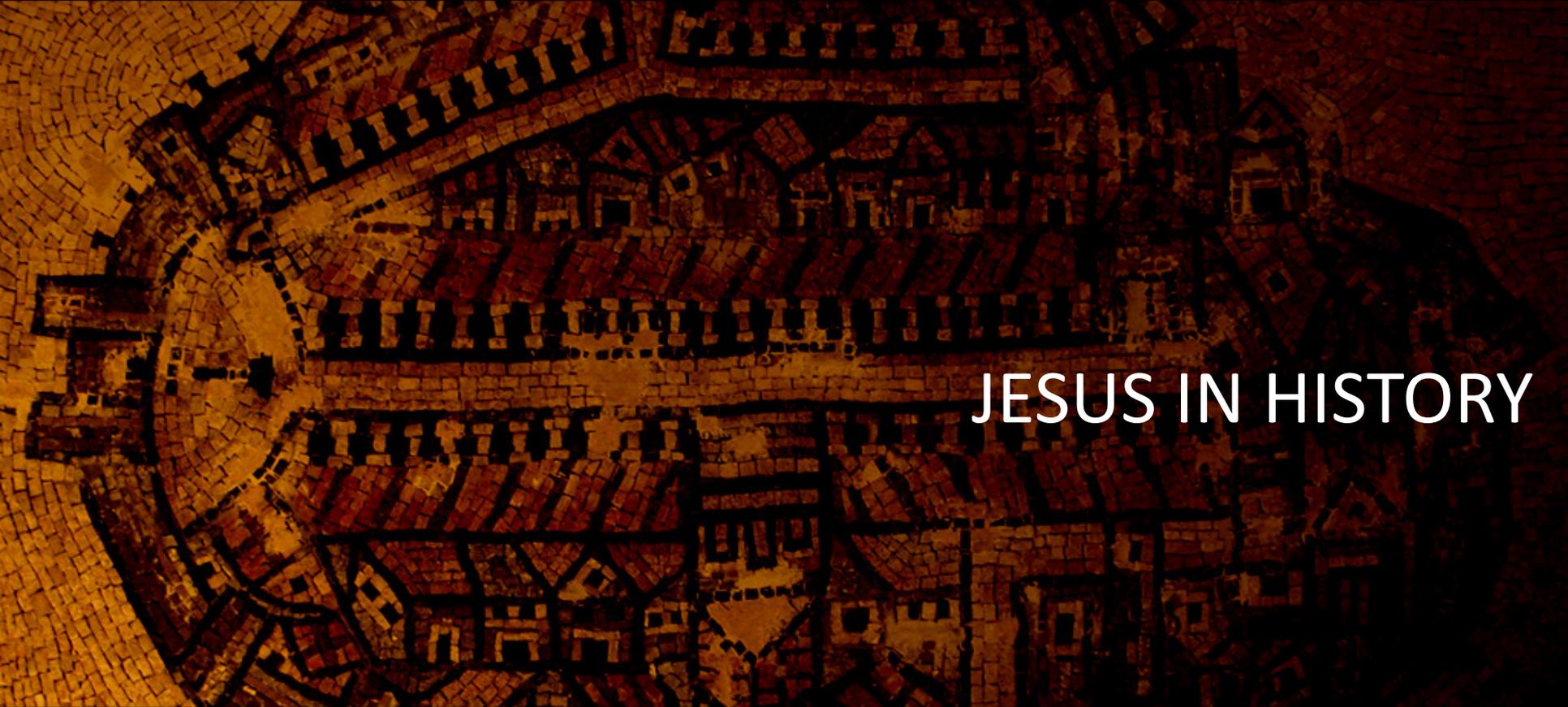


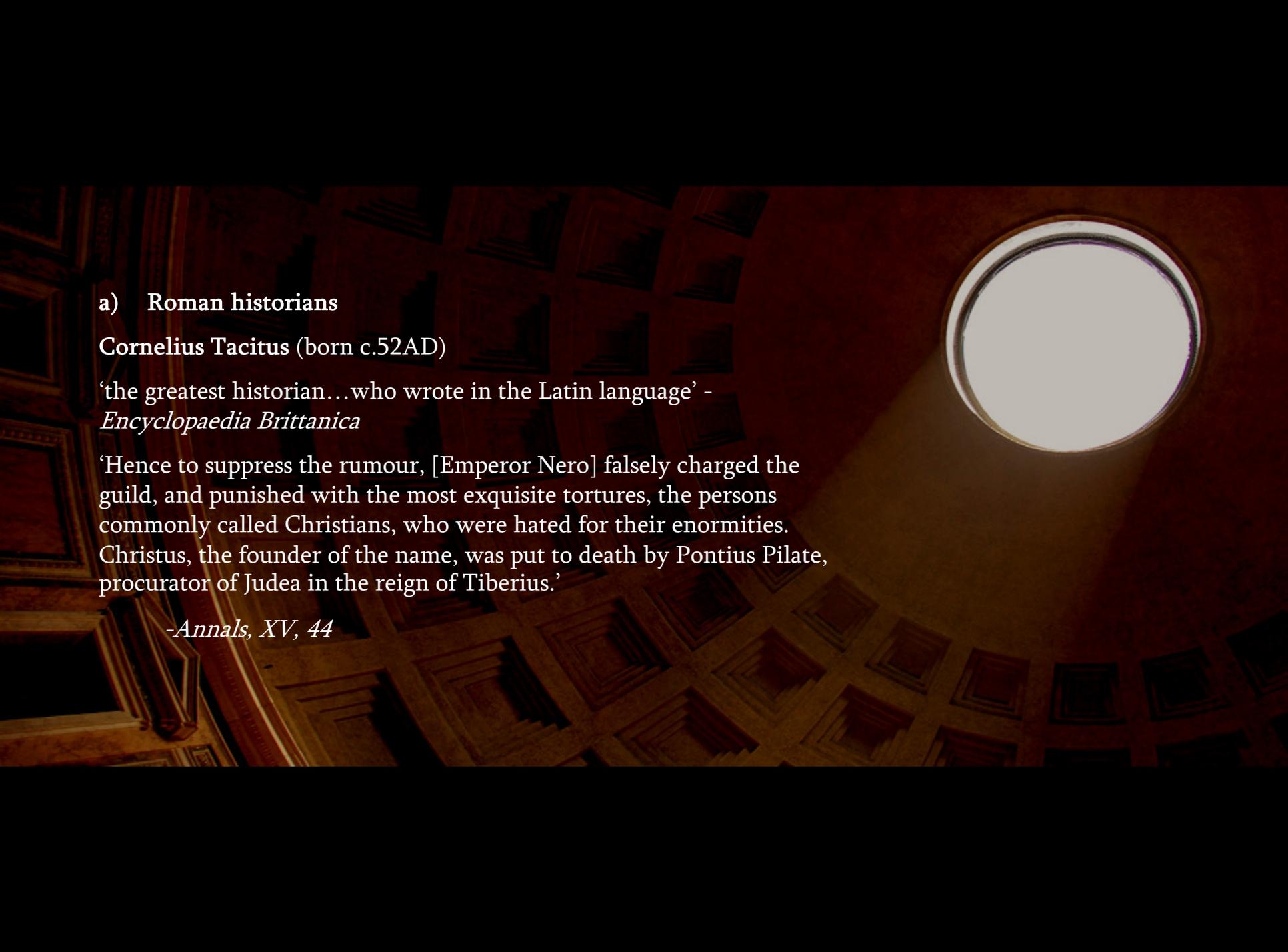
...if Christ has not been raised,
your faith is futile; you are still
in your sins [and] we
[Christians] are to be pitied
more than all men.

St Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:14-20





JESUS IN HISTORY

The background of the slide is a photograph of a domed interior, likely a classical or neoclassical building. The ceiling is a dome with a grid of square panels, creating a coffered effect. A large, circular skylight is visible on the right side of the dome, allowing light to enter. The overall color palette is warm, with shades of brown, tan, and gold.

