

The Empty Tomb





Mark 12:28-31 AMP

'Then one of the scribes [an expert in Mosaic Law] came up and listened to them arguing [with one another], and noticing that Jesus answered them well, asked Him, "Which commandment is first and most important of all?" [Matt 22:34-40; Luke 10:25-28]



Mark 12:28-31 AMP

Jesus answered, “The first and most important one is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul (life), and **with all your mind (thought, understanding)**, and with all your strength.’ [Deut 6:4, 5] This is the second: ‘You shall [unselfishly] love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” [Lev 19:18] ’



1 Peter 3:15 AMP

'But in your hearts set Christ apart [as holy—acknowledging Him, giving Him first place in your lives] as Lord. Always be ready to give a [logical] defense to anyone who asks you to account for the hope and confident assurance [elicited by faith] that is within you, yet [do it] with gentleness and respect. [Is 8:12, 13]



1 Corinthians 15:12-19 AMP

Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how is it that some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain [useless, amounting to nothing], and your faith is also vain [imaginary, unfounded, devoid of value and benefit—not based on truth].



1 Corinthians 15:12-19 AMP

We are even discovered to be false witnesses [misrepresenting] God, because we testified concerning Him that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised, either; **and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless and powerless** [mere delusion]; you are still in your sins [and under the control and penalty of sin].



1 Corinthians 15:12-19 AMP

Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If we who are [abiding] in Christ have hoped only in this life [and this is all there is], then we are of all people most miserable and to be pitied.

Three golden trumpets are arranged within a large, light purple circle. One trumpet is positioned horizontally across the center, pointing to the right. The other two are positioned vertically, one above and one below the central trumpet, both pointing upwards. The trumpets have a light beige body and a golden bell.

How was the world being prepared for Him...



Communication

3500 BC

Pictographs

- Complex message not possible
- Not a durable medium



3000 BC

Papyrus & Cuneiform Writing



original pictograph	pictograph position in later cuneiform	early Babylonian	Assyrian	original or derived meaning
				bird
				fish
				sun, day
				to plow, to till

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Communication

1050 BC

800 BC

Phoenician alphabet

- 22 consonants
- No vowels

Greek Alphabet

- Ancient Greek : 27 letters / Today: 24
- F (digamma) Ϝ (koppa) and Ϟ (sampi) are no longer used. Added vowels.

✱	,	⊗	Ṭ	↷	P
♠	B	↗	Y	↻	S
↘	G	✈	K	⊙	Q
▷	D	↶	L	▷	R
≡	H	↪	M	↯	Š
Y	W	↱	N	✕	T
I	Z	≠	S		
☐	H	○	,		

α alpha	β beta	γ gamma	δ delta	ϵ epsilon
ζ zeta	η eta	θ theta	ι iota	κ kappa
λ lambda	μ mu	ν nu	ξ xi	$\omicron$ omikron
π pi	ρ rho	σ/ς sigma	τ tau	υ upsilon
ϕ phi	χ chi	ψ psi	ω omega	

