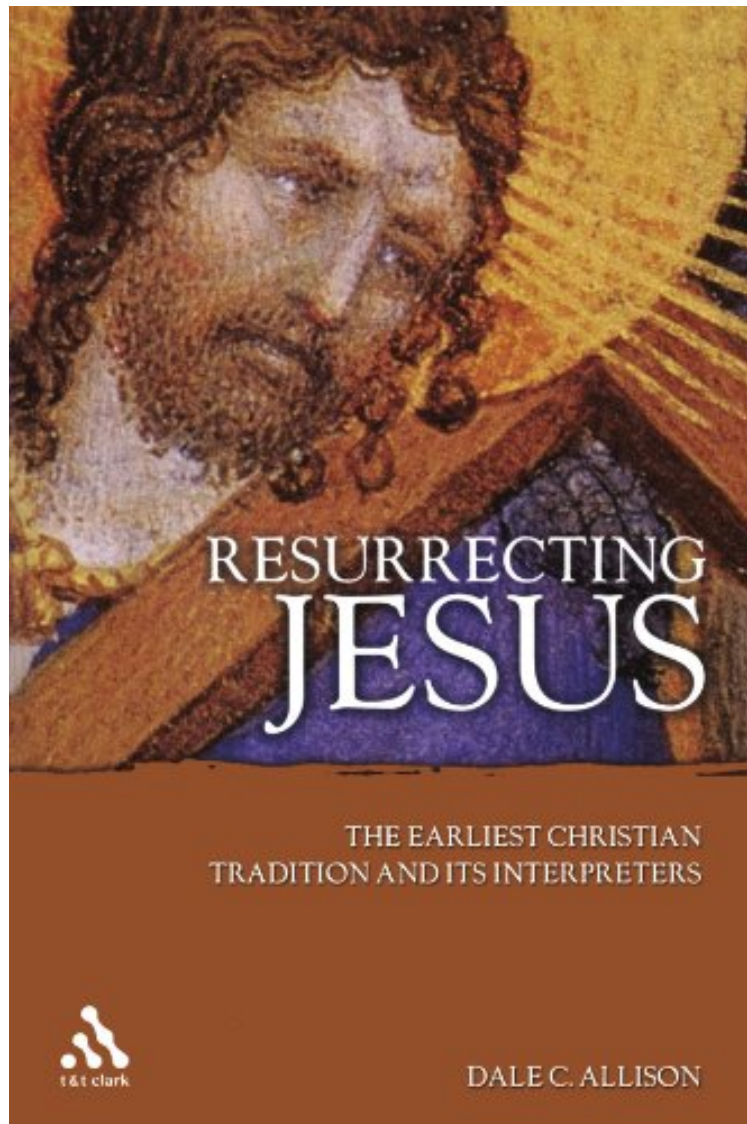


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Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters (Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement)

Dale C. Allison Jr.

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#1237103 in Books Dale C Allison Jr 2005-08-18 2005-08-18Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 228.60 x .85 x 6.00l, 1.25 #File Name: 0567029107416 pagesResurrecting Jesus | File size: 22.Mb

Dale C. Allison Jr. : Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters (Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters (Journal for the Study

of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement):