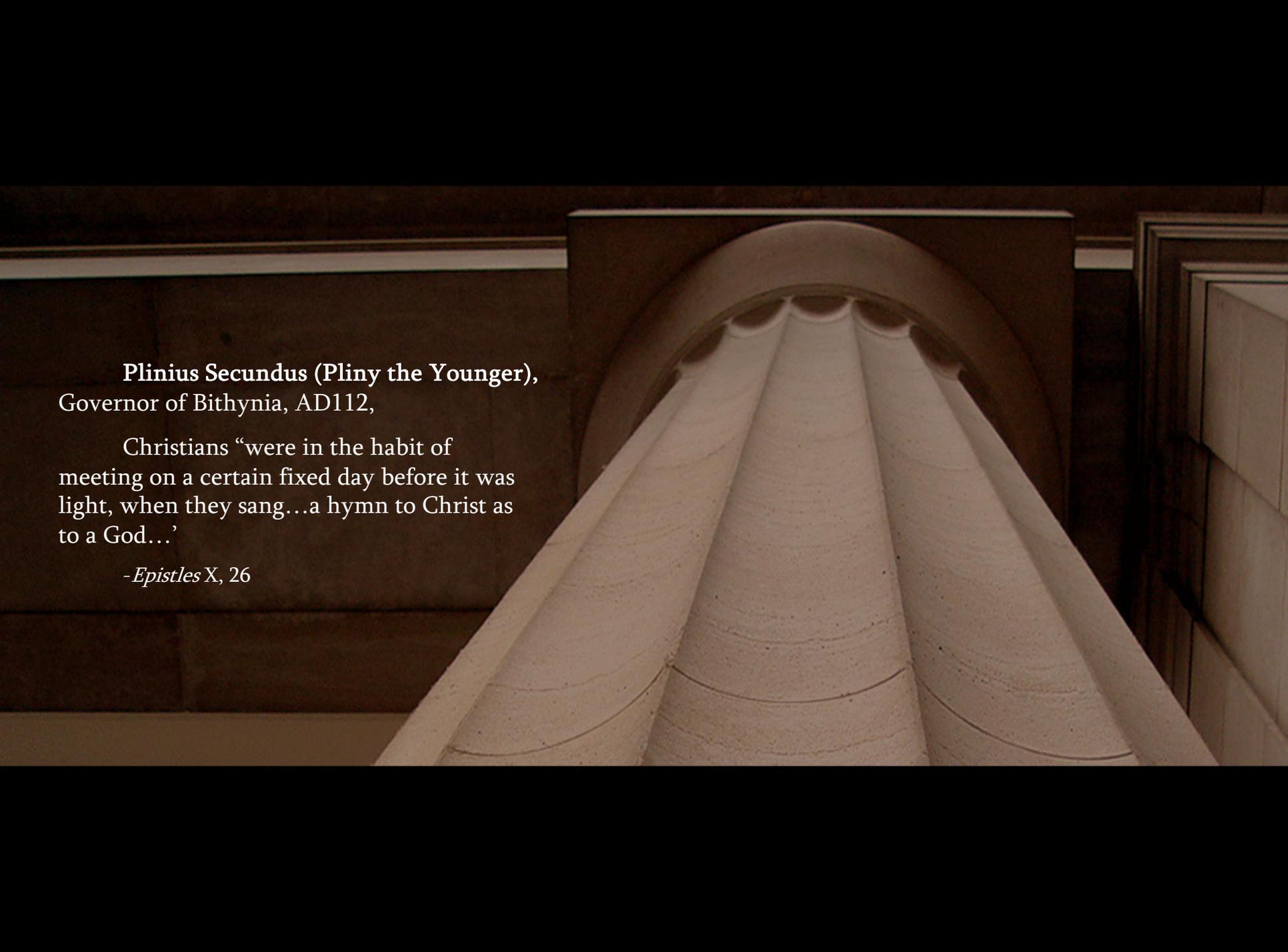
a) Roman historians

Cornelius Tacitus (born c.52AD)

‘the greatest historian...who wrote in the Latin language’ -
Encyclopaedia Britannica

‘Hence to suppress the rumour, [Emperor Nero] falsely charged the guild, and punished with the most exquisite tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities. Christus, the founder of the name, was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius.’

