

1,800-Year-Old Image of Jesus Found in Ancient Tomb

A stunning discovery from the heart of ancient Christianity is drawing worldwide attention after archaeologists uncovered a remarkably preserved image of Jesus in what was once the city of Nicaea.

According to reports from The Christian Post, researchers excavating an ancient burial site near the modern Turkish city of Iznik, Turkey, uncovered a third-century fresco depicting Christ as the Good Shepherd. Experts believe the artwork is among the earliest known depictions of Jesus and one of the best-preserved examples from Christianity's earliest centuries.

The fresco was found inside a family tomb within the Hisardere necropolis, an ancient cemetery dating back to the Roman era. Hidden within the sealed burial chamber, the artwork remained protected from the elements for centuries, allowing its colors and intricate details to survive far longer than researchers typically find.

The image portrays Jesus carrying a sheep across His shoulders, a powerful symbol rooted in Scripture. Unlike many familiar artistic representations that emerged centuries later, this depiction presents Christ as youthful and clean-shaven, clothed in garments consistent with the Roman world of the time.



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The discovery offers a fascinating glimpse into how some of the earliest believers visualized Christ long before the iconic portrayals that would later become commonplace throughout Christian history.

In John 10:11, Jesus declared, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” During an era when followers of Christ often faced persecution and uncertainty, the shepherd symbolized protection, guidance and sacrificial love.

Researchers believe the fresco dates to the early-to-mid third century, decades before Christianity gained legal recognition within the Roman Empire. As a result, the discovery provides a rare look into the faith and worship practices of believers who lived before Christianity became a dominant force throughout the ancient world.

The location of the find adds another layer of historical significance. Ancient Nicaea would later become the site of the First Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, a gathering that helped establish foundational Christian doctrine and produced what would become known as the Nicene Creed.



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Researchers also uncovered additional tombs, artwork and archaeological evidence throughout the site, helping piece together a broader picture of Christian life during a pivotal period in church history. These discoveries continue to reveal how believers lived, worshipped and expressed their faith amid the challenges of the Roman era.

Nearly 1,800 years after it was painted, the image still points to the same truth that has encouraged believers for years: Jesus is the Good Shepherd who leads, protects and cares for His flock. Though civilizations rise and fall, the message of the gospel continues to endure—preserved not only in stone and pigment, but in the hearts of those who follow Him.

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