

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO

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**ISLAM**

## CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

- ▶ I believe this to be the historical achilles hill of Islam. There is no better attested fact about Jesus than that He was crucified under the Roman government.
- ▶ This is reported by Christian and non-Christian sources, both Jew and Gentile.
- ▶ This fact is uncontested by any serious scholar or historian, both believers and non-believers alike will say that if we can know *anything* about Jesus, it is this one fact.

# CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

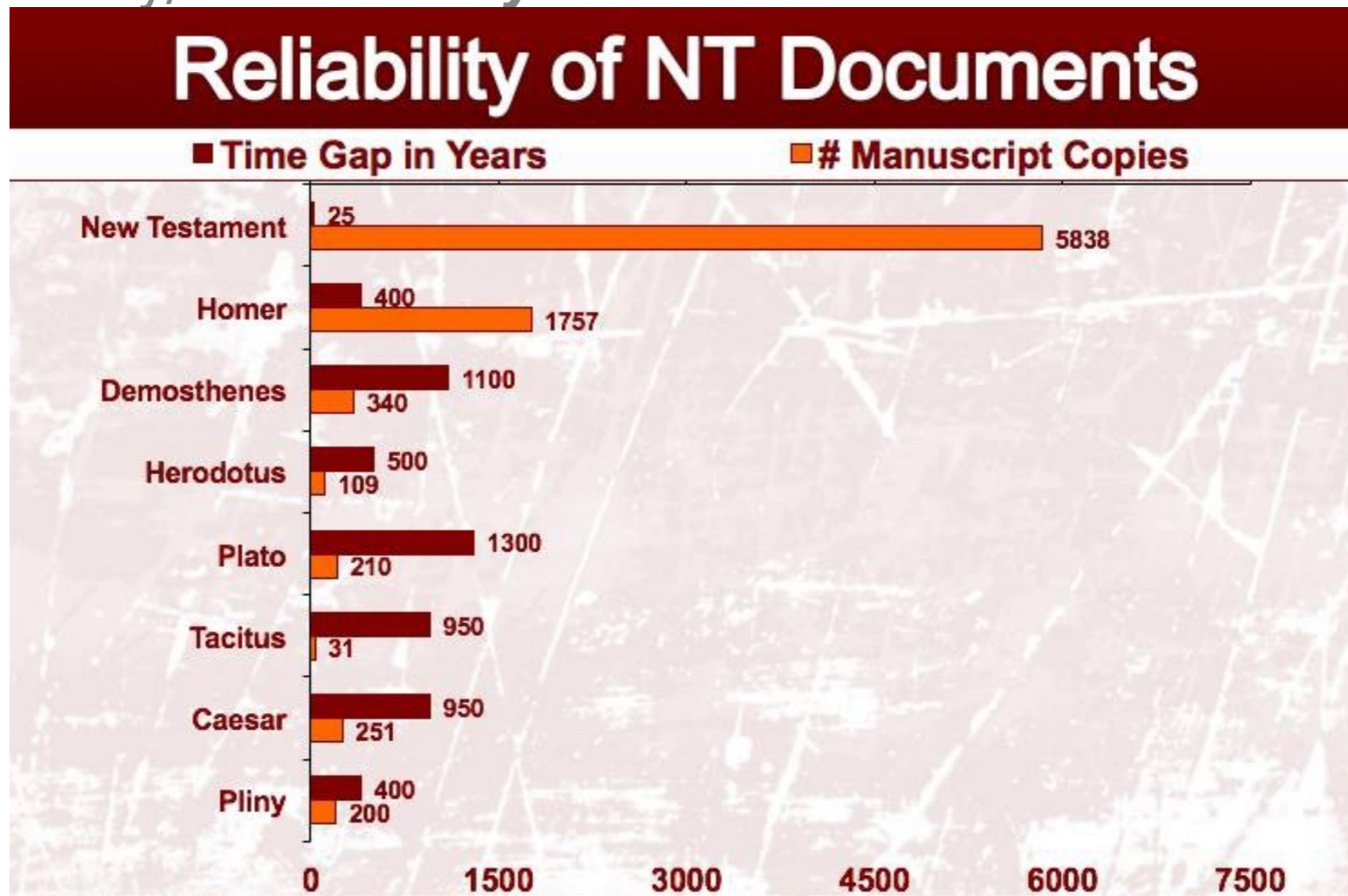
- ▶ Josephus writes “When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing amongst us, had condemned him to be crucified...” (Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.64) (probably late 1st century)
- ▶ Tacitus writes “Nero fastened the guilt [of the burning of Rome] and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christ’s, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate.” (Tacitus, *Annals* 15.44 AD 115)
- ▶ Lucian of Samosata (Greek satirist) writes “The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day—the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account.” (Lucian of Samosata, *The Death of Peregrine*, 11-13 MID 2nd century)

# CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

- ▶ Mara Bar-Serapion writing to his son from prison writes "Or [what advantage came to] the Jews by the murder of their Wise King, seeing that from that very time their kingdom was driven away from them?" (late 1st-3rd century)
- ▶ The Talmud reports "on the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged." (being hung on a tree was used to describe crucifixion in antiquity) (late 2nd century)
- ▶ Even the highly critical scholar John Dominic Crossan writes "That he was crucified is as sure as anything historical can ever be."
- All points on this slide can be found at (Michael R. Licona and Gary Habermas, *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*, pg. 49)

# CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

- ▶ Most importantly, we have *very reliable* documents from the 1st century.



