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The Resurrection Of Jesus



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2006

Front Cover

Rembrandt, *Supper at Emmaus*, 1648.

Oil on panel, 68 x 65 cm

Rembrandt had painted the supper before in 1626, but this painting is more famous.

Preface

The resurrection of Jesus continues to challenge hearers of the gospel message. The Book of Acts records that some of Paul's Athenian hearers mocked when they heard of Jesus' resurrection while others believed (Acts 17:32-34). So it has been throughout the centuries. Even today, the resurrection is the focus of intense theological discussion. Three recent debates (or, to be politically correct, dialogues) have been published between well known and highly respected theologians or philosophers: William Lane Craig and Gerd Ludemann; Gary Habermas and Anthony Flew; N.T. Wright and John Dominic Crossan (the believer in the resurrection of Jesus is listed first).

The debate is not whether the resurrection of Jesus is a central tenet of New Testament teaching. All agree that the collective weight of the New Testament writings support the fact that the apostles and early Christians believed that Jesus rose from the dead. The disagreement exists over the reality and nature of Jesus' resurrection. What does it mean when it was said that Jesus was "raised from the dead"? Bodily raised? Or some sort of "spiritual" resurrection?

Naturalism is alive and well, and expected, in atheistic circles. Unwilling to acknowledge any deity, atheists have devised multiple responses to "explain" the Gospel accounts of the resurrection. Unexpectedly, however, naturalism is also prevalent in religious circles. Many modern objectors to the resurrection of Jesus are Christian theologians. They contend that the New Testament teaching has been misunderstood by Christians throughout the ages, and that a correct understanding of the New Testament writings excludes any concept of a literal resurrection. Typical of this view, Robert W. Funk, the founder of the Jesus Seminar, writes as one of his Twenty-One Theses:

The resurrection of Jesus did not involve the resuscitation of a corpse. Jesus did not rise from the dead, except perhaps in some metaphorical sense. The meaning of the resurrection is that a few of his followers—probably no more than two or three—finally came to understand what he was all about. When the significance of his words and deeds dawned on them, they knew of no other terms in which to express their amazement than to claim that they had seen him alive. [*The Fourth R*, Vol.11,4; July/Aug 1998]

Consequently, the prime task of this study is to determine what is taught about the resurrection of Jesus in the New Testament. The New Testament contains historical narratives of the events surrounding the resurrection of Jesus, sermons which proclaim Jesus' resurrection, and practical admonitions bringing out the significance of Jesus' resurrection. Each of these must be carefully examined to fully appreciate the breadth of the New Testament teaching.

The English Standard Version (ESV) will be used as the text for the lessons.

As always, our conclusions must be based on an honest study of the Scriptures and not on what we have previously thought or was taught. May God bless our study.

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CLASS PRE-TEST

Our study this quarter will be concerning the burial and resurrection of Jesus. Before starting our study, this pre-test will give some indication of your familiarity with this topic. First, without using your Bible, answer the following questions. Then, using your Bible (or wait until you are given the answers in the first class), grade yourself.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

- _____ 1. The burial of Jesus is recorded in which Gospel(s)?
 - a. Matthew only
 - b. Matthew and Mark
 - c. Matthew, Luke, and John
 - d. All four gospels

- _____ 2. Which of the following women were witnesses to the empty tomb?
 - a. Mary Magdalene only
 - b. Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James only
 - c. Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Mary the mother of James only
 - d. All of the above

TRUE (T) or FALSE (F) or UNKNOWN (U)

- _____ 3. Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple of Jesus.
- _____ 4. Jesus died on the Day of Preparation.
- _____ 5. An angel rolled back the stone from the tomb of Jesus.
- _____ 6. Jesus rose early on Sunday morning.
- _____ 7. The angel was inside the tomb when the women arrived.
- _____ 8. There were two angels at the tomb of Jesus when the women arrived.
- _____ 9. The apostles disbelieved the report of the women.
- _____ 10. Peter and John enter the empty tomb.
- _____ 11. On one occasion, Jesus appears to Peter by himself.

WHICH GOSPEL (Mt, Mk, L, J) TELLS OF THE FOLLOWING EVENTS?

- _____ 12. Pilate asks the centurion if the Jesus had already died.
- _____ 13. Nicodemus assisted Arimathea in preparing the body of Jesus for burial.
- _____ 14. The Jewish leaders ask Pilate to order the tomb to be guarded with soldiers.
- _____ 15. An earthquake is associated with the moving of the stone.
- _____ 16. Peter sees the face cloth lying by itself separated from the linen cloths.
- _____ 17. Jesus invites the disciples to touch him.
- _____ 18. After his resurrection, Jesus walks and eats with two disciples as they travel to Emmaus.
- _____ 19. Upon seeing Jesus, Thomas confesses Jesus as his Lord.
- _____ 20. Jesus ascends into heaven.