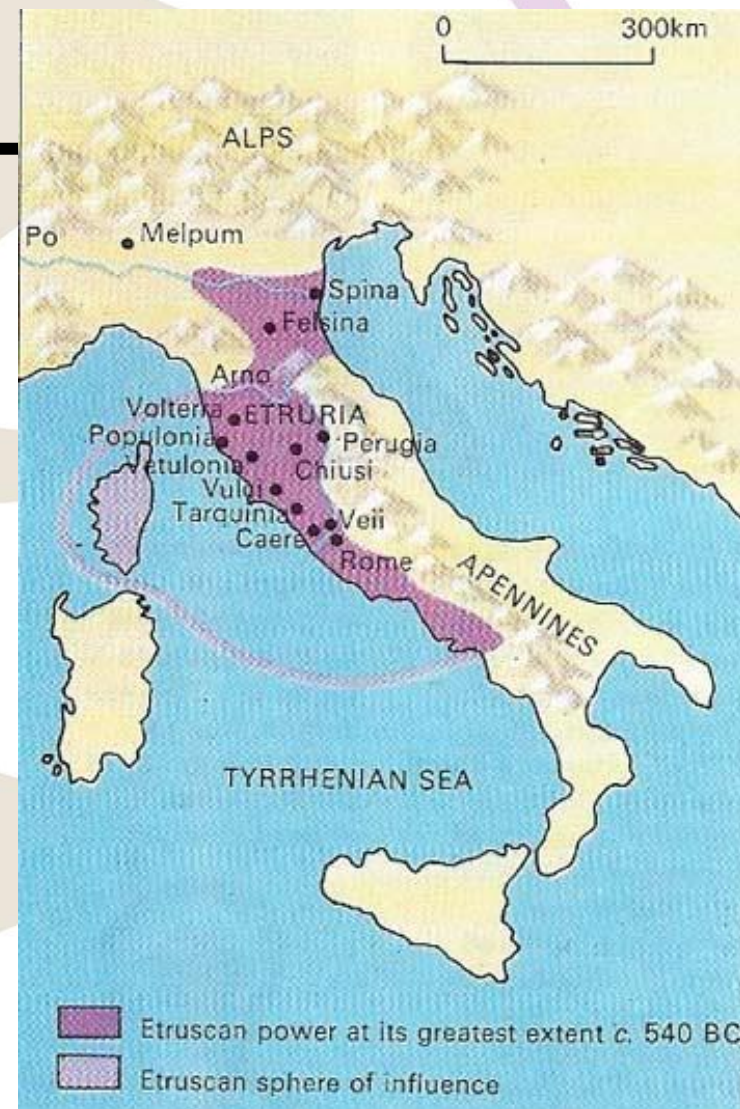


Communication

700 BC

Etruscan alphabet

⊗	⊞	Ɐ	Ɀ	ⱻ	Ȿ	ⱽ	ⱼ	Ɀ
Θ	H	Z	V	E	D	G	B	A
[t ^h]	[h]	[ts]	[v]	[e]	[r/d]	[k]	[b]	[a]
Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ
Ś	P	O	Ξ	N	M	L	K	I
[ʃ]	[p]	[o]	[s]	[n]	[m]	[l]	[k]	[i/j]
Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ	Ɀ
ψ	φ	χ	Υ	Τ	Σ	Ρ	Q	
[k ^h]	[p ^h]	[z]	[u/w]	[t]	[s]	[r]	[q]	





