

The Burial of Jesus

This all happened on Friday, the day of preparation, the day before the Sabbath. As evening approached, a rich man named Joseph, who was from the town of Arimathea in Judea and was an honored member of the high council, although he had not agreed with the decision and actions of the other religious leaders. He was a good and righteous man and was waiting for the Kingdom of God to come. He had been a secret disciple of Jesus because he feared the Jewish leaders. Joseph took a risk and went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Pilate couldn't believe that Jesus was already dead, so he called for the Roman officer and asked if he had died yet. The officer confirmed that Jesus was dead, so Pilate gave permission and Joseph came and took the body down from the cross and he then wrapped it in a long sheet of linen cloth and laid it in a new tomb that had been carved out of rock. With him came Nicodemus, the man who had come to Jesus at night. He brought about seventy-five pounds of perfumed ointment made from myrrh and aloes. Following Jewish burial custom, they wrapped Jesus' body with the spices in long sheets of linen cloth. The place of crucifixion was near a garden, where there was a new tomb, never used before. And so, because it was the day of preparation for the Jewish Passover and since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there. Then he rolled a stone in front of the entrance.

As His body was taken away, the women from Galilee followed and saw the tomb where His body was placed. Then they went home and prepared spices and ointments to anoint His body. But by the time they were finished the Sabbath had begun, so they rested as required by the law.

The next day, on the Sabbath, the leading priests and Pharisees went to see Pilate. They told him, "Sir, we remember what that deceiver once said while He was still alive: 'After three days I will rise from the dead.' So we request that you seal the tomb until the third day. This will prevent His disciples from coming and stealing His body and then telling everyone He was raised from the dead! If that happens, we'll be worse off than we were at first."

Pilate replied, "Take guards and secure it the best you can." So they sealed the tomb and posted guards to protect it.

** The Combined Gospels Resurrection Account **

Saturday evening, when the Sabbath ended, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome went out and purchased burial spices so they could anoint Jesus' body. Very early on Sunday morning, just at sunrise, they along with Joanna, Mary the mother of James and several other women went to the tomb taking the spices they had prepared.

Suddenly there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled aside the stone, and sat on it. His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint.

On the way, Mary and Salome were asking each other, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" But as they arrived, they looked up and saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled aside. Mary Magdalene left and ran and found Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. She said, "They have taken the Lord's body out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put Him!"

After she had left, the other women then entered the tomb, but they didn't find the body of the Lord Jesus. As they stood there puzzled, two men suddenly appeared to them, on the right side, clothed in dazzling robes. The women were terrified and bowed with their faces to the ground. Then the men asked, "Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? He isn't here! He is risen from the dead! Remember what He told you back in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and that He would rise again on the third day. He is risen from the dead, just as He said would happen. Look, this is where they laid His body. Now go and tell His disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see Him there, just as He told you before He died." Remember what I have told you." Then they remembered that He had said this.

The women fled from the tomb, trembling and bewildered and they said nothing to anyone because they were too frightened. They then rushed back from the tomb to tell His eleven disciples—and everyone else—what had happened. It was Mary Magdalene first, then Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and several other women who told the apostles what had happened. But the story sounded like nonsense to the men, so they didn't believe it. However, Peter and the other disciple (John) jumped up and started out for the tomb. They were both running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn't go in. Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, while the cloth that had covered Jesus' head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings. Then the disciple who had reached the tomb first (John) also went in, and he saw and believed—for until then they still hadn't understood the Scriptures that said Jesus must rise from the dead. Then they went home again, wondering what had happened.

Appearances of the Resurrected Christ

To Mary Magdalene at the tomb (*John 20:11-18; 116:9*).

After returning, Mary was standing outside the tomb crying and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" the angels asked her. "Because they have taken away my Lord," she replied, "and I don't know where they have put Him."

She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognize Him. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who are you looking for?" She thought He was the gardener. "Sir," she said, "if you have taken Him away, tell me where you have put Him, and I will go and get Him." "Mary!" Jesus said. She turned to Him and cried out, "Rabboni!" (which is Hebrew for "Teacher").

"Don't cling to Me," Jesus said, "for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find My brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, "I have seen the Lord!" Then she gave them His message.

To the Women on the road (*Matthew 28:8-10*)

The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to give the disciples the angel's message. And as they went, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they ran to Him, grasped His feet, and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid! Go tell My brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see Me there."

