

# The Gospel of the Kingdom Pt 17

## The Resurrection

In our lives there are many events that take place that, it's only after the fact that we realize the importance of those events. It is the same with the resurrection of Jesus. In all four of the Gospel accounts, it is the women who go to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus and they are the first to encounter the empty tomb.

The burial customs of the day were that the body was washed, anointed with oil, herbs and spices (Nard and Myrrh) and then tightly wrapped in a cloth. The problem was that Jesus died late on Friday, just before the beginning of the Sabbath. Joseph of Arimathea, who claimed Jesus' body, only had time to wrap him in a linen cloth and lay him in the tomb. No work or contact with a dead body was allowed during the Sabbath.

Knowing this, the women then prepared the herbs and spices so that they could properly prepare the body of Jesus at first light following the Sabbath. The idea was to preserve the body for as long as possible and to keep it from stinking.

### **1. Seeking the Living among the Dead.**

***Matt 28:1-10***

***Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.***

While in the varying Gospel accounts it talks about the women who went to anoint his body, central among them was Mary Magdalene. Mary Magdalene was the one from whom Jesus had cast out 7 demons who had been tormenting her. Despite what some traditions hold to, she was not the same Mary who was a prostitute nor was she His wife. Regardless, Jesus had delivered her, and she overflowed with gratitude and devotion. So great was her devotion to Jesus after that, that she was counted among the disciples and traveled with Jesus wherever He went. So great was her gratitude and devotion to Jesus, that in Luke Chapter 3, it says that she, along with other women, helped support Jesus and the disciples financially.

The other Mary that Matthew mentions, is Mary the mother of Jesus.

***2 And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it.  
3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow.***

In Mark's Gospel, as the women were on their way, they wondered who would roll back the stone so they could anoint Jesus' body. They needn't have worried on with either account.

Angels spend time in the presence of the Father. We know from this passage that when you spend time in His presence you will reflect His glory and it will cause fear in the hearts of men.

**Ex 34:29-31**

***When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. 30 Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.***

This angel reflected the glory of God and even the guards, who were hardened Roman soldiers had never experienced anything like this before.

***4 And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men.***

Guards had been appointed because the Chief Priests and the Pharisees worried that the disciples would steal His body to say that Jesus' words had come true, and that He had been raised from the dead. Isn't it interesting, that the priests, who thought Jesus a heretic, paid closer attention to His teachings that His disciples did.

***5 But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.***

We don't know the identity of this angel. Was he Gabriel, who announced the birth of Jesus, or was he the archangel Michael, the commander of the hosts of heaven? We don't know, what we do know is that he delivered the best news in the history of mankind.

However, when we take the four Gospels as a whole, we discover that for both the women and the disciples, seeing an empty grave didn't necessarily mean that they understood the significance of what they were seeing. In John's account when the women go to tell Peter, they relay their fear that Jesus' body has been stolen.

## **2. Seeking to Spread the News.**

***7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you."***

Even the reassurance of the angel doesn't assuage their fear completely or help them to fully understand what is happening.

***8 So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples.***

They went with fear and great joy. That is a most unusual combination. I have never seen an angel, but if you go by the Scriptures, it seems that most of the time an angel appears,

the first thing he says is, "Don't be afraid!" There must be something overpowering about their presence in addition to their glow that terrifies those who see them. Even when they bring good news, it takes a while before your knees stop knocking. The women had been in the presence of Jesus, God in the flesh, but now they were in the presence of a being like no other coming directly from the throne of God.

### **3. Seeking to Worship the Risen Christ.**

***9 And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him.***

So great was the devotion of Mary that here and in Mark 16:9, she was the first person to whom Jesus appeared after His resurrection.

Still, they bow down before the Master and grab Him by the feet, just to make sure He's real. Before, they knew Him as a man, a prophet, a teacher. Now it is clear he is something more and they fall at his feet in worship and adoration. It is also an acknowledgment of Isaiah's prophecy.

***Isa 52:7***

***How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news,***

Jesus in the flesh is good news personified. While they have seen Him and touched His feet, they are still processing everything: the resplendent angel, the empty tomb, the announcement of His resurrection and now His very presence in front of them. Their minds can scarcely take it all in.

Jesus, sensing their fear and bewilderment gives them instructions:

***10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."***

In the following days, Jesus appears to not only the disciples, but also to others. All of them, who had been grieving His death, now have to make that adjustment to the fact that not only is He alive, but their lives and the world have been changed forever.

We never got the chance to see Him in the flesh like they did. But can we really say that we understand the full importance of whom He is and what His resurrection means.

The Apostle Paul says this:

***1 Cor 15:3-9***

***For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of***

***whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.***

He reminds us that there were multiple eye-witnesses of His resurrection and that they gave testimony to this fact all over the world.

***6 He is not here, for he has risen, as he said.***

This is the greatest news the world has ever heard.

He is not here! He has conquered the grave, He is alive!

Satan could not defeat Him. Death could not hold Him.

He is a living Savior!