Communication

100 BC

Ancient Roman alphabet

λ α ς δ ε Ϝ Ϛ Ϟ ϧ ϩ ϫ
a b c d e f g h i k

ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ
l m n o p q r s t u x

Alphabet for complex ideas



Koine Greek – Common Language



Papyrus – Lasting & Transportable medium for writing





Communication

100 BC

Ancient Roman alphabet

λ α ς δ ε Ϝ Ϛ ϧ ϧ ϧ ϧ
a b c d e f g h i k

ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ ℓ
l m n o p q r s t u x

Alphabet for complex ideas



Koine Greek – Common Language



Papyrus – Lasting & Transportable medium for writing





Transport Infrastructure

5000 BC

2500 BC

Sumarian Wheel

- Carts – farming and building
- Poor roads
- 2700 BC – Oldest known Pyramid



**Stepper Pyramid
of Djoser**

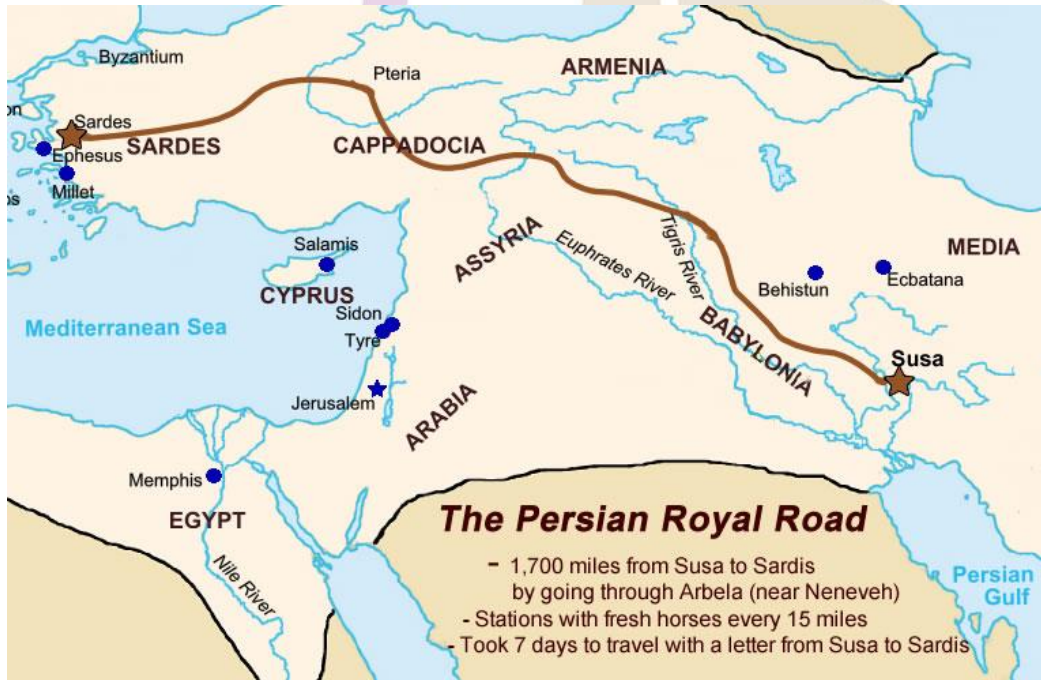




Transport Infrastructure

500 BC

Persian Royal Road





Transport Infrastructure

312 BC

Roman Appian Way (212 km)





125 AC





Transport Services

2000 BC

Egypt creates a
Postal Service

550 BC

Persian Mail Service - Couriers



From Susa (West Iran) to Sardis in
seven to nine days, following the
Royal Road, over a distance of
2600 km



Transport Services

27 BC

Cursus publicus

- The Emperor Augustus created it to transport messages, officials, and tax revenues between the provinces and Italy
- Citizens had to obtain diplomas / permits to use the system (government and military primarily)
- Typical speed: 61 – 100km per day (normal conditions)



Pax Romana

The Golden Age the Roman Empire

- Relative peace and order, prosperous stability with regional expansion
- 70 million people, which was around 33% of the world's population

Politics of ancient Rome



Periods

Roman Kingdom

753–509 BC

Roman Republic

509–27 BC

Roman Empire

27 BC – AD 395



AUGUSTUS
27BC - 14AD



TIBERIUS
14 - 37



CALIGULA
37 - 41 †



CLAUDIUS
41 - 54 †



NERO
54 - 68 †



Ottaviano Augusto: 31 a.C. - 14 d.C.

Territori appartenenti a Roma prima del 31 a.C.

Annessioni e conquista di Ottaviano:

- dal 31 al 19 a.C.
- dal 19 al 9 a.C.
- dal 9 a.C. al 6 d.C.

Regni clienti di Roma con Ottaviano:

Fortezze legionarie: nel 6 d.C.

Three golden trumpets are arranged within a large purple circle. One trumpet is positioned horizontally across the center, pointing to the right. The other two are positioned vertically, one above and one below the central trumpet, both pointing upwards. The trumpets are rendered in a simple, stylized manner with a light beige body and a golden bell.

How His people was prepared...



How His people was prepared...

The image of Jesus...

- Escaped death from a king's decree
- Lived in Egypt as child but returned
- Was tempted while in the wilderness
- Attested through signs and wonders
- Worked miracles at the sea
- Fed thousands miraculously with bread
- Spoke God's word from a mountain

MOSES



How His people was prepared...

The image of Jesus...

JOSEPH

- *Was the object of his father's love*
- *Underestimated and dismissed by his family*
- *Fed the hungry*
- *Successfully resisted temptation*
- *Falsely accused*
- *Stripped of his robe and delivered to the gentiles*
- *Was sold by someone he trusted for pieces of silver*



How His people was prepared...

The image of Jesus...

JOSHUA

- *From obscurity he rose to a position of honor*
- *Anointed to lead and shepherd his followers*
- *Brought deliverance from the enemies of God*
- *Promised to give rest to his people*



How His people was prepared...

