Yesterday I started to answer a question from a reader who pointed out that just as the existence of Jesus is multiply attested, so too is Jesus’ resurrection. And so if *one* is established as historical, doesn’t the other one *also* have to be seen as historical? And if one is considered non-historical, doesn’t that show that the other is probably also non-historical?

These are great questions, but I think the answer to both of them is “no.” Yesterday I showed why multiple attestation strongly supports the existence of Jesus. Some readers objected to that, but I should reiterate – this is simply a common sense principle that all of us use every day to decide if something happened (say, what happened at lunch yesterday). Today I want to show why multiple attestation can *not* be used to support the resurrection of Jesus.

I begin by pointing out something that hasn’t occurred to a lot of people, but is nonetheless a fundamental point. History is not the past.

This may come as a surprise, but here’s the deal. The “past” is everything that has happened before now. “History” is what we can establish – in one way or another – as having happened before now. Trillions and trillions of things have happened before this moment. They are all in the past. But historians do not have access to far more than 99.99% of those things. What historians have access to is what we call history – things that we can show probably happened.

FOR THE REST OF THIS POST, log in as a Member. If you don’t belong yet, JOIN NOW, OR YOU MAY NEVER KNOW!!!

You need to be logged in to see this part of the content. Please Login to access.

Historians and the Problem of Miracle
Multiple Attestation for Jesus