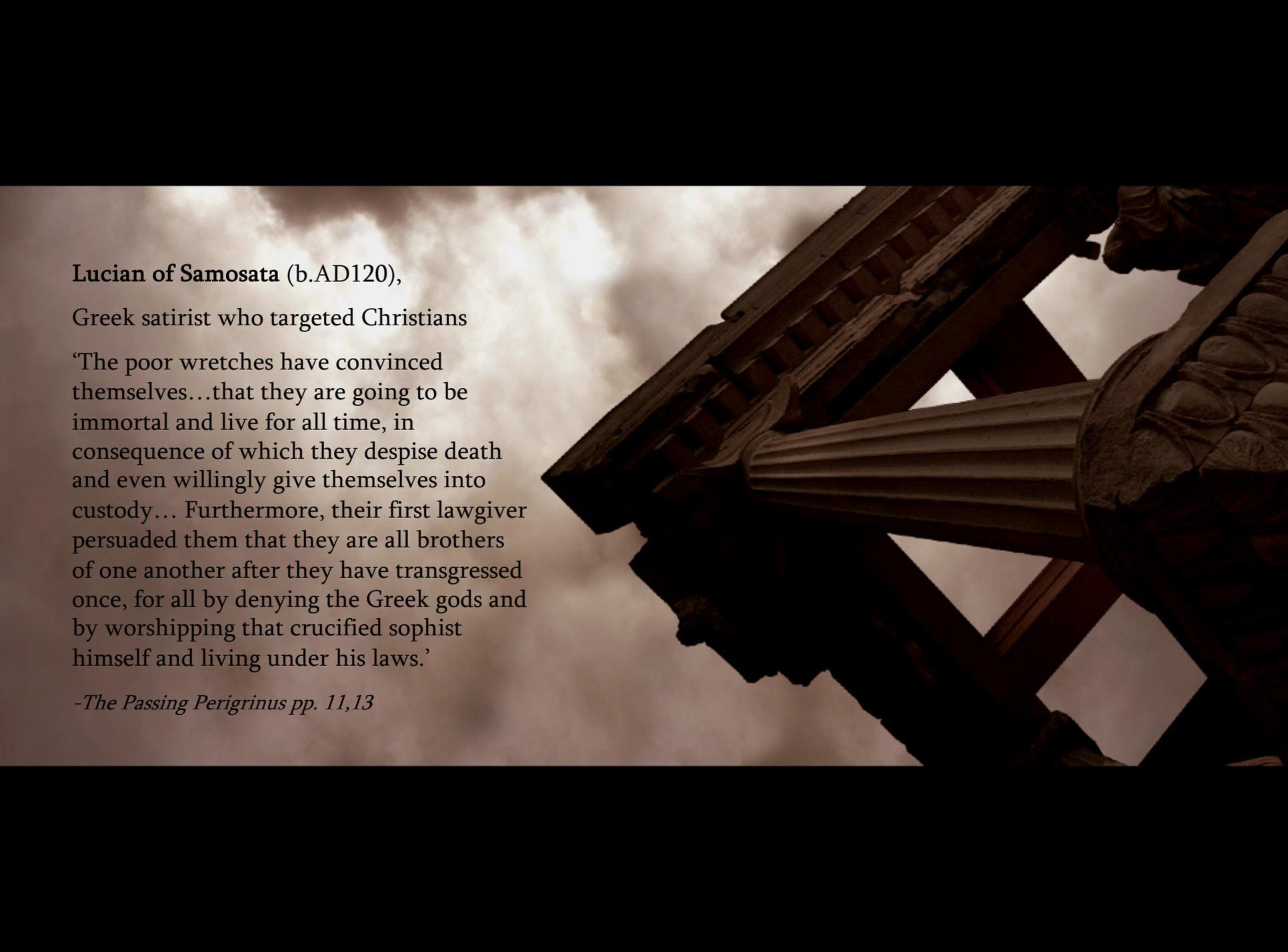
-Annals, XV, 44



Plinius Secundus (Pliny the Younger),
Governor of Bithynia, AD112,

Christians “were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang...a hymn to Christ as to a God...’

-Epistles X, 26

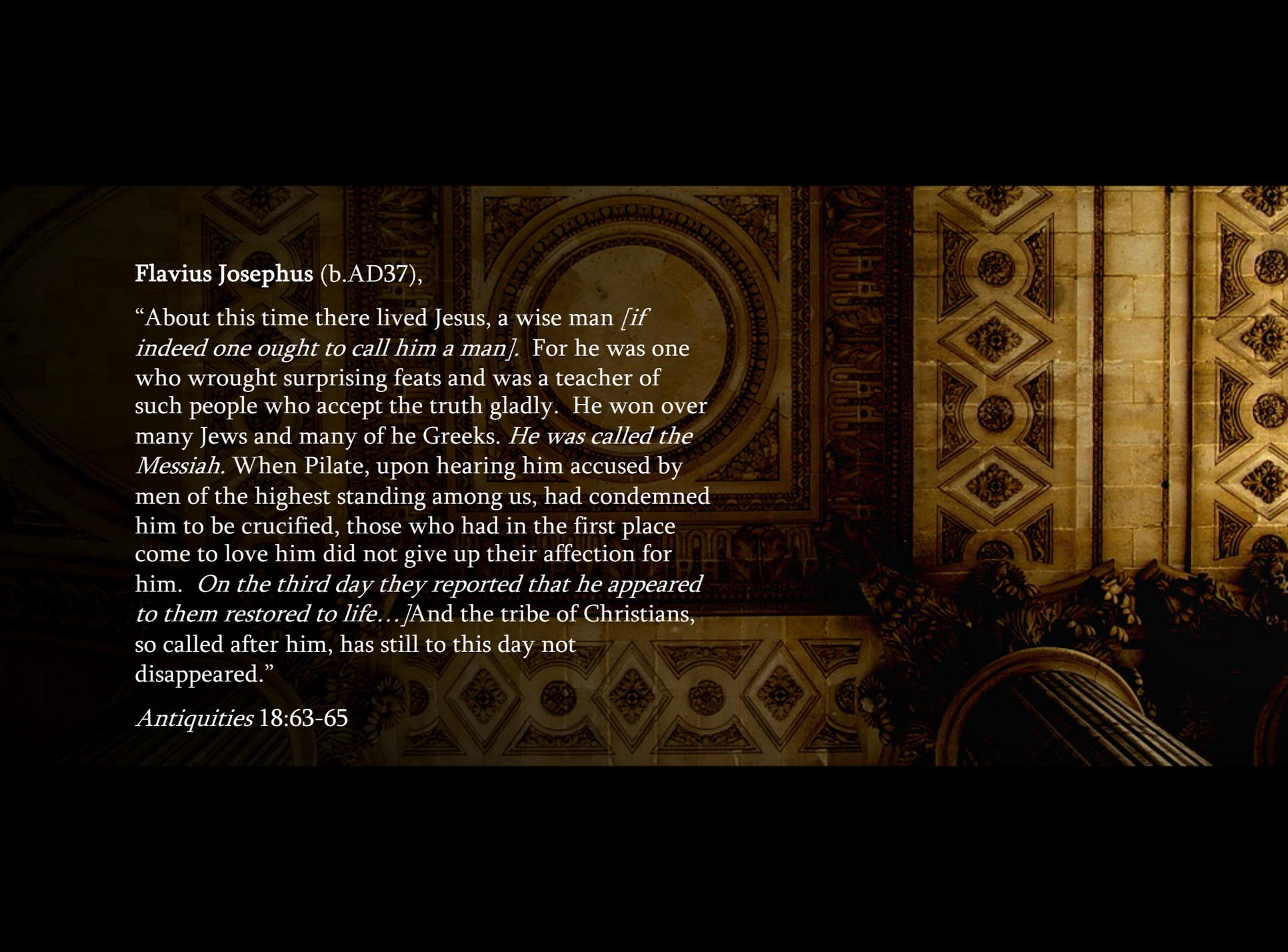


Lucian of Samosata (b.AD120),

Greek satirist who targeted Christians

‘The poor wretches have convinced themselves...that they are going to be immortal and live for all time, in consequence of which they despise death and even willingly give themselves into custody... Furthermore, their first lawgiver persuaded them that they are all brothers of one another after they have transgressed once, for all by denying the Greek gods and by worshipping that crucified sophist himself and living under his laws.’