The image of Jesus...

- *Born in the town of Bethlehem*
- *Identified as a shepherd king*
- *Amazed his elders*
- *Popularity with the masses but angered leaders*
- *Anointed by God to shepherd his people*

DAVID



How His people was prepared...

The image of Jesus...

JONAH

- *Preached repentance to the gentiles*
- *Slept on a boat during a storm*
- *He chose to sacrifice himself for others*
- *Spent three days given up for dead*
- *Spent 40 days preaching after*



How His people was prepared...

The miracles of Jesus...

ISAIAH 35:5

Then the eyes of the blind will be opened And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.

Healing of the blind man in Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26)

Healing of the blind beggar Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52)

Healing of the man born blind (John 9:1-12)

Healing of a deaf and mute man (Mark 7:31-37)

Healing of a demon-possessed mute man (Matthew 9:32-34)



How His people was prepared...

The miracles of Jesus...

ISAIAH 35:6

'Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy.'

Jesus healed several individuals who were lame or paralyzed:

- Healing of the paralytic at Capernaum (Mark 2:1-12)*
- Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-15)*



Outside of the New Testament?



Outside of the New Testament?

- Seventeen early non-Christian sources are within 100-150
- 12 deal with his death, 50% call him “God”
- We can gather 60 facts about Jesus’ life outside of NT



Outside of the New Testament?

Josephus (37-100 AD), also known as *Flavius Josephus*, was a Jewish historian, priest, and scholar who lived during the 1st century AD.

Written 93-94 AD

Book 18, Chapter 3, Section 3

Book 20, Chapter 9, Section 1

Josephus initially fought against the Romans during the First Jewish-Roman War (66-73 AD) as a commander of Jewish forces in Galilee. However, he was captured by the Romans in 67 AD during the Siege of Jotapata.



Outside of the New Testament?

Book 18, Chapter 3, Section 3

Now there was about this time Jesus, **a wise man**, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a **doer of wonderful works, a teacher** of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. **He was [the] Christ**. And when **Pilate**, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had **condemned him to the cross**, **9 those that loved him at the first did not forsake him**; for **he appeared to them alive again the third day**; **10** as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.



Outside of the New Testament?

Book 20, Chapter 9, Section 1

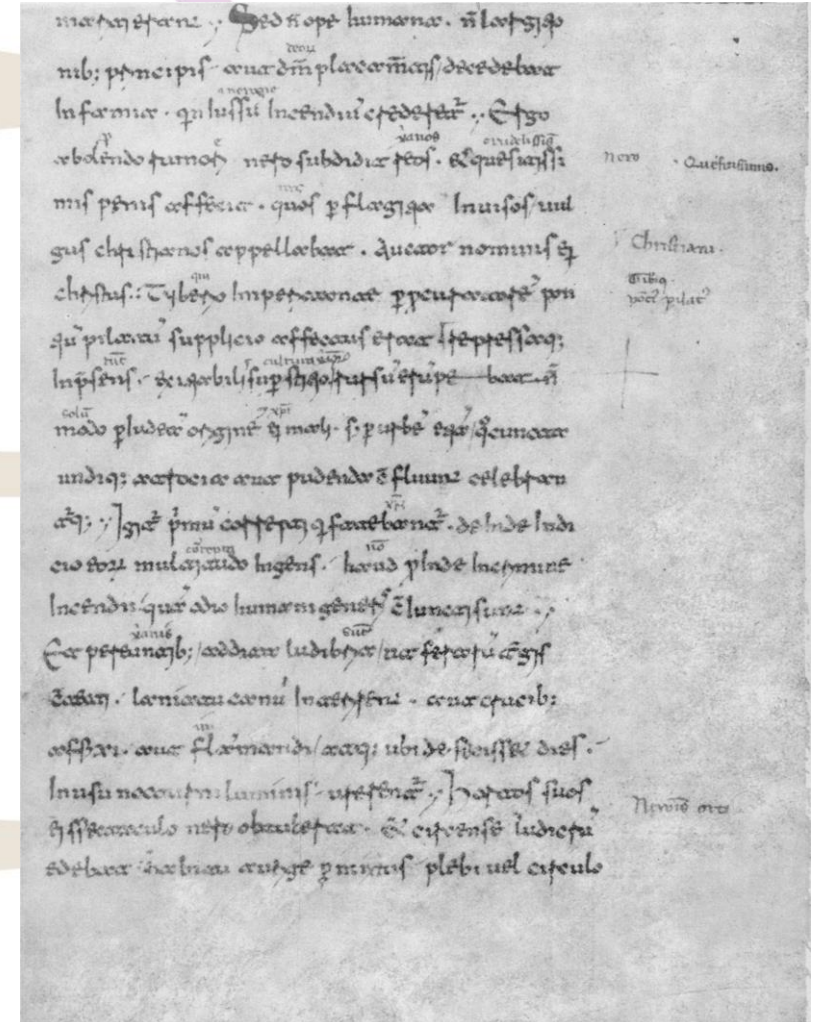
Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the Sanhedrim of judges, and **brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James**, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned:



