carved into the rock, wide, and in an area close to the city. This is also what the 14th Chapter of the Gospel according to St. Mark, stating that this Tomb was owned by one of the rich who is an honorable marshal named Joseph of Arimathea.
- c. What also confirms this is the tombs of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who requested for their burial to be near the Tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wilbur M. Smith pointed out that the word "tomb" was mentioned thirty-two times in the four Gospels’ records about the Resurrection.

- d. J. Anderson, a Lawyer and Professor specializing in Eastern Law at the University of London, asks: [Have you noticed how the evidence of emptiness of the Tomb, was written in all the Gospels? It was written to give the Christian community all the facts they wanted to know. In the sermons to all non-believers, as it’s clear in the Book of Acts of the Apostles, it is noticed that there is constant confirmation to the truth of the Resurrection, yet there isn’t the slightest doubt regarding the empty Tomb. But why did this happen? As for me, there is only one response: there is not a single justification for raising the issue of the empty Tomb; as everyone, whether friends, or enemies, know that it was empty, and the questions that is worthy of discussion are “why was Tomb empty, and what does that prove?”]

In other writings, Anderson says: [The empty Tomb appears before us as a powerful rock, as a fundamental and important element in the subject of the Resurrection. Let’s suppose that the Tomb was not empty, as some claim, this is considered a ridiculous statement. The historical fact lead us to the Apostles, from the very beginning changed the faith of many people in Jerusalem, despite their well-known enmity, by spreading the joyful news that our Lord Jesus Christ had risen from the Tomb - and they did so by going on a short journey to

the Tomb.

It was easily possible for anyone who listened to them could make a short visit during a lunch period; wasn't this not sufficient enough to make sure that the Tomb was empty, or that His Body still existing in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, subject to decomposition? Can many Priests and fanatical Pharisees be affected by the fact of Jesus Christ rising from the dead when in fact there was no Resurrection].

2. The Holy Shroud confirms that it is the Holy Shroud of our Lord Jesus Christ and that He who was buried in it was raised after His burial:

- a. St. John the Theologian clarified to us the meaning of the existence of the Holy Shrouds as evidence of Jesus Christ's Resurrection, so we read in the Gospel of St. John: ***"Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead."*** (John 20:3-9).

- b. A.H. Day, commented on St. John's narration, saying: [Indeed, what St. John saw and noticed, contains conclusive and convincing evidence, not just as an eyewitness, but as an accurate observer. Hence, the two disciples running, and following their arrival at the tomb; how they entered and how St. John's bowed, who looked through the lowered door and seeing the shrouds in their place; and St. Peter, who was more courageous and preceded him in entering.

The Greek word that was used to describe St. Peter means that he (looked at) the Holy Shrouds, and it may also mean that he examined the matter thoroughly and accurately, as he described the places where the clothes and the handkerchief were located, which is an accurate description chosen in his words. Then, St. John's entry, and the faith that occupied him when he saw the Holy Shrouds. All these things mean that he (looked) and that his memory still paints the scene for him as he saw it, and that his vision of the empty Tomb and the abandoned clothes was a turning point in his faith and then throughout his life after that].

c. **The Holy Shroud of our Lord Jesus Christ preserved, in Turin, is unique from other shrouds, modern or ancient, that is found in international museums: Through the following:**

- i. **Traces of the Human Body:** If we look at the Holy Shroud before us, we see clear and pure traces of the full shape of a human being from the front, one hand on top of the other, His legs are extended, His hair hanging on his face, has a moustache, and a beard in the middle. As we see It completely from behind, red spots of Blood spread along His Body, denser at the back of the head.
It is the shape of a crucified Human Being; and on His hands and feet traces of nails, and on His head traces of strong bleeding resulting from sharp thorns being stuck into It, and on His back marks of whipping, and on His right side traces of a spear stab.
This man, who was wrapped in this Holy Shroud, has suffered the same torments as our Lord Jesus Christ, as stated in the Gospel, which led some to say that: **the Holy Shroud is a fifth new Gospel**, which shows us in the picture, what is written in the other four Gospels, as if it confirms the Biblical description with living image.
- ii. **Free of decomposing of the Body remains:** If we examine the shrouds that wrap the dead bodies, we'll see in all of them the remains of the decomposing body, but in the Holy Shroud of Turin, we don't find anything of that matter. There's no sign of secretions or the well-known substances that usually remain after the decomposition of the body. The man who was wrapped in Turin's Holy Shroud managed to get away from death before the cooling process of the Body started, followed by its disintegration and decomposition. Hence, He left the Holy Shroud in an unfamiliar way, leaving behind the shape of His entire Body and traces of the wounds.
- iii. **The Italian Lawyer, Secondo Pia (1941) who took photographs of the Holy Shroud for the first time.** On the night of the 28th of May 1898; he was the one who discovered this advantage. Usually, in the art of photography, the person we see with the naked eye is considered a positive image, then converted in the photographic film inside the camera into a negative image; where colors and directions are reversed, so the light color becomes dark and the dark becomes light, and the right hand for example is reversed to be the left one and vice versa. In the lab, the photographer transforms the negative image into a positive one, by acidification and enhancing, so the actual features of the person appear as if we can see him by the naked eye.