How did you do? 10 or less correct? *You definitely need this class.*
11 to 15 correct? *Not bad, you must have studied this before..*
16 to 18 correct? *Very good, you probably have taught this material.*
19 to 20 correct? *Excellent, do you want to teach this class?*

LESSON 1

Introduction

The nature of both Jesus' birth and death was not what was expected of a king. Kings are not born in manglers and do not die on crosses. Yet there is symmetry to the Gospel accounts of the beginning and end of Jesus life; both were attended by angels. Their presence gives pause, and cautions us not to let the circumstances of his birth and of his death lead us to a wrong conclusion. Their message tells the true nature of the one who came to earth to live and die among men. To those women who went to the tomb to mourn Jesus' death, the angels announce "He has risen!" The resurrection of Jesus forever declares that he is the Son of God (Romans 1:4).

The Resurrection and the Gospel Message

The first gospel sermon after Jesus' ascension included the following proclamation:

"Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know – this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it... This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses" (Acts 2:22b-23, 32).

One, perhaps surprising, feature of the first sermon is that it does not focus upon what Jesus had done, but upon what God had done. Yes, Jesus performed "mighty works and wonders and signs", but the preacher clearly ascribes those acts to God. Whereas we might begin teaching someone by emphasizing the sacrificial work of Jesus and his role as Savior, it was apparently important for this Jewish audience who knew God, but had not accepted Jesus, to understand that it was God who was at work in Jesus. It was God who made Jesus "both Lord and Christ" (2:36), and the central fact to make that point is that God raised up Jesus.

Paul confirms the conclusion that the resurrection of Jesus is fundamental to the gospel of Jesus:

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you – unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve." (1 Corinthians 15:1-5).

The Resurrection and the Miracles of Jesus

The resurrection of Jesus is often said to be the "supreme miracle". In a sense this may be true, but it lends itself to the view that the miracles were all performed for the sole purpose of showing the power of God, and since the other miracles pale in comparison to the resurrection on that basis, the resurrection is the greatest miracle.

It is better to understand that the miracles of Jesus had multiple purposes with each miracle accomplishing its own purpose as no other miracle could. For example, Jesus fed

five thousand by multiplying the boy's five loaves and two fishes and then the next day taught the people that he was the "bread of life". Even the resurrection would not make the point as powerfully as the miracle Jesus performed.

The miracles not only show God's power, but they also show that God was with Jesus, that the teaching of Jesus was true, and that the character of Jesus shown in the miracles reflects the character of God.

Yet, the resurrection of Jesus is unique and declares to all who will listen that Jesus is the Son of God who brings life to a dying world.

The Resurrection and the Unbeliever

The types of arguments used by those who deny the resurrection depend in large part on how sympathetic they are to Christianity. Opponents of Christianity will make arguments such as the following:

1. The disciples stole the body to "fulfill" Jesus' predictions of his resurrection. For example, this was the first argument used by the Jews in conjunction with the soldiers who were guarding the tomb.
2. Even if the disciples didn't steal the body, the disciples invented the stories of the resurrection simply to give credence to their message, or to attract attention, or to retain their power, or...
3. Jesus didn't really die on the cross, thus he regained strength and somehow was able to exit the tomb. Thus, Jesus was a party to the lie that he was risen.

On the other hand, Christian deniers of the resurrection have no desire to portray Jesus or the early Christians as deceitful. Thus, they will make arguments such as:

1. The disciples misunderstood where the body of Jesus was buried.
2. Someone other than a disciple stole (or moved) the body.
3. The disciples in their desire to maintain connection to Jesus had visions of the risen Jesus.
4. The disciples used the metaphor of a "resurrection" to describe these visions because they did not have any other way to express their experience.

There are other "neutral" arguments that are used by both groups:

1. The Gospel accounts are contradictory, therefore they are not reliable.
2. Mark, the earliest Gospel, doesn't include any appearances of the risen Lord (assuming as they do that Mark's Gospel ended with Mark 16:8), which is compatible with the view that only later were the stories of Jesus appearing to disciples created.

And so the arguments run. It is hoped that this study of Jesus' resurrection will show the weakness of these arguments, but we ought not be overly discouraged if disbelief continues to thrive even if every argument of the disbeliever is convincingly countered. After all, some *saw* the miracles of Jesus and disbelieved.