Outside of the New Testament?

Cornelius Tacitus

- Roman historian and senator
- Written “Annales” in AD 116
- Book 15, Chap 44 – Great Fire of Rome in 18 July 64





Outside of the New Testament?

Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called **Christians** by the populace. **Christus**, 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 Pilatus**, and a **most mischievous superstition**, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular.

The Annals of Cornelius Tacitus

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0078%3Abook%3D15%3Achapter%3D44>

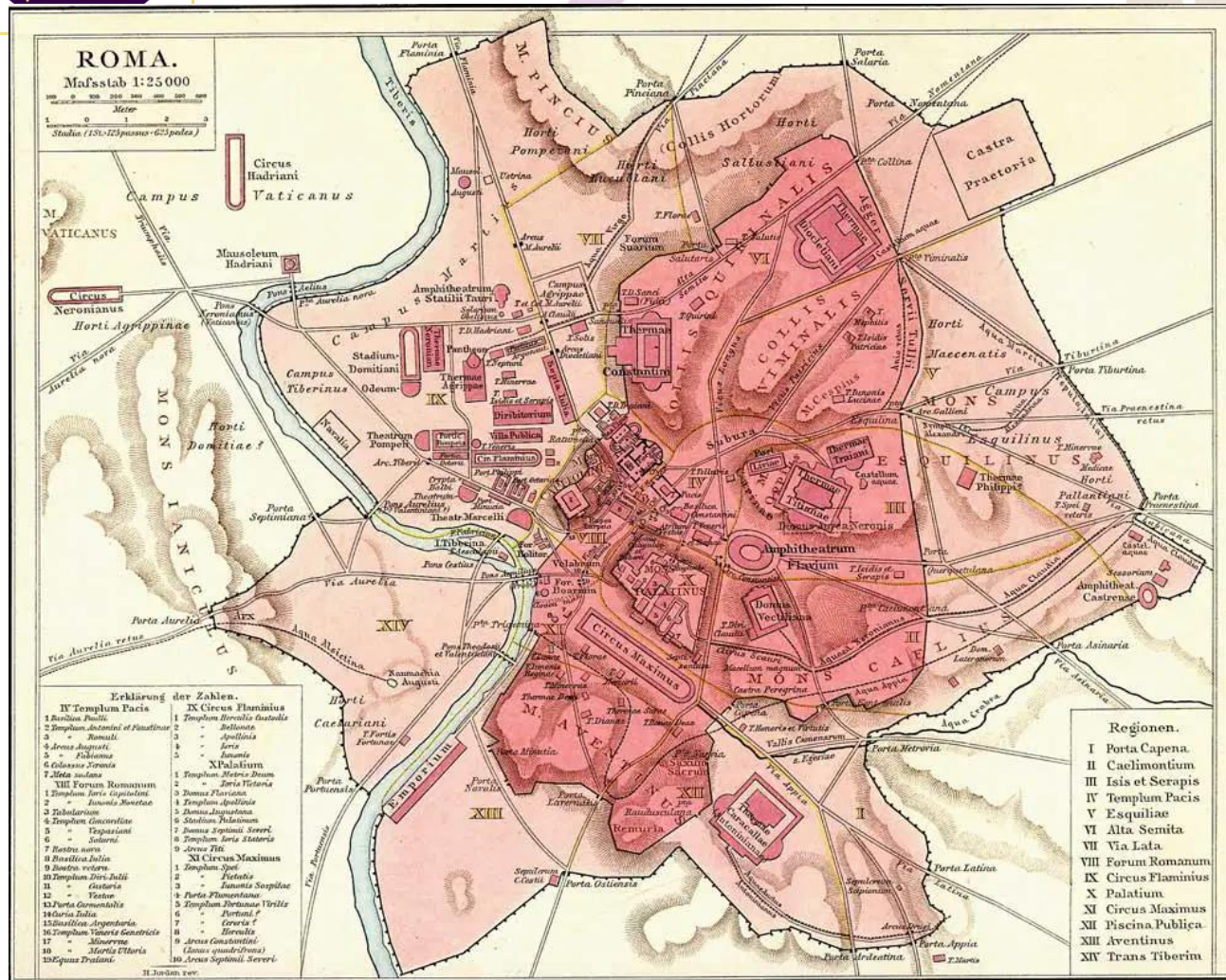


Outside of the New Testament?

Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.



Outside of the New Testament?



- Burned for 6 days and 7 nights, was largely subdued and started burning for another 3 days
- 10 out of 14 districts destroyed
- Nero was blamed
- Shifted blame to the Christians
- Vinegar

The Annals of Cornelius Tacitus

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0078%3Abook%3D15%3Achapter%3D44>



Outside of the New Testament?

Other sources:

- **Thallus** (52 AD) quoted by **Julius Africanus** in 221 AD
- “On the whole world there pressed a most fearful darkness; and the rocks were rent by an earthquake, and many places in Judea and other districts were thrown down. This darkness Thallus, in the third book of his History, calls, as appears to me without reason, an eclipse of the sun.”

https://ia802705.us.archive.org/1/items/adler-2004-africanus-roman-near-east/Adler_2007_Julius_Africanus_Fragments.pdf



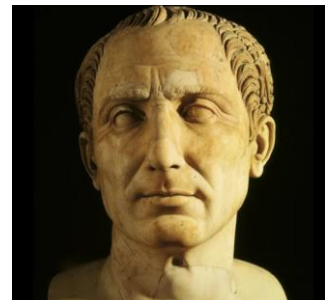
Outside of the New Testament?

Other sources:

- **Pliny the Younger** (61-113 AD) – Roman Governor – describes Christian worship practices