But as for Pia the Lawyer, he saw in the negative image what he was supposed to see in the positive one, which is seeing the real shape of the Body as if he would see with the naked eye. He was astonished by the incident. Furthermore, until today no experts have discovered how to acquire this phenomenon in this state.

iv. The three dimensions: Although the traces of the Body on the flat Holy Shroud seem to be 2D, yet it contains the elements of a 3D figure, and it enabled some scientists to obtain a clear and tangible picture that can't be obtained from any other ordinary 2D image. After the first result that the French Scientist Paul Gastineau got in 1973, by laser beams, the American Scientists, John Jackson, Eric Gamber and Bill Moturn, enhanced the result in 1978, as they used a special VPeight machine made by Nasa. Later, came the two Italian Scientists, Tamborelli and Paloccino, who retouched the image with the computer. They were followed by the Italian Scientist, Aldo Guerreschi, who only used the art of photography, without turning to a machine or any other means; he recently managed to obtain an amazing photo of the Holy Shroud through 3D. The Scientists, Kins Stephenson and Gary Habermas say: [If we apply the theory of probability to the Holy Shroud, the percentage that this Holy Shroud belongs to another person other than our Lord Jesus Christ equals the result of multiplying the probabilities that confirms the authenticity and identification to the Holy Shroud belonging to our Lord Jesus Christ as well as the historical evidence and the Gospel events; that is, the chance of this Holy Shroud being to another person other than our Lord Jesus Christ is one chance of eighty three million chances. Surely, this means the scientific impossibility that this Holy Shroud belongs to anyone else other than our Lord Jesus Christ. The last surprise that took place was discovering traces on the Holy Shroud that confirms that the person who was wrapped in It was our Lord Jesus Christ (date of this news was April 2004)].

v. The light that appears from the Holy Tomb:

The appearance of light from our Lord Jesus Christ's Tomb in the commemoration of His Resurrection every year, and the light that comes out as a cloud or sometimes as an illuminated column, and it comes out of the Tomb to circulate the whole Church above and below and illuminate all the lamps of Church, the low ones the high ones, that are being previously turned off, and also the lamps of the small church, as well as the illumination of the candles of the people present.



The thing that proves that it, which was placed in the Tomb, wasn't to a human body but God the Incarnate, and it's a proof that renews itself every year to be a compelling, living, testimony before every ungrateful who denies the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the gate to the left side, the column from which the light came out in 1547 A.D.; when, in the time of the Ottomans, people were forbidden from entering the Resurrection Church on the Holy Saturday so that the miracle of light doesn't happen. As God doesn't let Himself be without a witness, hence, any person will not have an excuse to not accept our Lord Jesus Christ as His Savior and Redeemer.

There's another miracle that occurred during the reign of His Holiness Pope Peter-Al Gawli, when the Turkish governor asked him to enter the Tomb on another day than the Holy Easter and the Holy Light appeared.

❖ Are the Death and Resurrection just a fantasy or a delusion?

Fantasies and delusions are of psychological illness, and a lot of scientific research had been done on them, and as any other physical illness they have rules, laws and basics:

- 1- Fantasies and delusions are very personal, that differs from one person to another, as they are originated from the subconscious mind and what it stores from memories, thoughts, and imaginations; so how can 500 people (1Corinthians 15:6) have the same delusions? Are they all ill?

- 2- Fantasies and delusions affect a group of people more than others. A person more likely to be affected by such illness is quick in agitation, easily influenced or anxious.
- 3- People imagine what they expect, what was in their conscious or subconscious minds, as a mother waiting for her prodigal son to return...a young man waiting for a specific result.

The disciples didn't expect the Resurrection but were in despair, although our Lord Jesus Christ had foretold them, but they didn't understand (see how He explained to the disciples of Emmaus). Are they apparitions of spirits? As what happened with King Saul, when he went to a foreteller to bring the spirit of Samuel, the foreteller was scared and did nothing.

