

KS3 Assessment: Crucifixion and Resurrection

Although Christians believe in one God, they believe God reveals Himself in three distinct ways. This belief is known as the **Trinity** and can be described as:

God the **Father** - creator of the universe.

God the **Son** - becoming human as Jesus to be sacrificed for our sins.

God the **Holy Spirit** - power sent by God through Jesus for Christians.

In the New Testament it is written: 'The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us' (John 1:14) - the **Incarnation**. Christians believe that Jesus is God who assumed a human form to come to Earth through the **Virgin Birth** to teach **God's Commandments** of 'love your God' and 'love your neighbour', suffer and die for our sins, and return from death to show humanity that only through Jesus can one reach God.

Jesus' **ministry** of preaching and miracles lasted for three years and ended when he was arrested, trialled, and convicted of **blasphemy** by the Jewish religious authorities - Sanhedrin - for claiming that he was the Son of God - a charge he did not deny (Luke 22:70). The Sanhedrin handed him over to the Roman governor Pontius Pilate. Pilate wanted to release him, but the crowd warned him that if he did so he was no friend of Caesar as he was setting free a Jewish rebel. Jesus was found guilty and was **crucified** to death on Friday.

Christians believe that Jesus had to die because without Jesus' death humanity could not be reconciled with God and enter Heaven, as humanity had separating itself from Him through the **Original Sin**. Jesus' sacrificial death would **atone** ('make up for') that separation. On the Cross Jesus forgave the two thieves crucified next to him and told them they would soon join him in Heaven. Just before he died, Jesus witnessing God's anger as a dark storm over the sky, said 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing' (Luke 23: 24).

According to the New Testament, early on Sunday morning, two of Jesus' followers - his mother and Mary Magdalene - visited Jesus' tomb in a cave to anoint his body. However, Jesus' body was not there. Two angels appeared to the women and told them that Jesus had risen from the dead - **resurrected**. The New Testament says that Jesus appeared during the next forty days to his disciples and other believers. In most of the Resurrection appearances Jesus was not immediately recognised. However, the stories all speak of how Jesus appeared to them in the **flesh** and not as a ghost. Jesus told those whom he visited that he had risen from the dead.

According to St Paul, the Resurrection is the most important Christian belief: 'And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead... For as in Adam all die, so in Christ will be made alive' (Corinthians 15:14, 20, 22). The belief in the Resurrection is important for Christians because:

- i. Shows Christians that Jesus is the Son of God.
- ii. Shows Christians that life after death is real.
- iii. Gives Christians confidence in the face of death as they will be resurrected if they accept Jesus.
- iv. Inspires Christians to live life in the way God wants them to so they can remain in His presence in this life and the next.
- v. Shows Christians how much God loves them.

Some Christians believe the body will be restored to life by physical resurrection, and for this reason they are against cremation. Other Christians believe that the resurrection will be spiritual. When Jesus was questioned about the idea of resurrection he said: 'When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage' (Mark 12:25). The new mode of existence would be different from the earthly one. St Paul tried to explain this: 'The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable... it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body' (Corinthians 15:44, 44).