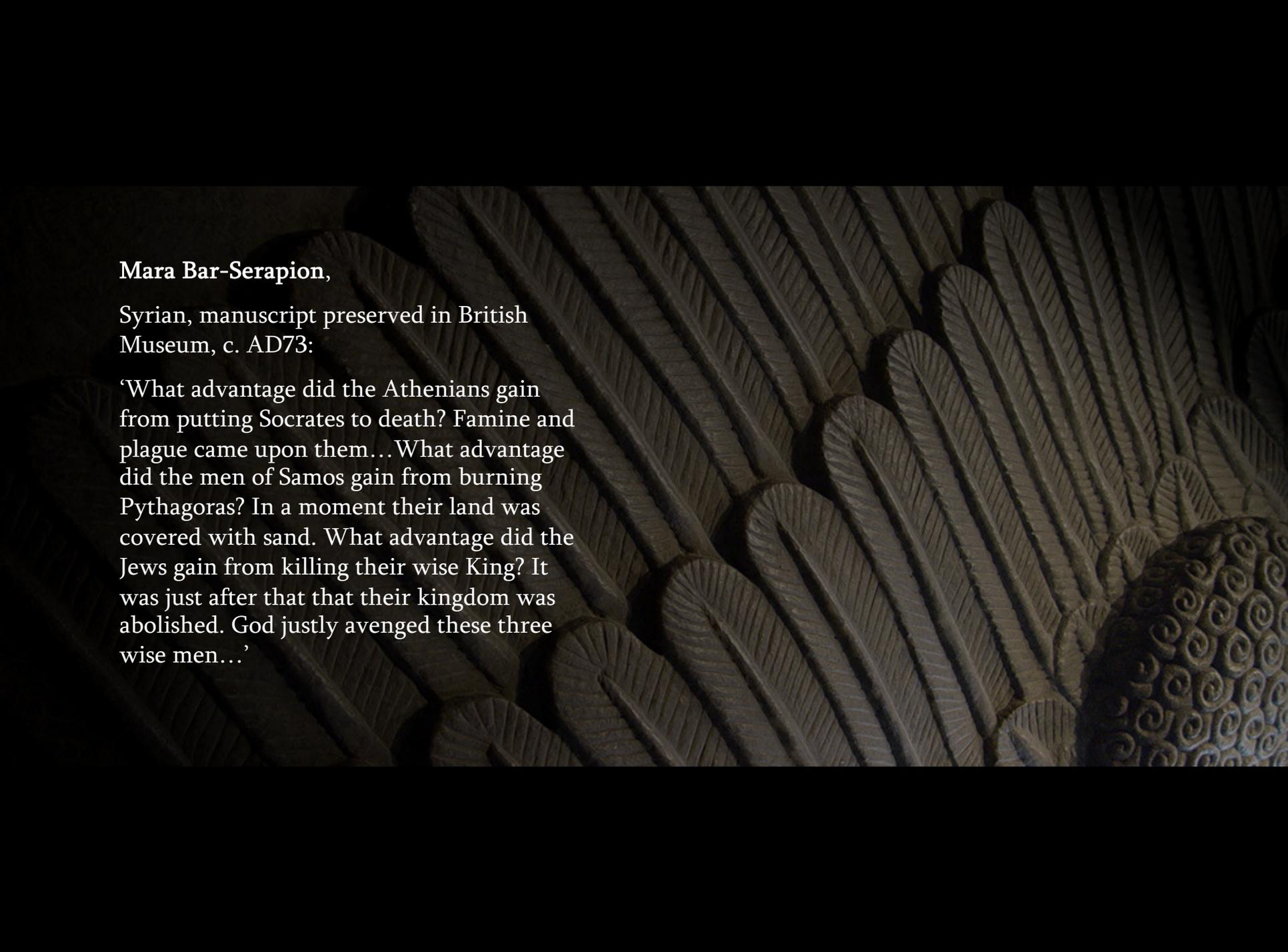
-The Passing Perigrinus pp. 11,13

The background of the slide is a photograph of an ornate classical interior. It features a wall with a large circular medallion in the center, surrounded by intricate carvings and decorative panels. To the right, there are columns with diamond-shaped panels containing floral motifs. In the foreground, the top of a classical chair with a curved back and decorative elements is visible. The overall lighting is warm and dramatic, highlighting the textures and details of the architecture.