35 of 36 people found the following review helpful. A fine piece of scholarship By Christopher Hallquist Resurrecting Jesus, by Dale Allison, could almost be viewed as two books: one on miscellaneous issues in New Testament scholarship, and another on the resurrection of Jesus. Each is roughly 200 pages long. I checked out the book for the second one, but the first provides some good reading material as well. Allison's previous books include Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet and The Apocalyptic Jesus: A Debate, with Marcus Borg, John Dominic Crossan, and Stephen Patterson. As one might guess from the titles of these books, Allison is the proponent of the view that Jesus believed the world would end within his lifetime or within the lifetime of his followers (he's the only proponent of this view in the debate book, making the thing sound somewhat lopsided). However, he still identifies as a Christian, and says he finds the idea that God vindicated Jesus by raising him from the dead attractive, since Jesus' message was one of vindication, and a death without vindication would have "invalidated his eschatological optimism" (p.214). Chapter one provides a good (though not introductory) survey of New Testament scholarship, while chapter two looks at the issue of Jesus saying different things to different people. Allison's status as a good scholar who isn't always comfortable with the results of his research comes across most clearly in chapters three and four, "The Problem of Gehenna" and "Apocalyptic, Polemic, and Apologetics." The first argues that Jesus likely held a view of Hell that Allison does not share, though it does soften the blow a little by showing how Jesus's view of Hell was given to him by his culture, contrary to what Dan Barker has said (that Jesus introduced nothing new "except hell"). The following chapter provides more on his struggles: "a Jesus without eschatological error would certainly make my life easier. I might, for instance, be able to tell some of my relatives, without them shuddering aghast, what I really do for a living." He also quotes Crossan's response to his position on the resurrection: "Having said that Jesus and all other millenarian prophets were wrong (so far), you could hardly claim that God raised Jesus from the dead to prove he alone was transcendently wrong." Chapter five argues Jesus had a mixed approach to Jewish law, sometimes conservative, sometimes liberal. Allison gives this a backdrop of Jewish interpretation of the time, though it may be more a matter of human nature: plenty of pastors today behave in a similar manner. The first thing I noticed about chapter six--perhaps because I began reading with the index--was that Allison is perfectly happy to interact with the partisans on both sides: he refers to the work of both evangelical apologists such as Gary Habermas and William Lane Craig and secular critics such as Richard Carrier and Jeffery Jay Lowder. His approach is to attempt to steer a middle course. The high point of the section, I think, was on the skeptical side: he brings together massive amounts of data on apparitions, hallucinations, and visions, arguing that the post-mortem appearances of Jesus are not terribly unique. He also analyzes seven pro and seven con arguments for the claim that Jesus' tomb really was found empty after his death. He concludes each side has two good arguments, but the pro arguments are somewhat stronger. I think he has perhaps misweighed the arguments, but his attempt to weigh them honestly is a refreshing contrast to William Lane Craig, who has never heard an argument for the empty tomb that he doesn't like. Ultimately, he concludes on one hand that apologists are wrong to think the resurrection can be proven on evidence (from his lengthy discussion of hallucination and realization that there are other ways to get a body out of a tomb), but on the other hand that skeptics cannot disprove it. He toys with the idea that Jesus came back as a ghost or something like one, a perfectly logical move if one shares Allison's belief (which I do not) that the dead sometimes communicate with the living. I don't think this is quite what he was hoping for, though, when he spoke of God's vindication of Jesus. He had his mind set on a more orthodox miracle, on the idea that Jesus was different that all the other people who have been allegedly seen after their deaths. Though this book has won my respect for Allison, I will be blunt in assessing his argument that the orthodox view cannot be disproved. When he argues it, he is essentially saying, "It looks like a duck, it quacks like a duck, but because we have not captured and dissected it, we may believe by faith that it is not a duck." In spite of this one flaw, Resurrecting Jesus is an excellent book. It is hardly an introductory text, but I would not hesitate to recommend it to someone familiar with the basics of New Testament scholarship. 3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Allison is Second to None By Stevie Jake I have said it before (in previous reviews) and I will say it again: Dale Allison is the one New Testament scholar that needs to be heeded. This is not an overstatement and Resurrecting Jesus renders this claim perfectly warranted. I will not go into the details of the book since previous reviewers have done an adequate job of that. However, I will continue to give Allison the praise he so deserves. I am personally quite interested, for a number of reasons, in New Testament studies. However, this does not mean that every book I delve into regarding NT studies will keep my interest. Allison, on the other hand, has been the one NT scholar that keeps my interest from cover to cover. I simply could not put the book down (and why would I want to!). His scholarship is the epitome of objectivity and honesty, and nowhere is this illuminated more in Resurrecting Jesus. Allison portrays the perfect amount of skepticism. He acknowledges that knowledge of history (e.g. the resurrection) is tentative and that we cannot arrive at conclusions beyond a reasonable doubt. He seems to steer a middle path between the illusion of certainty that plagues Christian apologists and the unnecessary abundance of doubts that plagues overly excessive skeptics. Allison is not out to please either of these extremes, nor anyone in between. Rather, it is clear he has set out to do objective history and come to the most reasonable conclusions possible. Whether Allison's conclusions are