LESSON 2

Mark's Burial and Resurrection Narrative

Introduction Mark's Gospel is usually assumed by modern scholars to have been the first gospel written and that it was used as a source by the other Gospel writers. Even though this cannot be known for certain and the underlying assumptions for such a view are questionable, Mark's Gospel account of the burial and resurrection is one the shortest of the four Gospels and is a useful starting point in our study.

Mark 15:42-16:20

⁴²And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the Council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. ⁴⁵And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. ⁴⁶And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where he was laid.

^{16:1}When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him.

²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" ⁴And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. ⁵And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. ⁶And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

[SOME OF THE EARLIEST MANUSCRIPTS DO NOT INCLUDE 16:9-20.]

⁹[[Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. ¹⁰She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

¹²After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. ¹³And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

¹⁴Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. ¹⁵And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

¹⁹So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.]]

Questions / Comments

1. Mark says that Jesus was crucified on "the Day of Preparation".
 - a. He then explains that the "Day of Preparation" was the day before the Sabbath. What does that imply about Mark's readers?
 - b. Note the time progression: Day of Preparation (15:42) – Sabbath (16:1) – First Day of the Week (16:2). So on what day of the week was Jesus crucified and buried according to Mark?

2. Joseph of Arimathea asks for the body of Jesus.
 - a. What two things are told to us about Joseph?
 - 1)
 - 2)Joseph's status is also suggested by his direct access to Pilate.
 - b. Where is Arimathea?
 - c. Was Joseph an accuser of Jesus? (see Mark 14:55, 64)

Early Traditions Related to the Gospel of Mark

1. Mark was a disciple and "interpreter" of Peter and wrote the Gospel from the things he heard Peter say. Mark did not see Jesus in person.
2. Mark wrote his Gospel at the request of the Christians at Rome.
3. Peter became aware of Mark's Gospel and either approved it (according to some sources) or did nothing to obstruct it (according to other sources).

- d. Why would Joseph ask for Jesus' body?
3. There are reported accounts that some victims of crucifixion lived several days on the cross before dying, thus Pilate's surprise.
4. Three women go to the tomb on Sunday morning to anoint Jesus.

- a. Who are they?
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
- b. Mary, the mother of James, is also the mother of who? (15:40)
- c. When did they purchase the spices to anoint Jesus. Be specific.



*Figure: A small tomb near Haifa, Israel
(courtesy of Padfield.com)*

- d. How do they know where to go to find the burial place of Jesus?
5. Upon arriving at the tomb, the women see that the stone had been removed and, entering the tomb, they meet a "young man".
- a. What indicators are there that might suggest that the young man was an angel?
 - b. What is the announcement made by the young man, and what is his command?
 - c. Do the women obey the command?
6. Is there any difficulty explaining when and how Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene without the other women being present? Does Jesus appear to Mary after she and the other women flee the tomb, or does verse 9 go back in time to earlier in the morning?

7. The eleven do not believe Mary Magdalene's testimony nor the testimony of the two men Jesus appeared to while they were walking in the country. Jesus then appears to the eleven.
 - a. Do we know the location where the eleven saw Jesus?
 - b. Note the irony in that the disciples did not believe in Jesus' resurrection and yet were given the commission to proclaim the necessity of belief.
 - c. From the impression one gets from Mark's account, how many times does Jesus appear to the eleven before he ascends into heaven?
8. Modern translations indicate that the last twelve verses of Mark are not in the earliest Greek manuscripts which end the Gospel with verse 8 (see the discussion at the end of this lesson).
 - a. Assume that the Gospel does end with verse 8. If so, there are no resurrection appearances recorded and no Great Commission. Why would Mark stop at the point? What lesson or impression would he be trying to teach?

[The difficulty in answering this question has led many to say that, although the last twelve verses in our English Bibles are not original, it is improbable that Mark ended his Gospel with verse 8. Thus, they believe the original ending has been lost.]

- b. In addition to the textual argument, those who think that the last twelve verses are not genuine argue that it is clear that the style of these verses do not match Mark's style and that the content of the verses interrupt the flow of the earlier verses in chapter 16. Read the chapter as a whole. What is your honest opinion about the flow of the chapter? Do verses 9-20 fit well with the first 8 verses, or do they have the appearance of being added at a later date?
- c. Is there anything doctrinally taught in 16:9-20 that is not taught or alluded to elsewhere in scripture?