Flavius Josephus (b.AD37),

“About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man [*if indeed one ought to call him a man*]. For he was one who wrought surprising feats and was a teacher of such people who accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. *He was called the Messiah*. When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing among us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love him did not give up their affection for him. *On the third day they reported that he appeared to them restored to life...* And the tribe of Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared.”

Antiquities 18:63-65



Mara Bar-Serapion,

Syrian, manuscript preserved in British Museum, c. AD73:

‘What advantage did the Athenians gain from putting Socrates to death? Famine and plague came upon them... What advantage did the men of Samos gain from burning Pythagoras? In a moment their land was covered with sand. What advantage did the Jews gain from killing their wise King? It was just after that that their kingdom was abolished. God justly avenged these three wise men...’

b) Jewish historians

The Talmud:

‘On the eve of Passover they hanged Yeshu (of Nazareth) and the herald went before him for forty days saying [he] is going forth to be stoned in that he hath practiced sorcery and beguiled and led astray Israel. Let everyone knowing aught in his defence come and plead for him. But they found naught in his defence and hanged him on the eve of Passover.’

(Babylonian Sanhedrin 43a)

- Yeshua in Hebrew = Jesus in Greek
- Hanged (on a cross) just before Passover feast (as Gospel says)
- Accused of sorcery: miracles? (Matthew 9:34)

c) Eyewitness sources

What did they gain?

Threatened

Tortured

Killed

What motive?



‘That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched - this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it...

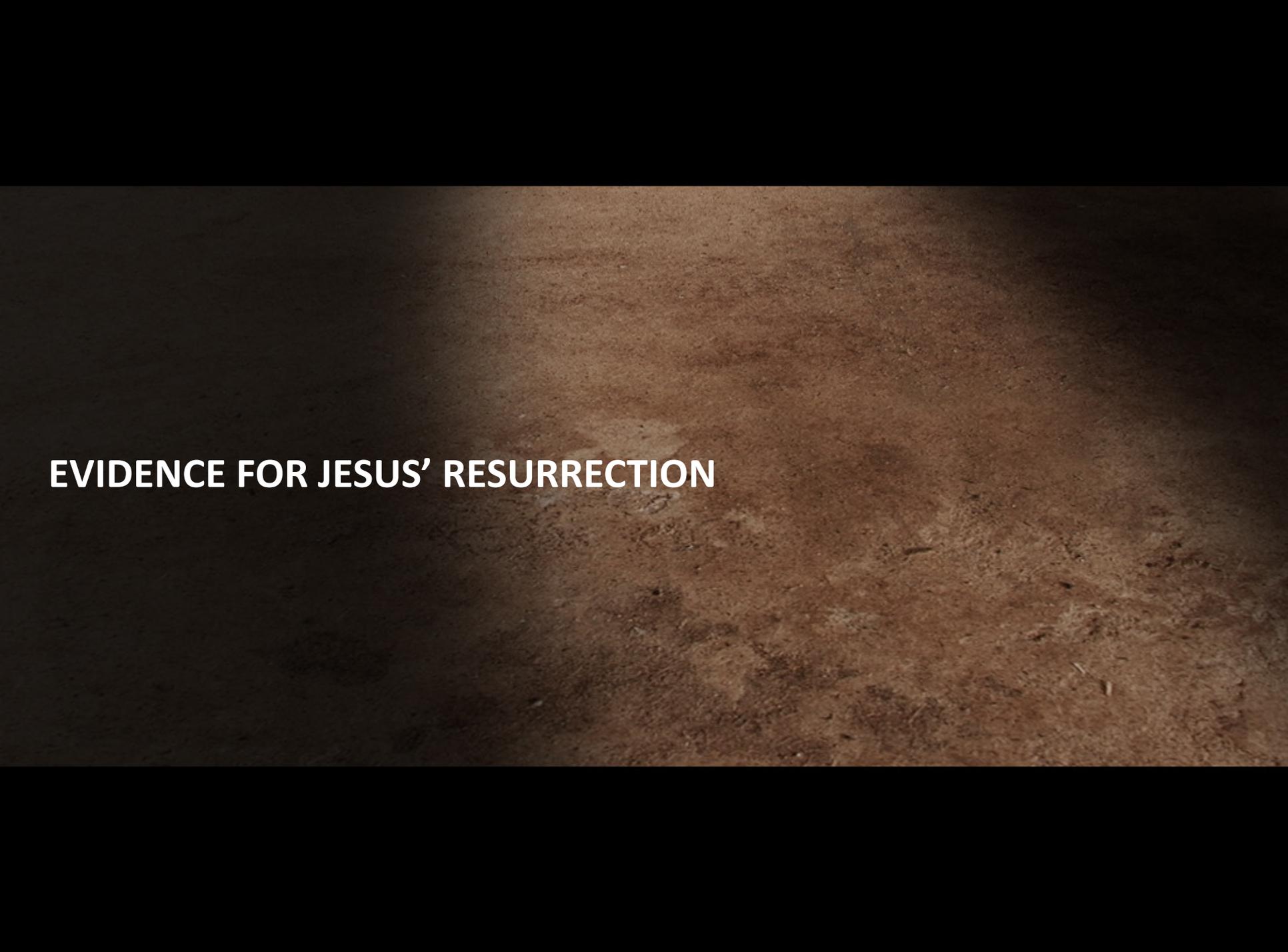
1 John 1:1-4



We proclaim to you what we
have seen and heard, so that you
also may have fellowship with us.
And our fellowship is with the
Father and with his Son, Jesus
Christ. We write this to make
your joy complete.'