welcomed by Christians or by skeptics is beside the point. The main point, in this writer's mind, is that Allison's book is the best and most truthful assessment of the resurrection of Jesus to be published. Anyone interested in the resurrection of Jesus would be foolish not to read this tome.⁷ of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Resurrection Grab Bag By Nick Peters Resurrecting Jesus is a book by Dale Allison that contrary to the title, only spends about half the book talking about the resurrection of Jesus. The rest of it is spent on various other topics. These others will be helpful to the student of the NT, but the main case is still the last half. Allison does believe that Jesus did bodily rise from the dead, but he doesn't think we can really make a strong case for it, at least certainly not as much as Habermas and Licona do. In fact, it can be a downside to Allison's approach that he decides to list his personal reasons why he would want the resurrection to be true throughout. Before really getting to that, I would also like to explain that reading Allison is a mixed bag. When he does great, it's something really good that's a helpful insight, but there are times that he seems to make a basic mistake that can make one wonder about how much some questions were really considered. For instance, Allison tells about the passage where Jesus says to hate your father and mother several times, but it never seems to dawn on him that Jesus is making a comparison statement. He is telling us that in comparison to our devotion to Jesus, our other obligations, including family obligations, must be secondary. Also, Allison in discussing the chapter on Hell says that it is hard to reconcile the view in Paul of salvation by faith and judgment by works. I find these quite easy to reconcile in fact. If you are in Christ, then you stake your identity in Him and His righteousness becomes yours. If you are not in Christ, then God can only judge you on one basis, your works. If those are not perfect, then they do not add up. Moving to the resurrection, Allison's desire to be humble could be getting in his way of really wanting to make a stand here or there. He does side with the resurrection being real, but it is in a sense reluctantly. Could it be that if he did not have any personal desire at all, which could be difficult to think about of course as none of us approach Jesus neutrally, then he would not want to make a stand? This is not to say that there are no valid insights in Allison's work. Allison has much on the nature of the body in Paul as well as the fact that we shouldn't assume the disciples would be grieving after the death of Jesus. Could they not just as much be angry? After all, they'd followed this guy for around three years and now he's been crucified and thus shown to be a fraud! They would have been shamed greatly in their society having put all that they had in the following of this one man who they had every reason to believe to be the Messiah. I find this to be an excellent point as we usually in the introspective conscience of the West look at the people in the Bible and think that they would have thought just like us. In reality, they didn't. Now of course, it could be the disciples were grieving but in reality, we just don't know. We can safely say there was a change in their behavior by looking at how they preached afterwards in contrast to knowing that they could meet the exact same fate as their proclaimed Messiah. Allison does state which sides he thinks are stronger, but at the same time doesn't seem willing to really enforce it strongly as he has a "What if?" approach in that there are some things that could possibly be. Of course there are possibilities, but we're interested in seeing actualities and what the evidence itself really has to say. Thus, I recommend this one, but I don't recommend it for beginners. I think it's far better for those who have sharpened their skills some on other areas as Allison will give you a lot to work through and think about. While I wish he would make a stronger case, we can be thankful for the case that has been made.

Jesus remains a popular figure in contemporary culture and Allison remains one of our best interpreters. He speaks around the country in a variety of venues on matters related to the study of the Historical Jesus. In his new book, he focuses on the historical Jesus and eschatology, concluding that the Jesus was not a Hellenistic wonder worker or teacher of pious morality but an apocalyptic prophet. In an opening chapter that is worth the price of admission, Allison astutely and engagingly captures the history of the search for the historical Jesus. He observes that many contemporary readings of Jesus shift the focus away from traditional theological, Christological, and eschatological concerns. In provocative fashion, He takes on not only the Jesus Seminar but also other Jesus interpreters such as N.T. Wright and Marcus Borg.

