

- In previous lessons the significance of the burial of Christ and how it is essential to the atonement of Christ and salvation was studied.
- Without the death of Christ there could be no resurrection.
- Some of the amazing events of the resurrection morning have been examined.
- Jesus was raised from the dead on the 3rd day, and no one was able to prevent the resurrection of God's Son.

Appearances of Christ

Lesson 3

First Appearance

Mk. 16:9 Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons.

Mk. 16:10 She went and reported to those who had been with Him, while they were mourning and weeping.

Mk. 16:11 When they [the apostles] heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it

1. Mark informs his readers that Jesus "first appeared to Mary Magdalene. (Mk. 16:9). John states Mary "came early to the tomb..." inferring she was alone. (Jn. 20:1).
 - a. She evidently reached the tomb before the other women.
 - 1) Only Mark mentions this detail.
 - 2) The other writers do not affirm the women all arrived at the tomb simultaneously, but that these loyal women came to the tomb. (Matt. 28:1; Lk. 24:1).
 - b. Jesus had "cast out seven demons" from her. (Mk. 16:9).
 - c. Nothing is said to suggest she had been a loose woman and was the sinful woman of Luke 7:37.
- Lk. 7:37 And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume,
 - d. She reported to the apostles what she had seen. (Mk. 16:10).
 - e. They "refuse to believe" her report or the report of the other women. (Mk. 16:11; Lk. 24:11).
 - f. Luke's account shows they reacted in the same way when they heard the report of Christ's resurrection from the other women. (Lk. 24:11).
 - g. John's account gives some details of this appearance to Mary.

Jn. 20:11 But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb;

Jn. 20:12 and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying.

Jn. 20:13 And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."

Jn. 20:14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, and did not know that it was Jesus.

Jn. 20:15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

- 1) John mentions "two angels" like Luke in his account who made reference to "two men" [angels]. (Jn. 20:12; Lk. 23:4).
- 2) Mary saw "two angels"... "one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying." (Lk. 24:1).
- 3) They asked Mary why she was weeping and she replied because "I do not know where they have laid Him."
- 4) She then "turned about and saw Jesus standing there."
- 5) Mary did not immediately recognize Jesus, and she supposed Him "to be the gardener."
- 6) She assumed the gardener had moved the body of Jesus and wanted to know where He had been laid and she would take Him away and seek to bury Him.

Second Appearance

Matt. 28:9 And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they [the women] came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him.

Matt. 28:10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me."

1. Matthew tells us "they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him."
 - a. Though there were many things they did not understand, they worshiped Jesus. (Matt. 28:9). See Matt. 2:11; 14:33).
 - b. They recognized He was more than a mere man.
2. The gospels give the identity of some of these women. (Matt. 28:1; Mk. 16:1).
3. These godly women had been loyal to Jesus, and it is very reasonable that Jesus would permit them to be the first to see Him raised from the dead.
4. Their grief and tears would be quickly turned to joy after the initial fear of seeing one risen from the dead. (Matt. 28:10).

The Report of the Watch

Matt. 28:11-15

Matt. 28:11 Now while they were on their way, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened.

Matt. 28:12 And when they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers,

Matt. 28:13 and said, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.'

Matt. 28:14 "And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble."

Matt. 28:15 And they took the money and did as they had been instructed; and this story was widely spread among the Jews, *and is to this day.*

1. "Some of the guard came into the city [of Jerusalem] and reported to the chief priests all that had happened." (Matt. 28:11).
2. The soldiers were paid "a large sum of money" to lie, and they lied for the money and to save their lives.
3. This lie was repeated "to this day."
 - a. This refers to the time of the writing of the gospel of Matthew.
 - b. Most believe Matthew wrote his gospel before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. described in Matthew 24.
 - c. Some still seek to deny Christ's resurrection by using this preposterous lie that the disciples stole and did away with the body of Jesus.

False Theories Of The Resurrection

1. Some say **grave robbers** stole His body.
 - a. Why would they want the corpse of Jesus? Jesus had little of value. He had been stripped by the Roman soldiers at the crucifixion. (Matt. 27:35).
 - b. Why did they leave an expensive linen cloth? Jn. 20:6,7

Jn. 20:6 And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there,

Jn. 20:7 and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself.

- c. Why did they take the time to fold His head gear?
 - d. How did they get past the guards?
 - e. There was great risk to obtain little, if anything, of value.
 - f. Grave robbers would not see to rob one who had been crucified since there would be nothing to rob.
2. Some hold to the **swoon theory**.
 - a. This theory affirms Jesus did not die on the cross, but merely fainted on the cross.
 - b. Jesus was declared dead on the cross by experts in killing. (Matt. 27:34; Jn. 19:33,34)
 - c. Assuming Jesus did not die, how did the weak and wounded Christ roll away the large stone? He had been scourged to the point of death and beaten. He had lost a lot of blood, and had gone without food likely since Thursday night.