1 John 1:1-4



The image shows a dark, textured surface, likely a tomb or a cave floor, with a spotlight effect illuminating the center. The text "EVIDENCE FOR JESUS' RESURRECTION" is overlaid in white, bold, uppercase letters on the left side of the illuminated area.

EVIDENCE FOR JESUS' RESURRECTION

Basic facts of Jesus' death and burial as the Gospels narrate them:

- Jesus was put to death by crucifixion on Friday afternoon
- A soldier speared him in the side. Blood and water came out (John 19:34)
- The body was wrapped in clean linen cloth (Matt 27:59)
- The body was placed in a solid rock tomb (Matt 27:60)
- A large stone was placed across the entrance to the tomb (Matthew 27:60)
- An official seal was affixed to the stone (Matt 27:60)
- A (Roman) guard was stationed to guard the tomb (Matt 27:66)



Basic facts of Jesus' resurrection as the Gospels narrate it:

- Early Sunday morning there was a great earthquake (Matt 28:1-2)
- An angel rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb (Matt 28:2)
- The guards shook for fear and “became like dead men”. (Matt 28:4)
- An angel told the women to tell the other disciples Jesus was alive and would meet them in Galilee. (Matt 28:7)
- Some of the guards reported the events to the Chief Priests. (Matt 28:11)
- The soldiers were bribed to say the disciples stole the body while they slept. (Matt 28:13-14)
- The soldiers were promised protection if this came to the attention of the governor. (Matt 28:14)



Who saw Jesus alive after His death?

Sunday am: Mary Magdalene and “the other Mary” (Matt 28:9-10)

The other women (Matthew 28:9-10)

Cleopas and his friend (Luke 24:13-31)

Sunday pm: Simon Peter (Luke 24:34)

10 apostles without Thomas (John 20:19-24)

Next Sunday pm: 11 apostles with Thomas (John 20:26-29)

Later: The seven by the Lake of Tiberias (John 21)

More than 500 believers (1 Cor 15:6)

11 apostles at the Ascension into heaven (Acts 1)

In vision: Saul/ Paul (Acts 9:3-6, 1 Cor 15:8)



Issues for critics of the Resurrection

A Roman seal - sign of Rome's authority - was broken.

A large stone was moved from the tomb entrance while a squad of guards stood watch.

Highly disciplined Roman guards fled their watch and were bribed by authorities to lie about what happened.

The Jerusalem authorities admitted that the tomb was empty.

The grave clothes were neatly folded. (John 20:6-7)

Jesus subsequently appeared to more than 500 witnesses. (1 Cor 15)

Women were the first witnesses of the empty tomb – but legally unable to give evidence in a Jewish court.



Issues for critics of the Resurrection – *continued*

The disciples displayed cowardly behaviour at the time of the crucifixion. e.g. Peter denied Jesus three times. Disciples fled the scene of His arrest.

The disciples did not expect Jesus to rise and were initially sceptical.