The manifestations of our Lord Jesus Christ didn't require people to bring spirits, yet His manifestations were by His free will and in different places like the sea, the attic, and a surprise to everyone who saw Him, therefore, they are real manifestations. Solicitation of spirits requires a medium and a meeting, asking for spirits in a special place and spirits don't have a body; but our Lord Jesus Christ asked His disciples to touch His Body.

❖ The ancient pictures and inscriptions since the early centuries tell the story of the Crucifixion, Burial and Resurrection:

† There are so many discovered evidence that reveal and tell through paintings, inscriptions and decorations on pieces of wood and stone, either painted on the walls of ancient churches or ancient icons, the story of Resurrection dating back to the 1st and 2nd centuries. They prove that our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven alive in His Body. Many scientists have published photographs of these pictures and inscriptions such as Sir William Ramzy in his book, "Modern Discoveries and the Truth of the New Testament Events/Facts", where it was published in the icons' file in the early centuries.

† The manuscripts that confirm the validity/ruth of the Holy Bible, thus, the truth of the Resurrection.

† Baptismal Fonts (Baptisteries) found in the ancient churches since the 1st century. "Baptism and Resurrection": ***"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in the newness of life."* (Romans 6:4).** our Lord Jesus Christ was buried in the Tomb after carrying our sins on the Holy Cross. ***(John 1:29).*** So, we were buried with Him, abolishing the power of death for us. ***"That through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil."* (Hebrews 2:14).** His Resurrection was the sediment to our resurrection which we acquire through the Sacred Sacrament of Baptism. As St, Didymus the Blind says, [The Holy

Spirit renews us in Baptism, being the Lord, and through uniting with the Father and the Son, brings us back from the state of distortion to the state of pure beauty. Thus, we are filled with His grace, we can no longer let a chance (give room) for anything that doesn't correspond with our love. He liberates us from sin, death, and earthly issues, turning us into spiritual human beings and partners in the Divine Glory, sons of the Lord; the Father, and heirs to Him. He forms us in the image of the Son of God and makes us partners with Him in the inheritance, becoming His brothers. We are glorified with Him and reign with Him. He grants us heaven instead of earth. He generously gives us paradise. He makes us more dignified than the angels. He extinguishes the unquenchable fires of hell with the Divine water of Baptismal Font.

❖ The testimony of some Jewish scientists and others about the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ:

1- The Historians:

➤ 1- Cornelius Tacitus (56-117 A.D.):

He was one of the greatest Historians in the Roman estate. He was a Roman Author known for his accuracy and integrity. He contemporized 6 Emperors and was titled "the Great Historian of Rome. One of his most famous books was "The Annals and the Histories". There are many references to our Lord Jesus Christ and Christianity in his books; the most prominent of which are:

[For Nero, to get rid of the accusation of "burning Rome", he fabricated the crime to a hated class known as the Christians and tortured them severely. The Lord, Jesus Christ, Whom the Christians are named after, were exposed to the most severe punishment during the reign of Tiberius by the hands of a Governor, called Pontius Pilate. This was one of the most mischievous superstitions that spread widely. Even though it demised in a short time, it spread again, not in Judea only; the first origin of all evil, but in Rome as well, which became the focus of all shameful, malicious things that reach it from all over the world].

It is obvious from this document that Christianity has derived its name from the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Pontius Pilate was the one who sentenced Him to death. As for the myth or rumor that he hinted to is the Resurrection. The sects that denied Resurrection are:

Basilidians, Corinthians, Carpocratians, Saturninus, Marcionism, Bardaisanites, Sethians, Priscillianism, Paulicianism, Mycenaeans, Titans, Docetism, Marcosians, Valentinianism, and Hermeticism.

➤ 2- Gaius Suetonius Tranquilas (69-140 A.D.):

He was the chief writer for Hardian, the Emperor (117-138 A.D.). His job allowed him access to the official records of the Estate. He pointed out the reasons that led to the Christians' persecution, including their belief in the Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ, His death, and His Resurrection. He didn't deny them the reality of these events. He says: [Because the Jews of Rome caused continual disturbances due to the instigation of Christus, Claudius dismissed them from the city.....after the great fire of Rome (during the reign of Nero). Sentences were also imposed on Christians; a sect which had a new disturbing religious belief].

➤ 3- The Greek Lucian of Samosata, (born in 100 A.D.):

He was one of the prominent Greek Historians in the beginning of the 2nd century AD. He commented in a sarcastic review on Christians and our Lord Jesus Christ in a book "The Death of Peregrinus". [Christians, as we know, worship, till this current day, a man of a distinguished character Who introduced the new rituals they practice, and that which was the reason for His Crucifixion; look how those deceived people believe they are immortal for eternity. This explains their contempt to death and voluntarily sacrificing themselves; this is something common among them. They are also influenced by their Legislator Who told them that they are all brothers since the moment they convert and deny all the gods of Greece and worship the Wise and Crucified and live according to His decree. Since the moment they converted (to Christianity) and denied the Greek gods, worshiped the Crucified Mentor, it was established in them that they are all brothers.