## WHO IS JESUS?

- ▶ Most Muslims will charge, since there are obvious differences in the N.T. and the Quran, that the N.T. has been distorted or changed.
- ▶ Response:
  1. The magnitude of the change would have been enormous. All references from the Bible that contradict Islam would have had to have been inserted into the documents. (Trinity, Incarnation, Crucifixion, Salvation by grace through faith)
  2. Given the rapid dissemination of the N.T. in the ancient world, it would have been impossible for any group to seize and alter all the texts at hand.
  3. We know of no early Christian texts of the N.T. that lack these distinctively Christian doctrines.

• All points on this slide can be found at (Christian Apologetics by Douglas Groothuis pg. 604-605)

## WHO IS JESUS?

- ▶ Furthermore, the Quran *assumes the N.T. to be reliable.*
- ▶ “So, (O prophet,) even if you are in doubt about what We have sent down to you, ask those who read the Book (revealed) before you. Surely, truth has come to you from your Lord, so never be among those who are suspicious. (94)” Sura 10:94
- ▶ “We sent ‘Isa son of Maryam after those prophets, confirming the Torah that was (revealed) before him, and We gave him the Injil having guidance and light therein, and confirming the Torah that was (revealed) before it; a guidance and a lesson for the God-fearing. (46) And the people of the Injil must judge according to what Allah has sent down therein. Those who do not judge according to what Allah has sent down, they are the sinners. (47) We have sent down to you the Book with truth, confirming the Book before it, and a protector for it. So, judge between them according to what Allah has sent down, and do not follow their desires against the truth that has come to you. For each of you We have made a law and a method. Had Allah willed, He would have made a single community of people, but (He did not), so that He may test you in what He has given to you. Strive, then, to excel each other in good deeds. To Allah is the return for all of you. Then Allah shall tell you about that in which you disputed. (48) We order you to judge between them according to what Allah has sent down. Do not follow their desires, and beware of them, lest they should turn you away from some of what Allah has sent down to you. If they turn away, be assured that Allah intends to make them suffer for some of their sins. Surely, many of the people are sinners. (49)” Sura 5:46-49

# WHO IS JESUS?

- ▶ The vicious circle is obvious here. If the Qur'an is true, then the N.T. is true, but if the N.T. is true, then the Quran is false, because the N.T. teaches against the Qur'an. However, if the N.T. is false, then the Qur'an is false, because the Qur'an affirms the N.T. as true.
- ▶ This is a terrible problem for Muslims, which I have not heard a Muslim deal with.



### WHO IS JESUS?

- ▶ Some Muslims (Shabir Ally to name one) will say that the Gospel writers changed who Jesus was. They will say that Mark, for example, did not exalt Jesus or think Jesus was God, as John did, who wrote much later. "The evolution of Jesus into God."
- ▶ However, we can look at Mark and see that Mark thought the same as John.

## WHO IS JESUS

- ▶ Notice that Jesus, at the very beginning of Mark's gospel, is recognized as Jehovah:
  - ▶ "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." (Mark 1:3)
  - ▶ "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)
- ▶ Notice Jesus forgave sins, which only God can do:
  - ▶ "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. " (Mark 2:5-11)

## WHO IS JESUS?

- ▶ Jesus called Himself "Lord of the Sabbath." Exercising authority over God's law.
  - ▶ "Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." (Mark 2:28)
- ▶ Jesus calms the storm, which only God can do:
  - ▶ "And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." (Mark 4:39)
  - ▶ "O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them." (Psalms 89:8-9)

## WHO IS JESUS?

- ▶ He walked on the water, which Job says only God can do:
  - ▶ "And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened." (Mark 6:48-52)
  - ▶ "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea." (Job 9:8)

## WHO IS JESUS?

- ▶ Jesus refers to Himself as David's "Lord". (Sovereign Controller)
- ▶ "And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly." (Mark 12:35-37)

## WHO IS JESUS?

- ▶ Jesus used the "I AM" statement and referred to Himself as the "Son of Man" and said He would set at the "right hand of power".
- ▶ "But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death." (Mark 14:61-64)
- ▶ What does this mean?

## WHO IS JESUS?

### ▶ "I AM"

- ▶ "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." (Exodus 3:14)

### ▶ "Son of Man"

- ▶ "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:13-14)

### ▶ "Right hand of power"

- ▶ Symbolizing equality with the Father.