

The Significance of the Resurrection

Some of the theological significance of the resurrection is addressed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15. In that chapter Paul answers four basic questions: (1) Will there be a resurrection of the dead? (2) What will be the nature of the resurrected body? (3) What will happen to those who are alive when Jesus comes again? and (4) What are the practical bearings of this doctrine?

Along with answering these questions Paul affirms that the resurrection of Christ is a historical fact and that there were many eyewitnesses to the fact (15:1-11). Paul then asserts that the resurrection of Christ from the dead is the bed-rock foundation of Christianity (15:12-19).

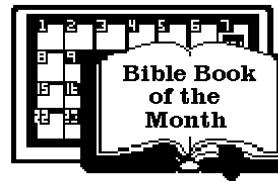
Paul said in the opening verses of Romans that the resurrection of Christ proved him to be the Son of God with power. This was the ultimate proof that Jesus was who He claimed to be and that His teaching was sanctioned by the Lord Almighty Himself!

Paul assures us that the Lord's resurrection is the guarantee that our bodies will also be raised. 1 Corinthians 15:22 and John 5:28, 29 teach clearly that all men will be raised from the dead, the wicked as well as the righteous. *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad"* (2 Corinthians 5:10).

By raising Christ from the dead, God gave to each of us both a promise and a pledge that we will *all* be raised from the dead and that He will judge all men by Christ (Acts 17:30, 31).

SOME QUESTIONS:

1. Who all contributed evidence that Jesus really did die?
2. Why did the soldiers brake the legs of those crucified?
3. When did the women buy their spice to anoint the body of Jesus?
4. Name some important matters that are attached to "the first day of the week."
5. What were the women discussing as they approached the tomb?
6. If Jesus had not been resurrected, do you think they could have anointed his body as they intended?
7. How was the "young man" dressed? What was his message?
8. What mixture of emotions do you think may have surged within the women as they hurriedly left the tomb?
9. What does Jesus' resurrection guarantee to us?
10. Thought Question: The preaching of the resurrection took center stage among the apostles in the Book of Acts, why?



Mark

Lesson #4

The Resurrection

Mark 16:1-11 — The New King James Version

1. Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. 2 Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. 3 And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. 5 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. 6 But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. 7 "But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you." 8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

9 Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. 10 She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. 11 And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe. (NKJV)

The Proof of Jesus' Death

In order that there might be no doubt about the Lord's resurrection it was necessary for even the enemies of Christ to pronounce him dead.

The soldiers decided to hasten the death of the crucified by breaking their legs (so they could not stand upright on their nailed feet and get breath) and thus die of asphyxiation. They broke the legs of the two thieves because they were not yet dead, but did not break the legs of Jesus because he was already dead (John 19:31-34). Thus one soldier thrust his spear in his side under his rib cage and assured his death.

Pilate would not give the body up to Joseph of Arimathea for burial until he had been assured by the centurion in charge that Jesus really was dead (Mark 15:42-45).

The Jews contributed to the confirmation of his death by their deeds described in Matthew 27:62-64.

Since Jesus had been crucified by the Romans in plain view of both Gentiles and Jews, of both disciples and non-disciples, of both friends and enemies, we today can be certain that no mistake was made in the matter: Jesus did really die! (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Hebrews 2:9; Romans 5:8).

The Text — 16:1-11

Verse 1. The Sabbath ended at sundown (Saturday) and that allowed the women to then buy spice that they might go early the next morning to anoint the body of Jesus.

Verse 2. Parts of the city in the shadow of the Mount of Olives had not yet seen the sun, some parts of the city had. There's no doubt that the resurrection took place on a Sunday, the first day of the week.

Jesus made his first appearance to his disciples on the first day of the week. He sent the Holy Spirit on the Apostles on the first day of the week (Acts 2:1-4). The church was established on the first day of the week. The Lord's Supper is to be eaten on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1,2). The first day of the week is the only day authorized by the Bible as the day on which the Lord's supper is to be eaten.

Verse 3. The women are discussing how they will get the large stone rolled away from the entrance. Apparently they're unaware of the guard that had been posted, and if nothing unusual had have happened the guard would not have let them have entrance into the tomb anyway.

But as it is, the guard, probably at this very moment, is hurrying into town with the news of an angel rolling the stone away! (See Matthew 28:11-15).

Verse 4. The women approach the tomb finding the large stone block the doorway had been rolled away.

Verse 5. Such tombs had a main chamber and usually several recessed niches around the sides for bodies to be laid. This was a new tomb that contained no other bodies. The angel they saw was sitting on the right

side dressed in a long white robe. In Revelation (19:7, 8) the robes of the redeemed are said to be fine white linen, and symbolizes their purity and righteousness.

The women here are alarmed when they see the angel. The guards earlier had "*become as dead men*" when they saw him. They may have fainted or frozen still in fright.

Verse 6. The one the women were seeking was not there! They're invited to view the precise spot where he lay, and could undoubtedly see the empty burial clothes and the napkin that had covered his face neatly folded and laying to the other side (John 20:7)

The principle message of the angel, "*He is risen!*" Jesus had foretold his death and resurrection several times but his disciples did not grasp the reality of his disclosure until after the eveny itself.

Verse 7. The angel instructs the women to go quickly (Matthew) and tell the disciples and that Jesus would go before them into Galilee and they would all see Him there. Here we see that these women were the first mortals to have the glorious blessing of proclaiming the resurrection!

Verse 8. Quickly they go their way, saying nothing to anyone along the way, still amazed and trembling themselves. Imagine the mixture of emotions stirring within them, "*great joy*" and "*fear*."

Verse 9. The Bible records some thirteen distinct appearances of Jesus to various individuals and groups. Our lesson today deals only with his very first appearance, to one Mary Magdalene. She had been one who experienced the great miraculous work of Jesus in her life.

Verse 10. She faithfully reported the Lord's appearance to her to His disciples as they grieved and wept, but when they heard her message that Jesus was alive and she had seen Him they did not believe. It would take a good deal of evidence before they became convinced. They were as skeptical at first as anyone who could be found.

By the end of the day Jesus had appeared not only to Mary Magdalene, but to other women also as they returned from the tomb. He appeared to two on the road to Emmaus who hastened back to town to convey their good news. And as these were all gathered in a locked room (minus Thomas) Jesus himself appeared to the apostles.