

WAS THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS REAL?

THINKCUBE 1 | THE HISTORICAL CASE FOR THE CRUCIFIXION

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Read ThinkCube 1 carefully. Use the article and Scripture to complete this open-book review. Circle one answer for each multiple-choice question and respond thoughtfully to the written prompts.

PREMISE 1: THE CRUCIFIXION IS WELL ATTESTED

1. Which set of writings records the crucifixion of Jesus?

- A. Only the Gospel of John
- B. All four canonical Gospels
- C. Only the book of Revelation
- D. Only later medieval accounts

2. What does the early confession in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 affirm?

- A. Jesus never suffered
- B. Jesus was only a teacher
- C. Christ died, was buried, and was raised
- D. The disciples invented the crucifixion

3. Why does widespread scholarly agreement about the crucifixion matter?

- A. It establishes every Christian claim automatically
- B. It shows Jesus' execution is strongly grounded in historical study
- C. It proves no ancient historian can be mistaken
- D. It makes primary sources unnecessary

PREMISE 2: NON-CHRISTIAN SOURCES CONFIRM JESUS' EXECUTION

4. Which Roman historian mentions Christus being executed under Pontius Pilate?

- A. Tacitus
- B. Plato
- C. Aristotle
- D. Herodotus

5. Which Jewish historian also discusses Jesus in Antiquities of the Jews?

- A. Philo
- B. Josephus
- C. Maimonides
- D. Gamaliel

6. Why are non-Christian references important to this argument?

- A. They replace the Gospels
- B. They demonstrate that every detail is undisputed
- C. They provide external corroboration of Jesus' execution
- D. They were written by the apostles

PREMISE 3: ROMAN CRUCIFIXION WAS BRUTAL AND EFFICIENT

7. What is the “swoon theory”?

- A. Jesus was never arrested
- B. Jesus survived crucifixion and later revived
- C. The Romans used a different execution method
- D. The disciples saw an angel instead of Jesus

8. According to John 19:33-34, what did the soldiers observe and do?

- A. They released Jesus
- B. They broke Jesus’ legs
- C. They found Jesus already dead and pierced His side
- D. They moved Jesus to another prison

9. Why is the reality of Jesus’ death essential to the resurrection claim?

- A. A resurrection presupposes an actual death
- B. It proves the tomb was in Rome
- C. It makes eyewitness testimony irrelevant
- D. It means no further evidence is needed

PREMISE 4: ISAIAH FORETOLD THE SUFFERING SERVANT

10. Which Old Testament chapter is central to the article’s prophetic argument?

- A. Genesis 12
- B. Psalm 1
- C. Isaiah 53
- D. Malachi 4

11. Which description appears in Isaiah 53?

- A. The servant would rule from Caesar’s palace
- B. The servant was pierced for our transgressions
- C. The servant would avoid suffering
- D. The servant would never be rejected

12. What is the central apologetics point of comparing Isaiah 53 with Jesus’ death?

- A. That prophecy eliminates the need to read history
- B. That all probability estimates are historically proven
- C. That the suffering-servant text provides an earlier biblical framework Christians see fulfilled in Jesus
- D. That Isaiah personally witnessed Roman crucifixions

PART TWO | WRITTEN REFLECTIONS

Use the ThinkCube article to support your responses. Write in your own words.

1. Premise 1: Identify two different lines of historical evidence for Jesus' crucifixion. Why is their agreement significant?

2. Premise 2: Explain what Tacitus and Josephus contribute to the historical case. Why might testimony from outside Christianity be persuasive?

3. Premise 3: Describe the swoon theory and explain how the nature of Roman crucifixion challenges it.

PART TWO | WRITTEN REFLECTIONS (CONTINUED)

4. Premise 4: Identify two details in Isaiah 53 that Christians connect with Jesus' suffering and death. Explain the connection.

5. Bringing the evidence together: Why must the historical case for the resurrection begin by establishing that Jesus really died?

PART THREE | SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Isaiah 53:5 — Read this verse in your Bible. Write the verse below, then underline the words that explain why the suffering servant was pierced.

PERSONAL TAKEAWAY

What is one fact or argument from this ThinkCube that you want to remember when discussing the crucifixion and resurrection with someone?

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY

THINKCUBE 1 | HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR THE CRUCIFIXION

PREMISE 1: THE CRUCIFIXION IS WELL ATTESTED

1. B — All four canonical Gospels
2. C — Christ died, was buried, and was raised
3. B — It shows Jesus' execution is strongly grounded in historical study

PREMISE 2: NON-CHRISTIAN SOURCES CONFIRM JESUS' EXECUTION

4. A — Tacitus
5. B — Josephus
6. C — They provide external corroboration of Jesus' execution

PREMISE 3: ROMAN CRUCIFIXION WAS BRUTAL AND EFFICIENT

7. B — Jesus survived crucifixion and later revived
8. C — They found Jesus already dead and pierced His side
9. A — A resurrection presupposes an actual death

PREMISE 4: ISAIAH FORETOLD THE SUFFERING SERVANT

10. C — Isaiah 53
11. B — The servant was pierced for our transgressions
12. C — That the suffering-servant text provides an earlier biblical framework Christians see fulfilled in Jesus

Reflection guidance

1. Gospels, early Christian testimony, and independent ancient references. 2. Tacitus and Josephus corroborate the execution under Pilate; discuss the historical value and limits of external testimony. 3. Swoon theory claims survival; Roman execution practices and the Gospel account challenge this explanation. 4. Isaiah 53 describes rejection, suffering, piercing, and bearing sins; students should explain connections rather than merely list them. 5. Resurrection requires a real prior death; evidence for crucifixion establishes that starting point.

Memory verse: Isaiah 53:5. Assess for accurate transcription from the student's Bible translation. Personal takeaway: Answers will vary.