- **Suetonius Tranquillus** (69 – 122 AD) – Roman Historian

He banished from Rome all the Jews, who were continually making disturbances at the instigation of one Chrestus

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/6400/6400-h/6400-h.htm>





Outside of the New Testament?

Other sources:

- **Mara Bar-Serapion** (Syrian Philosopher) – Letter to his son refers to the execution of a wise king of the Jews.
- **Lucian of Samosata** (Greek Satirist) – *The Passing of Peregrinus*
 - Makes a passing reference to Jesus as a crucified sage and the founder of Christianity. He describes Christians as worshippers of Jesus, who he claims taught them to live according to his teachings and reject other gods.

<https://www.tertullian.org/rpearse/lucian/peregrinus.htm>



Outside of the New Testament?

“Unfriendly” sources:

- **The Babylonian Talmud (Jewish Rabbinic Text)**

- **Sanhedrin 43a** : On the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised sorcery and enticed Israel to apostacy.

https://halakhah.com/sanhedrin/sanhedrin_43.html



Outside of the New Testament?

“Unfriendly” sources:

- **The Sefer Toledot Yeshu (1000 AD)** : The Book of the Generations/History/Life of Jesus

Even though it contains various writings against what we believe and know to be true it still confirm the following: Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, healed the lame, said Isaiah foretold of His life, was worshipped as God, arrested by the Jews, beaten with rods, given vinegar to drink, wore a crown of thorns, rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, was betrayed by a man named Judah Iskarioto, and had followers who claimed He was resurrected and ascended, leaving an empty tomb.