The Genuineness of Mark 16:9-20

Most modern translations give some sort of indication that the last twelve verses of Mark are not contained in the earliest Greek manuscripts. Nevertheless they all have decided to include these verses. There are other verses or groups of verses in the New Testament whose genuineness are questioned (e.g. John 8:1-11, Acts 8:37), but the ending of Mark has generated the most attention. However, there is nothing taught in these twelve verses that is not taught or illustrated in other portions of the New Testament.

The textual evidence is more complicated than simply whether or not the last twelve verses were part of Mark's Gospel. There are four different endings to Mark's Gospel attested in various Greek manuscripts:

- 1) The two oldest Greek manuscripts in our possession, Sinaiticus (Ⲛ) and Vaticanus (B), come from the fourth century. Neither of these manuscripts contain the last twelve verses of Mark. In addition, one of the earliest versions (a version is a translation of the Greek text into another language), the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript, does not contain these verses, nor do about 100 Armenian manuscripts or the two oldest Georgian manuscripts (ninth century). Both Eusebius (AD 339) and Jerome (AD 420) comment that the majority of Greek manuscripts known to them did not contain these verses, nevertheless Jerome did include them in his Latin translation the Vulgate.
- 2) Although the last twelve verses of the Mark (called the "longer ending" of Mark) are not included in the two oldest manuscripts they are included in three important fifth century Greek manuscripts, the Codex Alexandrinus, Ephraemi Rescriptus, and the Codex Washingtonianus manuscript. The Alexandrinus manuscript is especially held in high regard and at times modern critical textual scholars have preferred its reading above that of the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. About 99% of all known Greek manuscripts include these verses (although some have scribal notes stating that older Greek manuscripts lack these verses). Equally important, Irenaeus quotes from Mark 9:19 in the second century (over 100 years earlier than the Sinaiticus manuscript).
- 3) Several late Greek manuscripts of the seventh century and later have what is called the "shorter ending" of Mark following verse 8. It states "But they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all that they had been told. And after this Jesus himself sent out by means of them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation." Nearly all of these manuscripts then continue with verses 9-20. No scholar argues that the shorter ending is genuine.
- 4) The Codex Washingtonianus noted above as including verses 9-20 also has another section of text inserted after verse 14. This additional text is clearly has no claims to being original.

On the basis of the textual evidence alone, most scholars would acknowledge that it is very possible that the text of verses 9-20 is genuine. However, the vast majority of scholars do not believe them to be genuine when internal evidences are also considered. They argue that the style and vocabulary of verses 9-20 is drastically different than the earlier sections of Mark which to them suggests a different author. However, scholars are divided between the opinion that the original ending of Mark was lost (since they cannot conceive of the Gospel ending with verse 8) and the opinion that Mark indeed did intend to end his Gospel with verse 8 (which seems to be getting more recent support, even among evangelical scholars).

So, is Mark 16:9-20 genuine? The only possible answer is that we do not know. Even if it is not genuine, all would agree that it was added at a very early date.

LESSON 3

Matthew's Burial and Resurrection Narrative

Introduction One of the ironies at Jesus' death is that his chosen disciples flee and abandon him, whereas a previously unknown disciple comes to the forefront to assume responsibility to bury the body of Jesus. And as Matthew tells us, the enemies of Jesus take Jesus' statements concerning his resurrection more seriously than the disciples themselves.

Matthew 27:57-28:20

⁵⁷When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud ⁶⁰and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

⁶²Next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.'⁶⁴Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can." ⁶⁶So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

^{28:1}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. ²And 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. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷Then 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." ⁸So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

¹¹While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. ¹²And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of

money to the soldiers ¹³and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

¹⁶Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Questions / Comments

1. Matthew also tells of Joseph of Arimathea requesting the body of Jesus.
 - a. What two additional items do we learn about Joseph?
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - b. How does one reconcile Joseph being a disciple of Jesus and also a member of the Council that as a "whole" (Mt. 26:59) condemned Jesus?

Some try to avoid this problem by suggesting that the description used by Mark (and Luke) that Joseph was a "member of the Council" did not mean that he was a member of the Sanhedrin (e.g. Nineham), but simply an official (compare KJV "an honourable counselor" Mk.14:43). Others suggest that Joseph was not a disciple at the time of Jesus' death, but since he later converted he was described as a disciple by Matthew.

- c. What does Matthew also explicitly make clear about the tomb?

If Joseph was from Arimathea, why would he have a tomb in Jerusalem?

2. If the Romans had their way, the body of Jesus would have hung on the cross until it decayed. However, Jews were very strict in their burial practices and insisted upon burying the body on the day of death (Deut. 21:23). So how long does Joseph have to bury Jesus?