To the disciples on the road to Emmaus (*Luke 24:13-32*)

That same day two of Jesus' followers were walking to the village of Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem. As they walked along they were talking about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things, Jesus Himself suddenly came and began walking with them. But God kept them from recognizing Him. He asked them, "What are you discussing so intently as you walk along?" They stopped short, sadness written across their faces. Then one of them, Cleopas, replied, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem who hasn't heard about all the things that have happened there the last few days." "What things?" Jesus asked. "The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth," they said. "He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and He was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people. But our leading priests and other religious leaders handed Him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified Him. We had hoped He was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel. This all happened three days ago. "Then some women from our group of His followers were at His tomb early this morning, and they came back with an amazing report. They said His body was missing, and they had seen angels who told them Jesus is alive! Some of our men ran out to see, and sure enough, His body was gone, just as the women had said." Then Jesus said to them, "You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. Wasn't it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering His glory?" Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. By this time they were nearing Emmaus and the end of their journey. Jesus acted as if He were going on, but they begged Him, "Stay the night with us, since it is getting late." So He went home with them. As they sat down to eat, He took the bread and blessed it. Then He broke it and gave it to them. Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him. And at that moment He disappeared! They said to each other, "Didn't our hearts burn within us as He talked with us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?"

To Peter (*Luke 24:33-34*)

And within the hour they were on their way back to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven disciples and the others who had gathered with them, who said, "The Lord has really risen! He appeared to Peter."

To 10 of the 11 disciples. Thomas being absent (*Luke 24:36-43; Mark 16:14; John 20:19-25*)

And just as they were telling about it, Jesus Himself was suddenly standing there among them. “Peace be with you,” He said. But the whole group was startled and frightened, thinking they were seeing a ghost! “Why are you frightened?” He asked. “Why are your hearts filled with doubt? Look at My hands. Look at My feet. You can see that it’s really Me. Touch Me and make sure that I am not a ghost, because ghosts don’t have bodies, as you see that I do.” As He spoke, He showed them His hands and His feet. Still they stood there in disbelief, filled with joy and wonder. Then He asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and He ate it as they watched.

To the 11 disciples. Thomas being present- 8 days later - (*John 20:26-31*)

Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” He said. Then He said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at My hands. Put your hand into the wound in My side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!”

“My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed. Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me.”

To 7 disciples by the shore of the Sea of Galilee. (*John 21:1-25*)

Later, Jesus appeared again to the disciples beside the Sea of Galilee. This is how it happened. Several of the disciples were there—Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples. Simon Peter said, “I’m going fishing.” “We’ll come, too,” they all said. So they went out in the boat, but they caught nothing all night. At dawn Jesus was standing on the beach, but the disciples couldn’t see who He was. He called out, “Fellows, have you caught any fish?” “No,” they replied.

Then He said, “Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you’ll get some!” So they did, and they couldn’t haul in the net because there were so many fish in it.

Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, “It’s the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his tunic (for he had stripped for work), jumped into the water, and headed to shore. The others stayed with the boat and pulled the loaded net to the shore, for they were only about a hundred yards from shore. When they got there, they found breakfast waiting for them—fish cooking over a charcoal fire, and some bread. “Bring some of the fish you’ve just caught,” Jesus said. So Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net to the shore. There were 153 large fish, and yet the net hadn’t torn.

“Now come and have some breakfast!” Jesus said. None of the disciples dared to ask Him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. Then Jesus served them the bread and the fish. This was the third time Jesus had appeared to His disciples since He had been raised from the dead.

After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love Me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” Peter replied, “you know I love you.” “Then feed My lambs,” Jesus told him.

Jesus repeated the question: “Simon son of John, do you love Me?” “Yes, Lord,” Peter said, “you know I love you.” “Then take care of My sheep,” Jesus said.

A third time He asked him, “Simon son of John, do you love Me?” Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, “Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Then feed My sheep.

“I tell you the truth, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked; you dressed yourself and went wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will dress you and take you where you don’t want to go.” Jesus said this to let him know by what kind of death he would glorify God. Then Jesus told him, “Follow Me.”

Peter turned around and saw behind them the disciple Jesus loved—the one who had leaned over to Jesus during supper and asked, “Lord, who will betray you?” Peter asked Jesus, “What about him, Lord?”

Jesus replied, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? As for you, follow Me.” So the rumor spread among the community of believers that this disciple wouldn’t die. But that isn’t what Jesus said at all. He only said, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?”

This disciple is the one who testifies to these events and has recorded them here. And we know that his account of these things is accurate. Jesus also did many other things. If they were all written down, I suppose the whole world could not contain the books that would be written.

To more than 500 disciples. (*1 Corinthians 15:3-6*)

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and He was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. *After that, He was seen by more than 500 of His followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died.*

To James. (*1 Corinthians 15:7*)

Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles.

To the Apostles when He ascended into Heaven. (*Acts 1:11*)

So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking Him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?” He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses, telling people about Me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

After saying this, He was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see Him. As they strained to see Him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday He will return from heaven in the same way you saw Him go!”

The Great Commission - Matthew 28:16-20

But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. When they saw Him, they worshiped *Him*; but some were doubtful. And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

To Paul. (*1 Corinthians 15:8*)

Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw Him.

Listen, the resurrection of Jesus Christ guarantees the resurrection of every saint, no matter what happens to the body. That is the promise of Scripture. And this then is unarguably the single greatest event in the history of the world. You cannot just slide the resurrection out of Christianity. Anybody who denies the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ cannot be a Christian. He can only falsely claim the title because the resurrection is the heart of everything in the Christian faith.