- d. How did He get past the guards guarding the tomb?
 - e. This theory calls for a miracle - the very thing liberals deny.
3. Disciples **made up resurrection story**.
- a. Why did not His enemies produce His body on Pentecost when Peter boldly exclaimed the body of Jesus did not see corruption, but was raised from the dead? See Acts 2:27
 - b. Why did the apostles and others suffer shame and persecution for a lie?
 - c. This makes no sense at all!
4. Disciples had **hallucination**.
- a. It is argued they merely thought they saw the risen Jesus because they wanted to see Him so badly
 - b. The fact is all the disciples were very skeptical of His resurrection, and believed the report of His resurrection was nonsense.
 - c. Thomas had great doubts. (Jn. 20:20, 27).
 - d. This theory does not explain the empty tomb nor how Jesus got out of the tomb.
5. Some hold to the **mental theory**.
- a. Jesus was raised on in the minds of the disciples, but His body remained in the tomb.
 - b. This does not explain empty tomb.
 - c. It does not explain His appearances. (1 Cor. 15:3-8).
6. **Joseph of Arimathea moved the body**. (Jn. 20:15).
- a. Joseph was the owner of the tomb and perhaps the garden. We do not know who owned the garden.
 - b. They contend he did it or had the gardener to do it.
 - c. Why did he change his mind quickly?
 - d. This does not explain His appearances.
 - e. It does not explain the guards and why they did not blame the empty tomb on Joseph and the gardener.
 - f. Once the tomb was sealed no one, not even the owner of the tomb or the gardener, would be permitted inside.
 - g. This does not explain the boldness and courage of the apostles and the others who saw the risen Lord.
7. Some say **enemies stole His body**.
- a. Why would they do this?

- b. A resurrection would lead people to believe in Christ. (Matt. 27:54).
 - c. Why did they not produce His body?
 - d. Why did they not admit they had disposed of His body?
8. Some hold to **spirit theory**.
- a. It is argued only the spirit of Jesus was raised - not His corpse. His body was transformed into a spirit Being.
 - b. They use some proof texts.

1) 1 Pet. 3:18

1 Pet. 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

- a) "in the spirit" is literally "in spirit." Words in the Greek New Testament are not capitalized. Capitalization is a matter of interpretation. It can be translated "in spirit" or "in or by Spirit" referring to the Holy Spirit. The NIV has "made alive by the Spirit."
- b) Jesus was not raised "in spirit," but He was bodily raised by the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 8:11).

Rom. 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

2) Some argue the appearances of Christ show He was raised a spirit Being. (Jn. 20:19)

Jn. 20:19 So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

- a) This verse taken by itself by lead one to believe Jesus was raised a Spirit Being, but a careful examination of this text and rest of the Bible reveals this theory is false.
- b) An examination of Scripture shows Jesus' body was raised, but as the Son of God He was able to miraculously appear and disappear.
- c) Jesus had done something very similar during His ministry. (Lk. 4:28-30; Jn. 10:39).

Lk. 4:28 And all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things;

Lk. 4:29 and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff.

Lk. 4:30 But passing through their midst, He went His way.

Jn. 10:39 Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

c. This theory is refuted by:

- 1) Psalm 16:10 - The body of Jesus would not see corruption. It would be raised up. (Jn. 2:19-21). Peter declared this glorious fact on Pentecost. (Acts 2:29-32).

Acts 2:29 "Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

Acts 2:30 "And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne,

Acts 2:31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay.

Acts 2:32 "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

2) The empty tomb supports that His body had been raised.

3) The words of Jesus that He was not a spirit. (Lk. 24:39).

4) He ate to prove He was not a spirit.

5) Jesus showed the disciples His wounded body (Jn. 20:20).

6) Romans 8:11 declares His mortal body was raised.

9. **Disciples stole His body.**

- a. The disciples would not have stolen His body.
- b. They were afraid. (Matt. 26:31, 56; Jn. 20:19).
- c. They were skeptics of the resurrection. (Lk. 24:11; Mk. 16:11).
- d. Why would they want His body?
- e. How did they get past the guards?
- f. They would not suffer shame and death for a lie.

10. Some believe **the gardener stole His body.**

- a. The Bible does mention a gardener. (Jn. 20:14,15).

Jn. 20:14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, and did not know that it was Jesus.

Jn. 20:15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

- b. Mary Magdalene thought the gardener might have moved the body of Jesus.
- c. She probably did not know about the Roman guards who had been assigned to guard the tomb after the initial visit of the women to the tomb near sunset on Friday.
- d. She saw the empty tomb and perhaps no guards. Most likely they left before any of Jesus' followers came to the tomb.
- e. She, like the others, was not expecting a resurrection.

- f. She assumed likely no one else would have moved Christ's body.
- g. She did not realize, at first, she was speaking to Jesus. (Jn. 20:14).
 - 1) The reason she did not recognize Him is not known.
 - 2) It could have been the time of day or Jesus appearance was slightly different.
 - 3) Believing Jesus to be dead, she was not expecting to see Him again.
 - 4) Jesus may have temporality restrained her vision to prevent His sudden appearance to her being too much of a shock.
- h. Moments later recognized the voice of Jesus. (Jn. 20:16-18).

Jn. 20:16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (which means, Teacher).

Jn. 20:17 Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'"

Jn. 20:18 Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and *that* He had said these things to her. Jesus among His Disciples.

- 1) She was excited to see Jesus and started clinging to Him like she might not see Him again. (Jn. 20:17).
- 2) She told her to "stop clinging" to Him, and informed her He had "not yet ascended to the Father." (Jn. 20:17).
- 3) It would be a number of days, 40 days, before He would return to the Father in heaven. (Acts 1:3).
- 4) Mary Magdalene proceeded to announce to the apostles what she had seen.

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