2- Jewish Resources:

They are hostile resources to Christianity, yet none of them denied the Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3- Gnosticism Resources:

Gnosticism is a philosophical, religious movement B.C. It means knowledge, and it has many sects that differ in some principles and agree in others. This movement made knowledge the basis on which it built its religious beliefs. What is known about this religious movement when Christianity spread, that Gnostics borrowed a lot of what suited their belief with a change in some Christian principles such as:

- They think that the body is evil; it is only a prison for the soul. That's why our Lord Jesus Christ didn't incarnate in an evil body, but He had an imaginary, hyaline Body.
- The thought that the Crucified is similar to our Lord Jesus Christ, as it seems, the Islamic view was influenced by this movement in its understanding to the Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Gnosticism, or at least some of its sects saw that our Lord Jesus Christ; the incarnate God, wasn't likely to be exposed to Crucifixion because His body was different from the bodies of human

beings. So, it is impossible for the Crucified body to be the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

However, the study of the religious and literary effects of the Gnostic movement provides us with other evidence to prove the reality of what the Holy Bible says about the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, especially what was mentioned in the early writings **such as:**

- **1- The gospel of truth:** It was most probably written by Valentius around 135-160 A.D. [Because when they saw and heard Him, He gave them His taste, His smell for they touched the beloved Son when He appeared to introduce them to the Father as He came in a physical appearance].

Some other passages assure that the Son of God came in the flesh: [The Word came in the middle and became flesh. Our Lord Jesus Christ was patient in His acceptance in pain and sufferings because He knew that His death is life for many. He was nailed on a tree and manifested the will of the Father on the Holy Cross. He surrendered Himself to death through life; He has eternity in Himself. After He had stripped Himself of worn-out rags, He was dressed in immortality that no one can take away from Him].

- **2- The Apocryphal gospel of John:** Most Probably by Saturninus around 120-130 A.D. [Once upon a time, when John (James' brother, one of Zebedee's sons), ascended and came to the sanctuary, a Pharisee named Arrimanios approached him and asked: "Where is your Master Whom you follow?" He replied: "He went to the place from which He came." The Pharisee said: "That Nazarene cunningly deceived you, filled your ears with lies, blocked your hearts, and kept you away from your forefathers' traditions."]
- **3-The gospel of Thomas:** (Probably from 140-200 A.D.). It contains many alleged references and quotes to our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **4- An article on Resurrection written by an unknown author in the late 2nd century:** [The Lord existed in the flesh, and He announced Himself as the Son of God. Now, He believed that He is the Son of God and the Son of man. He embraced them both and possessed both Divinity and humanity. Thus, on one hand He could overcome death through the fact of being the Son of God, and on the other hand, He could restore the supreme fullness through being the son of man; because He was originally from above, the offspring of Truth and before this temple, He created the universe].

[We have known the Son of man and believed He rose from the dead. This is Whom we say about, has become the demolition of death, because blessed those who believe in Him].

[The Savior swallowed death, He turned Himself into an immortal eternity, lifted Himself after the invisible had swallowed the visible and gave us the way to our immortality].

[Don't think that the Resurrection is an illusion. It is not an illusion, but a reality. It is appropriate to say that the world is an illusion but not the Resurrection which originated by the hands of our Lord, the Savior, Jesus Christ].

[You already have the Resurrection, so why don't you consider yourself to have risen and indeed have come to this? Thus, faith was encouraged not to continue in death]. **Although these gospels were not inspired by God, and their authors called them gospels to strongly mislead people, yet all of them mention that our Lord Jesus Christ is whole and complete in His Divinity as well as in His humanity. They also confirm the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ's Crucifixion.**

- **5- The book “The Secret Teachings of Christ” (2nd century), in it was mentioned:** [The Lord replied and said: "Assuredly I say to you, who doesn't believe in My Holy Cross, won't be saved because the Kingdom of God belong to those who believe in My Holy Cross].

Here we should mention the danger of trust in any teachings that allege to be the secret teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, because everything that God wanted to tell human beings of His Holy Words, was perfectly written down in His perfect Book, the Holy Bible, God's only Word to mankind. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is life. If we, theoretically, research it, yet the Biblical evidence are facts. So, let Resurrection be the life we always live, victorious over the death of sin, to rise in the second Resurrection which conquered death.

And Glory Be To God Forever, Amen.