What other religions say about Jesus?

World Religions

Size and Projected Growth of Major Religious Groups

	2010 POPULATION	% OF WORLD POPULATION IN 2010	PROJECTED 2050 POPULATION	% OF WORLD POPULATION IN 2050	POPULATION GROWTH 2010- 2050
Christians	2,168,330,000	31.4%	2,918,070,000	31.4%	749,740,000
Muslims	1,599,700,000	23.2	2,761,480,000	29.7	1,161,780,000
Unaffiliated	1,131,150,000	16.4	1,230,340,000	13.2	99,190,000
Hindus	1,032,210,000	15.0	1,384,360,000	14.9	352,140,000
Buddhists	487,760,000	7.1	486,270,000	5.2	-1,490,000
Folk Religions	404,690,000	5.9	449,140,000	4.8	44,450,000
Other Religions	58,150,000	0.8	61,450,000	0.7	3,300,000
Jews	13,860,000	0.2	16,090,000	0.2	2,230,000
World total	6,895,850,000	100.0	9,307,190,000	100.0	2,411,340,000

Pew Research Center Report – 2 April 2015

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/>



Buddhism

- *Primarily based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama*
- *Lived in India (563 – 483 BC)*
- *Buddhism incorporates a variety of religious traditions, beliefs and practices.*



Buddhism

- What they say about Jesus:
 - Jesus was an **Enlightened Man**
 - Jesus was a **Wise Teacher**
 - Jesus was a **Holy Man**



Hinduism

- *Very diverse religious faith that began in India*
- *Dates vary between 12th to 6th century BCE*
- *Multiple branches of believes:*
 - *Vaishnavism*
 - *Shaivism*
 - *Shaktism*
 - *Smartism*
 - *Regional, Folk and others*



Hinduism

- What they say about Jesus:
 - Jesus was an **Holy Man**
 - Jesus was a **Wise Teacher**
 - Jesus is a **God** (pluralistic faith accommodates)



Islam

- **Founded** in 610 AD
- **Founder:** Muhammad - born 570 AD in Mecca
- **Main Texts:** Quran (verbatim word of God and the unaltered, final revelation) and the teachings of Muhammad
- Alongside the Quran, Muslims also believe in previous revelations, such as the Tawrat (the Torah), the Zabur (Psalms), and the Injil (Gospel of Jesus / Isa / Eesa).



Islam

- What they say about Jesus:
 - Jesus was **born a virgin** (Quran 19:18-22)
 - Jesus was a **prophet** (Quran 6:85)
 - Jesus was a **wise teacher** (Quran 57:27)
 - Jesus was a **miracle worker** (Quran 2:87; 3:46,49)
 - Jesus **ascended to Heaven** (Quran 4:159)
 - Jesus will **come again** (The Hadith)



Islam

- Quran 4:157

... and for boasting, “We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah.” **But they neither killed nor crucified him - it was only made to appear so.** Even those who argue for this “crucifixion” are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever - only making assumptions. They certainly did not kill him.



Judaism

- What they say about Jesus:
 - He was Mary's son
 - He was a teacher
 - Had many disciples
 - He was a miracle worker
 - Claimed to be the Messiah
 - Crucified on the Cross
 - Followers reported that he rose from the dead



Judaism

There is not and has never been a place in Judaism for the belief that Mashiach ben David will bring his Messianic mission only to experience death, burial and resurrection before completing it.

Yeshua remains a non-candidate for the position of Messiah



Isaiah 52:13-15 AMP

'Indeed, My Servant (the Messiah) will act wisely and prosper; He will be raised and lifted up and greatly exalted. Just as many were astonished and appalled at you, My people, So His appearance was marred more than any man And His form [marred] more than the sons of men.



Isaiah 52:13-15 AMP

So He will sprinkle many nations [with His blood, providing salvation], Kings will shut their mouths because of Him; For what they had not been told they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand. [Rom 15:21]



Isaiah 53:1-11 AMP

'Who has believed [confidently trusted in, relied on, and adhered to] our message [of salvation]? [Is 52:7, 10] And to whom [if not us] has the arm and infinite power of the Lord been revealed? [John 12:38-41; Rom 10:16] For He [the Servant of God] grew up before Him like a tender shoot (plant), And like a root out of dry ground; He has no stately form or majestic splendor That we would look at Him, Nor [handsome] appearance that we would be attracted to Him.



