

## 76. Jesus Rose from the Dead

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that not all of the Jewish religious leaders wanted Jesus to be put to death. We saw that at least two, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, did not agree with the actions of the other religious leaders. In fact, this caused them to become bold witnesses for Jesus who had the courage to bury Jesus after His death. In our topic today, we are going to see what happened at the tomb on the first day of the week.

John 20:1-2 says, “Now the first *day* of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw *that* the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, ‘They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.’” In these verses, we see that Mary Magdalene came to the tomb very early on Sunday morning.

However, Mary Magdalene did not come alone. Mark 16:1 says, “Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary *the mother* of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.” Then, Luke 24:1 adds, “Now on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.” The book of John was written many years after the three other Gospels were written. We will see in the next topic why John focused on the life of Mary Magdalene that morning.

On the way to the tomb, Mary and the other women asked one another how they were going to move the stone. They arrived and saw that the Lord sent an angel to move the stone out of the way from the door of the tomb. Matthew 28:2-4 says, “And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead *men*.” The angel both moved the stone and caused the guards to be filled with fear.

Mary Magdalene quickly ran to tell Peter and John. We see that Mary and the other women thought that someone had stolen the body of Jesus. That concern had been a major concern of the religious leaders. That is why Matthew 27:62-66 says, “On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, ‘Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’ Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him *away*, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.’ Pilate said to them, ‘You have a guard; go your way, make *it* as secure as you know how.’ So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.” We see that guards were placed and the tomb was sealed to prevent this possibility. However, they became so controlled by fear that they became like dead men.

Mary saw the stone rolled away and the empty tomb and she and the other women immediately

ran to tell the disciples what they had seen. The disciples did not believe the words of the women. Luke 24:11 says, “And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.” Jesus had told the disciples quite a number of times that He would die and rise again from the dead on the third day. Matthew 16:21 says, “From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.” Jesus repeated the message of His coming death and resurrection to the disciples on other occasions as well. However, they were looking for Jesus to set up His kingdom and so it was like they never really listened when He talked about His coming death and resurrection.

When Mary told the disciples that the tomb was empty, we see that two of the disciples went to see. John 20:3-7 says, “Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying *there*; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying *there*, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself.” John is not named, but we see that Peter and John immediately began to run to the tomb when they heard the words of Mary Magdalene. Both were in a great hurry to get to the tomb.

Peter and John both ran together to get to the tomb. John was able to run faster than Peter and he arrived first. However, we see that the two disciples did very different things once they got to the tomb. John bent down and looked into the tomb. He saw the way that the linen clothes were laying in the tomb. Because Jesus had a resurrection body, He was able to pass through the graveclothes and leave them in the tomb in the shape of a human body. That was in great contrast to the resurrection of Lazarus a few weeks earlier. John 11:44 says, “And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Loose him, and let him go.’” Here, we see that Lazarus had to have someone help him get out of the graveclothes by unwrapping them. His graveclothes could not be left in the shape of a body as the graveclothes of Jesus were left. John continued to observe from the outside.

However, when Peter arrived, he went right into the tomb. He also saw the linen graveclothes laying there. He also noticed something else as he looked. He saw that the handkerchief that had been around the face of Jesus was not lying with the linen cloths. Instead, the handkerchief had been folded and laid in a separate place. The fact that it was folded meant that Jesus had stopped to take time to fold it before He left the tomb. Here, we see that Jesus had not left the tomb in a hurry. John mentioned this particular thing that he had noticed that morning because of a false story that the Jewish religious leaders had paid the soldiers to tell to try to deny that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Matthew 28:12-15 says, “When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, saying, ‘Tell them, “His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.” And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will appease him and make you secure.’ So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is

commonly reported among the Jews until this day.” If the disciples had taken the body, they would not have brought the linen cloths back. They certainly would not have taken the time to fold the handkerchief that had been wrapped around the face of Jesus.

John 20:8-10 says, “Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.” We see that John then went into the tomb after Peter was inside. Although John does not mention his own name, he does tell how the evidence affected him. We read that he saw and believed. This is an important statement because the disciples had not had any thought about stealing the body of Jesus.

Later, we see that Peter and John were both very willing to suffer for what they saw and believed. Acts 5:40-41 says, “And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.” It was the same religious leaders that had paid the soldiers a large sum of money that ordered the beating of the disciples in Acts 5. They certainly would not have continued to witness and suffer shame for the name of Jesus if they had not believed.

We read that at the time, Peter and John went to the tomb, they did not understand the Scripture about the fact that Jesus would die and rise again. However, by the day of Pentecost, Peter understood what the Old Testament taught. Acts 2:25-28 says, “‘For David says concerning Him: ‘I foresaw the LORD always before my face, for He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.’”” This quote came from Psalm 16:8-11. That was one of the passages Jesus explained to them that evening.

In Luke 24:44-48, it says, “Then He said to them, ‘These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.’ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.’” Jesus opened the understanding of the disciples that night so they could explain what the Old Testament Scriptures taught about the death and resurrection of Jesus. In the same way, we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what both the Old and New Testament teach about His death and resurrection. May the Lord richly bless you as you teach your children to explain the Scriptures about His death and resurrection.