"This is the most interesting and illuminating piece of writing on the resurrection of Jesus that I have ever read." -Dr. Joel Marcus, Professor of New Testament Christian Origins, Duke Divinity School "Dale Allison is one of the very best Jesus scholars of our time. The six essays in this volume show him to be the master of the pertinent Gospel and early Jewish texts, modern biblical scholarship, and everything from patristics to modern psychology and theology. Moreover, they sparkle with his intellectual independence, fresh insights, and good judgment." Daniel J. Harrington, S.J., Weston Jesuit School of Theology, Cambridge, MA "Dale Allison is one of the very few scholars today to whom each of us must listen. Some think Jesus was bodily raised, some think resurrection is the explanation of encounters with Jesus after his death, and others think it is all balderdash. Resurrecting Jesus is one book that honest people must read. Belief in the resurrection, as Allison argues, is less a product of eschatological dissonance and more likely the cause of that dissonance, and resurrection language among Jews (as others have argued) transcends belief in the afterlife. This debate is not likely to die out soon and it will surely take place with Resurrecting Jesus in hand." Scot McKnight, Ph.D. Karl A. Olsson Professor in Religious Studies North Park University "In these six essays, Dale Allison addresses some of the most important issues in contemporary research on the historical Jesus. The essays consistently raise and

explore the theological issues that are related to the historical debates. Allison's breadth of knowledge, independence of judgment, and intellectual candor make these essays as stimulating as they are refreshing. The essays are a worthy companion volume to his earlier *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet*. Gregory E. Sterling, Associate Dean of the Faculty, Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins, The University of Notre Dame (Greg Sterling) "Professor Dale Allison's learned work offers an impressive contribution to the most important questions regarding Jesus and Christian origins. Rich with literary and historical detail, finely nuanced in its assessment of complicated and often very contentious issues, and here and there written from an autobiographical perspective, *Resurrecting Jesus* is a joy to read. Beginning students and learned scholars alike will gain much from this engaging book." Craig A. Evans, Payzant Distinguished Professor of New Testament, Acadia Divinity College, Wolfville, Nova Scotia (Craig Evans) "Dale Allison has given us a fine and penetrating new assessment of some vexatious old problems. With characteristic candour he has blown fresh air into the discussions of Jesus and his audiences, and the themes of judgement, the Torah and apocalyptic, not to mention the fantasy of a third quest. But above all, by drawing on widespread evidence of reports of post-mortem apparitions and responses to bereavement, he has broken new ground in the study of the claim that Jesus was raised from the dead. For its carefulness in respect of what an historian may or may not legitimately claim, as well as for its combination of vigour and rigour, this book is a delight. Very hard to put down!" David Catchpole, Professor Emeritus of Theological Studies, University of Exeter, UK (David Cathpole) "Dale Allison has been one of the most stimulating and provocative contributors to the contemporary debate about (the historical) Jesus. You may not agree with all his interpretations of motifs and texts, but you certainly cannot ignore them, since they are invariably backed by extensive knowledge of historical and social, textual and bibliographic data, and they challenge any reader to look afresh at the evidence, and often from a new angle. Here he dispels the myth of a 'no quest for Jesus' between 1907 and 1953, presses the implications of Jesus having said different things to different people, challenges the refusal of the very idea that Jesus could have believed in hell and the polarisation of the debate about Jesus' attitude to the law, and in an almost book length treatment of Jesus' resurrection dispels any easy assumption that the debate on Jesus' resurrection can be reduced to a sequence of simple either-ors. And all this with some fascinating excursions into the byways and cul-de-sacs of the quest and an engagingly fresh and self-critical honesty." James D.G. Dunn, Emeritus Lightfoot Professor of Divinity at the University of Durham, England. (James D.G. Dunn) "In this important collection of six essays, Allison (holding firm to his conception of Jesus as a millennial prophet) deals in a masterful way with several important critical issues and conundrums in the teaching of Jesus, the Gospels and modern Jesus scholarship, producing consistently competent, insightful and convincing results. In dialog with an amazing number of post-enlightenment authors and an unusually large array of patristic works, Allison exhibits a striking degree of critical candor and historical humility in pursuing his historical and exegetical inquiries, providing occasional autobiographical glimpses of his own intellectual struggles and faith commitment. Since excellent books are rare, I would counsel you to go, sell all that thou hast, and buy this one!" David E. Aune, Professor of New Testament, University of Notre Dame (David E. Aune) '...a truly amazing tour de force.'