

Jesus Rose from the Dead

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why the resurrection is so important. In this topic, and the next, we will learn how to help our children explain what the Word of God teaches about the resurrection so they can explain the resurrection from the Word of God.

Matthew 28:1-4 says, “Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. 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 Sabbath lasted from sundown Friday night to sundown Saturday night. Here, we see this chapter began as the day began to dawn, which meant it was very early on Sunday morning. It was at this time that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. John 19:25 says, “Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the *wife* of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.” Mary, the wife of Clopas is the same Mary mentioned in Matthew 27:56, where we read, “Among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.” This Mary is the mother of James known as James the Less.

As these three women were going to the tomb, we see that there was a great earthquake. At the same time, an angel of the Lord came down from heaven. This angel was not concerned about the seal that the chief priests and Pharisees had placed on the tomb. The angel just rolled the stone away from the entrance of the tomb and sat on the stone. We are also given a description of the angel. The appearance of the angel was as bright as lightning. The clothing of the angel was as white as snow. These verses make it very clear that the angel was very bright. The Roman soldiers knew how to fight against armies of people or soldiers that included many more people than the Romans. However, this was not a human army. This was an angel. The Roman soldiers were so fearful they could not even think about trying to stop the angel from rolling the stone away from the tomb. We see that the guards became so fearful, they began to shake with fear. Then, they became like dead men.

By the time the women arrived at the tomb, the angel had moved inside the tomb. Mark 16:3-5 says, “And they said among themselves, ‘Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?’ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.” We see, in these verses, that the angel was now sitting inside the tomb on the right side. The angel began to speak to the women and tell them what had happened.

Matthew 28:5-8 says, “But the angel answered and said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I

know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.’ So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.” We see that the first thing the angel told the women was to not be afraid. These were common words to those who were followers of the Lord. Luke 1:13 says, “But the angel said to him, ‘Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.’” Luke 1:30 says, “Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.’” Luke 2:9-10 adds, “And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.’”

Once the angel told the women not to be afraid, the angel said he knew why the women were at the tomb. The angel said that he knew the women were looking for Jesus who had been crucified. Then, the angel told the women something that sounded amazing to them. The angel said, “He is not here; for He is risen.” Even though Jesus had said that He would rise again on the third day, this message came as a great surprise to the women. A little later, Mary Magdalene stood weeping outside the tomb. Two angels, inside the tomb, asked her why she was weeping. John 20:13b gives her answer as she said, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.” Mary did not believe until Jesus personally called her by name. A few minutes later, John 20:16-17 says, “Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to Him, ‘Rabboni!’ (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’”

The angel also told the women, “Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.” Here, we see that the angel told the women to look and also to take the message of the resurrection to the disciples. In addition, they were to tell the disciples that Jesus would meet them in Galilee. Jesus had told the disciples at the Last Supper, in Matthew 26:32, “‘But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.’” This was a reminder to the disciples. However, we see that the disciples did not go to Galilee for more than a week after the resurrection. John 20:26 says, “And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, ‘Peace to you!’” This was the second appearance of Jesus to the disciples and they had still not begun the trip to Galilee.

The women followed the instructions the angel gave to them at the tomb. We read that they quickly left the tomb. Their hearts were filled with both fear and great joy. This was such good news, they ran to tell the disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead. This message is such good news that everyone needs to hear this message today. That is why it was a part of most of the recorded messages of the apostles and others in the book of Acts. Acts 1:21-22 says, “‘Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning

from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.” This was the message of Peter to the one hundred and twenty meeting in the upper room before the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Peter shared this same message with the religious leaders when they tried to stop the apostles from preaching about Jesus and His death and resurrection. Acts 5:29-32 says, “But Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said: ‘We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. Him God has exalted to His right hand *to be* Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses to these things, and *so also is* the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.’” Paul told Agrippa and Festus that this message was the same message he preached. Acts 26:22-23 says, “‘Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come—that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the *Jewish* people and to the Gentiles.’” Here, we see that Paul said he was being obedient to the Lord by sharing this message.

Matthew 28:9-10 goes on to say, “And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, ‘Rejoice!’ So they came and held Him by the feet and worshipped Him. Then Jesus said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. Go *and* tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.’” Here, we see that Jesus met the women as they went to tell the disciples. The word translated “rejoice” means *to be glad or to rejoice exceedingly*. Happiness is the response of people to what is happening around them and can quickly change to sadness. In contrast, joy is what is happening within our lives because we are yielding our lives to the Lord. This is illustrated in Acts 5:41, where we read, “So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.”

Here, we see that the joy that developed in the hearts of these women immediately caused them to worship Jesus. We see that they came and held Jesus by the feet and worshipped Him. In order to hold the feet of Jesus, the women had to get down on their knees in front of Him. As a result, we see that they held His feet as they worshipped Him. Jesus said, in John 4:23-24, “‘But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.’” We worship the Father in our hearts as we recognize the greatness of His love in sending His Son to die for our sins. Then, Jesus gave the women the same instructions the angel had given them when He said, “Go *and* tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.” Here, we see that both the angel and Jesus gave very clear instructions.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to worship God and to recognize the greatness of His love in sending His Son to die for our sins and rise again for our justification. Truly, we can rejoice together as Christians because of the fact that Christ is indeed risen from the dead. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children grow in their understanding of what it means to worship the Lord.