Isaiah 53:1-11 AMP

He was despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and pain and acquainted with grief; And like One from whom men hide their faces He was despised, and we did not appreciate His worth or esteem Him. But [in fact] He has borne our griefs, And He has carried our sorrows and pains; Yet we [ignorantly] assumed that He was stricken, Struck down by God and degraded and humiliated [by Him]. [Matt 8:17]



Isaiah 53:1-11 AMP

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was crushed for our wickedness [our sin, our injustice, our wrongdoing]; The punishment [required] for our well-being fell on Him, And by His stripes (wounds) we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, We have turned, each one, to his own way; But the Lord has caused the wickedness of us all [our sin, our injustice, our wrongdoing] To fall on Him [instead of us]. [1 Pet 2:24, 25]



Isaiah 53:1-11 AMP

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth [to complain or defend Himself]; Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before her shearers, So He did not open His mouth. After oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation [His contemporaries], who [among them] concerned himself with the fact That He was cut off from the land of the living [by His death]



Isaiah 53:1-11 AMP

For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke [of death] was due? His grave was assigned with the wicked, But He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. [Matt 27:57-60; 1 Pet 2:22, 23] Yet the Lord was willing To crush Him, causing Him to suffer; If He would give Himself as a guilt offering [an atonement for sin],



Isaiah 53:1-11 AMP

He shall see His [spiritual] offspring, He shall prolong His days, And the will (good pleasure) of the Lord shall succeed and prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He shall see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge [of what He has accomplished] the Righteous One,



Isaiah 53:1-11 AMP

My Servant, shall justify the many [making them righteous—upright before God, in right standing with Him], For He shall bear [the responsibility for] their sins.



The New Testament is a good solid primary source of historical evidence – but today nobody buys it!

- *First-hand eyewitness accounts*
- *Very close to the events etc.*

New approach was developed to collect historical data concerning the resurrection that almost all skeptics agree to be true...



Twelve Known Historical Facts

1. Jesus died by crucifixion **[core fact #2]**
2. He was buried
3. Jesus' death caused the disciples to despair and lose hope, believing that his life was ended
4. The tomb was discovered to be empty just a few days later
5. The disciples had experiences which they believed were literal appearances of the risen Jesus **[core fact #3]**
6. The disciples were transformed from doubters who were afraid to identify themselves with Jesus to bold proclaimers of his death and resurrection **[core fact #1]**
7. This message was the center of preaching in the early church.
8. This message was especially proclaimed in Jerusalem, where Jesus died and was buried shortly before
9. As a result of this preaching the church was born and grew
10. Sunday became the primary day of worship
11. James, who had been a skeptic, was converted to the faith when he also believed he saw the resurrected Jesus
12. A few years later, Paul was also converted by an experience which he, likewise, believed to be an appearance of the risen Jesus **[core fact #4]**



The Tomb of Jesus was either

Occupied

Unknown Tomb

4-12

Wrong Tomb

5-12

Legend

1-12

Twin

4,11

Hallucination

5,11,12

Existential
Resurrection

4,5,11,12

Spiritual
Resurrection

4,5,11,12

Natural

Disciples Stole
Body

5,6,11,12

Authorities Hid
the Body

5-12

Swoon Theory

1,6

Passover Plot

5,6,11,12

Jesus was an
alien



Supernatural

Bodily
Resurrection



1. Jesus died by crucifixion **[core fact #2]**
2. He was buried
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1 Corinthians 15:20-22 AMP

But now [as things really are] Christ has in fact been raised from the dead, [and He became] the first fruits [that is, the first to be resurrected with an incorruptible, immortal body, foreshadowing the resurrection] of those who have fallen asleep [in death]. [Col 1:18]



1 Corinthians 15:20-22 AMP

For since [it was] by a man that death came [into the world], it is also by a Man that the resurrection of the dead has come . For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

The Empty Tomb