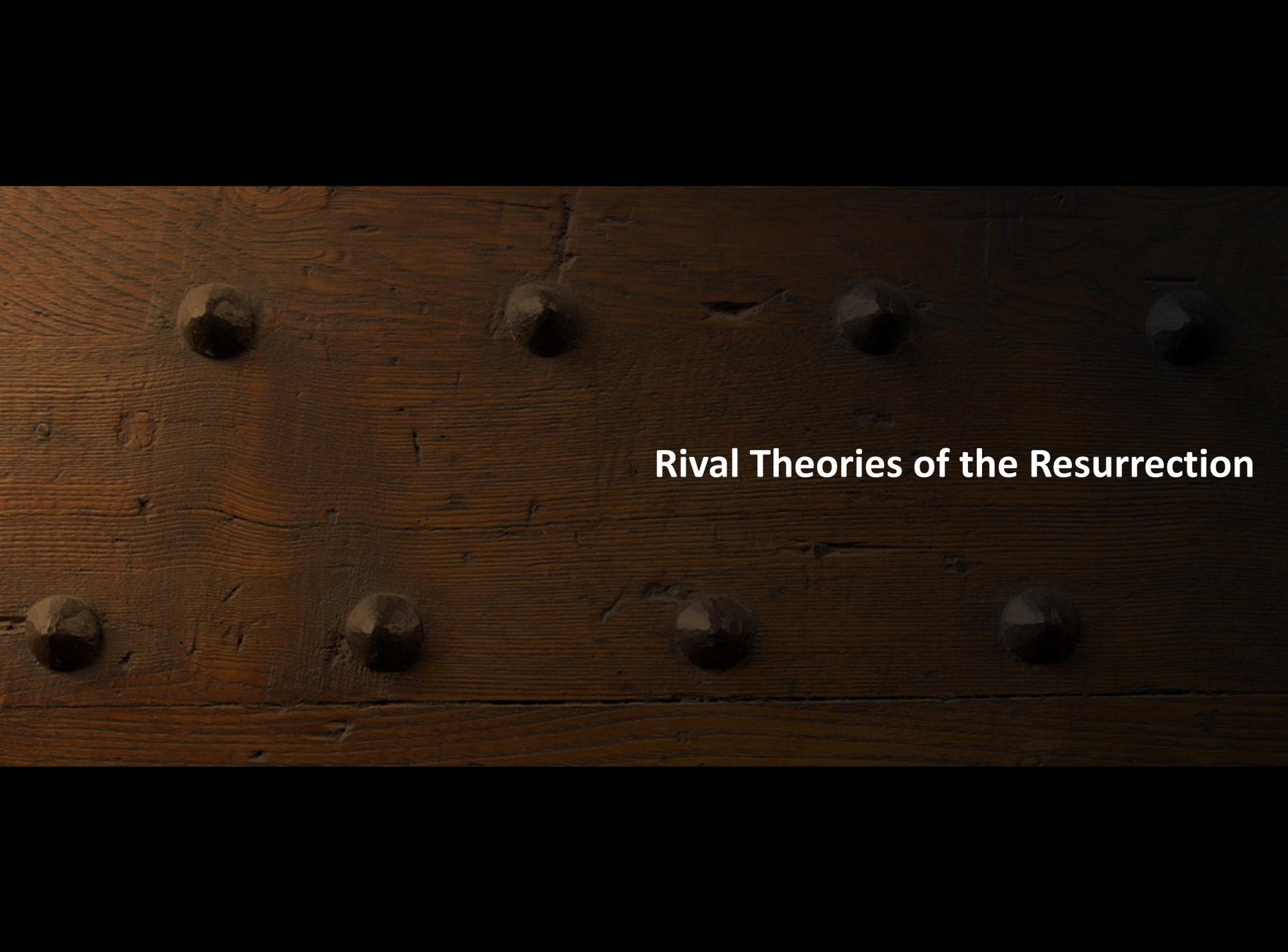
The disciples preached at the empty tomb in Jerusalem just weeks later.

The disciples were willing to die for their belief in the resurrection.

The resurrection message was central to the New Testament and to the preaching of the early Christian church.

The early Christian church grew rapidly despite fierce persecution.





Rival Theories of the Resurrection

Rival Theories of the Resurrection

Swoon Theory – He fainted on the cross and woke later

Conspiracy Theory – the disciples and others faked it

Hallucination Theory – the witnesses imagined they saw Jesus

Theft Theory – the disciples stole the dead body and made up the story



Problems with the Swoon theory

Roman soldiers were practiced at crucifixion and took special care with rebels.

A Roman soldier checked Jesus was dead, and so did not break His legs.

John, an eyewitness, saw blood and water come from Jesus' wounded side.

The body was encased in sheets and entombed.

How could He recover fast enough to overpower a squad of Roman guards?

Jesus was severely beaten. How could He look well at His many appearances?



Problems with the Conspiracy Theory

None of the apostles "broke" under torture to deny the story.

What was their motive for such a lie? Why would they die for it?

At first the disciples were sceptical, and only believed later.

Their lives were transformed.

If the resurrection was a lie, the authorities could have produced the corpse and proved it a fraud. They had the power and motivation.

The disciples could not have successfully proclaimed the resurrection in Jerusalem if it had been a lie.



Problems with the Hallucination Theory

An individual may be hypnotised for a short time, but Jesus appeared at so many different times and places, and once to more than 500 people who knew Him.

Hallucination is a disorder of perception, often linked to drugs or psychiatric illness. Why would so many suffer it at once?

The disciples touched Him, spoke with Him, saw Him eat.

The disciples did not expect His resurrection and did not even believe it at first.

A hallucination-based story could be easily exposed by producing the body.

Hallucination would not explain the empty tomb.



Problems with the Theft Theory

Matthew exposed bribery of the Roman guards.

Why did no-one question their testimony when it has obvious holes?

1. How could they describe an event that happened while they were asleep?
2. Roman soldiers who fell asleep on duty were executed.
3. How did they all sleep through the moving of a large stone right nearby?

How did depressed disciples find the courage to steal the body from soldiers?

Would thieves neatly fold the grave clothes?

Why would they fake the story, if they didn't yet even believe in resurrection?

Why risk your life to tell a lie?



- *EXECUTED*
- *EYEWITNESSES*
- *EMPTY TOMB*
- *EARLY*

Professor C.S. Lewis

You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit on Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call Him Lord and God.”

YouTube

- William Lane Craig
- Michael Licona
- Bart Ehrman (against)
- *Risen*
- James Bond Big Questions Grenville Kent