

# The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

*by Bryan Gibson*

**(Matthew 28:1-4)**

As the first day of the week began to dawn, there was suddenly a great earthquake. An angel of the Lord descended from heaven, went to the tomb of Jesus, and rolled back the stone. Through the mighty power of God, Jesus was raised from the dead (Eph. 1:19-20). The angel then sat on the stone. His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. When the Roman guards saw him, they shook for fear of him and became like dead men.

**(Mark 16:2-8; Matthew 28:5-8; Luke 24:1-8; John 20:1)**

Very early that same morning, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Salome, Joanna, and some other women headed to the tomb, taking spices with them to anoint the body of Jesus. The women said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone for us?" because it was very large.

When they arrived at the tomb, just as the sun was beginning to rise, they discovered that the stone had already been taken away. At this point it seems Mary Magdalene left the other women and went to find some of the apostles. The other women, though, went on in to the tomb and found it empty. The body of Jesus was gone. What they did see were two men in shining garments. The women were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth.

One of the men spoke and said, "Do not be afraid. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is risen; He is not here. See the place where He was laid. Remember how He talked to you while He was still in Galilee saying that the Son of Man must be given into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

Then the women remembered Jesus' words.

The angel continued, "Now, go and tell His disciples and Peter that He is going before you to Galilee. There you will see Him, as He told you earlier."

The women left the tomb, filled with fear and amazement.

**(John 20:2-10; Luke 24:12)**

Meanwhile, Mary Magdalene, who had left the other women earlier, ran until she found Peter and John and told them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him!"

Peter and John then raced to the tomb, with John arriving before Peter. John didn't go in at first, but he looked inside and saw the strips of linen cloth lying where the body had been. When Peter got there, he went on into the tomb. He also saw the linen cloths. The napkin or handkerchief which had covered Jesus' head was not lying with the cloths, but was folded up in a place by itself. John then went into the tomb, and he saw and believed. However, they still did not understand the Scripture which said that Jesus must rise again from the dead.

Peter and John then left the tomb, each going to his own home. As Peter went away, he marveled to himself at what had happened.

**(Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-18)**

After telling Peter and John about the empty tomb, Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb. Peter and John had already left. She stood outside the tomb, weeping. As she wept, she stooped down and looked into the tomb. She saw two angels dressed in white, one sitting at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been. They said to Mary, “Woman, why are you crying?”

She said, “Because they have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have laid Him.”

Having said these words, Mary turned and saw Jesus, but she did not recognize Him. Jesus said to her, “Why are you crying? Who are you looking for?”

Mary, thinking He was the gardener, said, “Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.”

Jesus said, “Mary.”

She turned back to Him and said in Hebrew, “Rabboni,” which means, “My Master!”

Jesus then said to her, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

Mary went on her way and told the disciples, “I have seen the Lord.” She also told them the words Jesus had said. Mary Magdalene was the first to see the Lord alive.

**Matthew 28:9-10; Luke 24:9-12)**

Meanwhile, as the other women were leaving the tomb, Jesus met them and extended greetings to them. They came and fell at His feet, worshipping Him. Jesus told them, “Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers that they are to go to Galilee, and they will see Me there.” Their fear now replaced with joy, the women left to do just what Jesus had told them.

Not long after Mary Magdalene had found Peter and John, the other women did bring their news to the rest of the apostles, and some other disciples with them. They listened to the words of the women, but they did not believe, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.

**(Matthew 28:11-15)**

Meanwhile, the Roman guards who had been set to watch the tomb hurried into the city and told the chief priests all the things that had happened. The chief priests met with the council and agreed to pay a large sum of money to the guards. They told them, “We want you to say, ‘His disciples came by night, and stole the body while we slept.’ And, if word comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So the soldiers took the money and did as they were told. This became the tale commonly reported among the Jews.

**(Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-32)**

Later on this same day, the first day of the week, two disciples left Jerusalem and walked toward the village of Emmaus, about seven miles away. As they walked along, they talked about the things which had happened. Then Jesus drew near to them and began walking with them. Their eyes were restrained at this time, so they didn't recognize Him.

Jesus said to them, "What are these things you are talking about as you walk along and are so sad?"

One of them whose name was Cleopas said, "Are you the only one staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened in the last few days?"

Jesus said, "What things?"

They replied, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."

Then Jesus said to them, "O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe in all the prophets have spoken. Was not the Christ supposed to suffer these things and enter into His glory?" Then beginning from Moses, Jesus went through all the prophets, explaining from the Scriptures all things concerning Himself.

When they reached the village, Jesus made as if He would go farther. But the men insisted that He stay with them, since the day was nearly over.

After a while, when they sat down to eat, Jesus took some bread, blessed it and broke it, and then gave it to them. As He did so, their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. Then He vanished out of their sight.

They said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"

**(Mark 16:13-14; Luke 24:33-43; John 20:19-23; 1 Cor. 15:5)**

Then, even though it was evening and they had just come from the city, the two men got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the apostles gathered together, with other disciples as well.

Before they told their own news, the assembled group told them, "The Lord really has risen and appeared to Peter."

Then the two men told the group all about their encounter with Jesus on the road to Emmaus, but the disciples didn't believe them.

But as the two men were still speaking to the disciples, Jesus suddenly stood in the midst of them. The doors had been shut for fear of the Jews, and when Jesus appeared, He said, "Peace to you." They were terrified and frightened, thinking they had seen a ghost.

But Jesus said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

Jesus then showed them His hands and His feet and His side. The disciples still had trouble believing, so Jesus said, "Do you have any food here?" They gave Him a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb. He took it and ate it in their presence.

**(John 20:24-25)**

Thomas was not with the other disciples at this time, so they went and told him, "We have seen the Lord."

But Thomas said to them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

**(John 20:26-31)**

Eight days later, Thomas got his chance. The disciples were gathered together again, and this time Thomas was with them.

Once again, Jesus stood in their midst and said, "Peace to you."

He then turned to Thomas and said, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

Thomas answered and said, "My Lord and my God."

Jesus said, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Jesus made still other appearances before He ascended back to His Father. He appeared to seven disciples beside the sea of Galilee (John 21), to over 500 brethren at one time (1 Cor. 15:6), to James (1 Cor. 15:7), and to the apostles when He gave them the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-18; Luke 24:44-49).