



April 1, 2007

The Real Conspiracy ?

Peter was sincere but prone to knee jerk reactions, impulsive decisions and peer pressure. These traits are detailed in the scriptures. We have discussed the lack of understanding the disciples had even at the time of Christ's ascension into Heaven (**Acts 1**). We have also discussed the improbability that these early disciples pulled off the most complex conspiracy and coverup in the history of human endeavor. We looked at the nature of these men, their background and the diversity of disciples later on. We examined the life of the apostle Paul and his rapid change after seeing Christ on the road to Damascus. We discussed these points from a perspective that poses to present things in a realistic manner. Given that perspective, it seems unlikely that the disciples possessed the resources to create such a story and make it appear to work well enough to fool the masses. Who had the resources to do such a thing? Certainly not the disciples. That leaves us with two groups. The Jews, including the Pharisees, Sadducees and Scribes, and the gentile occupying forces of the Romans. Looking at the situation from our common sense point of view, the Romans would have to be ruled out. They were pagans who worshiped their own gods and while some, such as Cornelius, had adopted many of the beliefs that the Jews held to, it is obvious that the majority did not. The Romans, aside from being pagan, had no love for the Jews and to be sent to Palestine in the first century as a Roman soldier was not a desired post. The conflict between the Romans and Jews was severe enough that the Romans would not have been able to influence the Jews to accept a belief such as Christianity, and there is ample evidence from history that this did not happen. The only other group that would have had the ability to collaborate, conspire and execute a vast deception, were those individuals who had killed Christ to begin with. As we explore these possibilities we find that the more we imagine how such a thing could have happened, we create more problems and a paradox. The scriptures describe the reaction of the religious leaders to the news that Christ had risen from the dead. "...*some of the watch came into the city, and*

shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day." (**Matt 28.11-15**). Throughout Christ's ministry, the Pharisees and others continually followed, harassed and tested Christ with the intent of showing that he was flawed. When this failed they accused Christ of being a drunk (**Matt 11.19**) and consorting with the "lower elements" of society (**Lk 7.34**). Failing in these tactics, their hatred led to conspiracy and murder. The scriptures tell how this was accomplished. Judas, one the twelve, was a thief (**John 12.4-6**) and conspired with the Pharisees to deliver Christ to them. Judas appears to have had the mistaken belief that Christ would be released and when he saw how wrong he was, he hung himself in despair realizing the great evil that he had done (**Matt 27.3-5**). The influence of the Pharisees and religious leaders was so tainted in the public eye however that the common people would never adopt any idea proposed by them. The popularity of Christ with the people was fueled by the hypocrisy of their leaders, a popularity that led to the hatred that eventually took Christ to the Cross. So, if the religious leaders, who had the necessary resources to create such a story about Christ, which would result in the writing of the New Testament, could not have influenced the common people, then we are left no closer to an answer other than the Bible. We then must turn to the possibility of another force from within the nation itself responsible for the lie.

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