Early Traditions Related to the Gospel of Matthew

1. Matthew wrote his Gospel for Jewish Christians.
2. Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew and later it was translated into Greek. (If Matthew did write in Hebrew, no copies remain; only Greek manuscripts exist today.)

3. Matthew's account is unique in recording the Jew's request for a guard to be placed at the tomb and the subsequent cover-up after Jesus' resurrection.
 - a. What is the apparent reason this incident is recorded? (28: 15b)
 - b. Why is appropriate that Matthew is the Gospel writer to relate this incident?
 - c. Pilate's statement "You have a guard of soldiers..." has been taken to mean either that the Jews had their own guard that Pilate is telling them to use (as is implied by the ESV above, NKJV, NASB, NRSV, etc) or that Pilate was assigning to them a Roman guard for this purpose (cf. NIV "Take a guard"). Based on the text, which is more likely?
 - d. Following the resurrection, the guards testify that Jesus disciples stole the body of Jesus while they slept. Why is this an obvious false report?

Matthew reports that "this story had been spread among the Jews to this day" (27:15). Justin Martyr also reported this story in the middle of the second century (*Dialogue with Tryphro*).

- e. Many modern scholars [e.g. Perkins, p.124] think that this incident concerning the guard is legendary and was simply created by the early Christians to counteract the Jewish charge that the disciples stole Jesus' body. As evidence for their view, they would note how the Jewish leaders understood Jesus' teaching that he would rise after three days, even though Jesus' disciples themselves did not understand this. What do you think?
4. Compare Matthew's and Mark's accounts of the women arriving at the tomb and the subsequent events. Note the differences and similarities:

_____ Matthew _____

_____ Mark _____

Church of the Holy Sepulchre (from Wikipedia)

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, called the Church of the Resurrection (*Anastasis* in Greek and *Surp Harutyun* in Armenian) by Eastern Christians, is a Christian church now within the walled Old City of Jerusalem. The ground on which the church rests is venerated by most Christians as Golgotha, the Hill of Calvary, where the New Testament describes that Jesus was crucified. It also is said to contain the place where Jesus was reportedly buried (the sepulchre). The church has been an important pilgrimage destination since the 4th century. Today it serves as the headquarters of the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Catholic Archpriest of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre.

Eusebius describes in his *Life of Constantine* how the site of the Holy Sepulchre, originally a site of veneration for the Christian community in Jerusalem, had been covered with earth and a temple of Venus had been built on top. Following his conversion to Christianity, Emperor Constantine ordered in about 325/326 that the site be uncovered, and instructed Saint Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, to build a church on the site.

Constantine's church was built around the excavated hill of the Crucifixion, and was actually three connected churches built over the three different holy sites, including a great basilica (the *Martyrium*), an enclosed colonnaded atrium (the *Triportico*) built around the traditional Rock of Calvary, and a rotunda, called the *Anastasis* ("Resurrection"), which contained the remains of the cave that Helena and Macarius had identified with the burial site of Jesus. The surrounding rock was cut away, and the Tomb was encased in a structure called the *Edicule* (Latin *aediculum*, small building; shown below) or the *Kouvoulkion* (Greek, shrine) in the center of the rotunda. The dome of the rotunda was completed by the end of the 4th century.

In the nineteenth century, a number of scholars disputed the identification of the Church with the actual site of Jesus's crucifixion and burial. They reasoned that the Church was inside the city walls, while early accounts (*e.g.*, Hebrews 13:12) described these events as outside the walls. On the morning after his arrival in Jerusalem, General Gordon selected a rock-cut tomb in a cultivated area outside the walls as a more likely site for the burial of Jesus. This site is usually referred to as the Garden Tomb to distinguish it from the Holy Sepulchre, and it is still a popular pilgrimage site for those (usually Protestants) who doubt the authenticity of the Anastasis and/or do not have permission to hold services in the Church itself.



However, it has since been determined that the site was indeed outside the city walls at the time of the crucifixion. The Jerusalem city walls were expanded by Herod Agrippa in 41–44, and only then enclosed the site of the Holy Sepulchre, at which time the surrounding garden mentioned in the Bible would have been built up as well. To quote the Israeli scholar Dan Bahat, former City Archaeologist of Jerusalem:

"We may not be absolutely certain that the site of the Holy Sepulchre Church is the site of Jesus' burial, but we have no other site that can lay a claim nearly as weighty, and we really have no reason to reject the authenticity of the site."

LESSON 4

Luke's Burial and Resurrection Narrative (I)

Introduction Luke provides a much fuller account of the events following Jesus' resurrection than Mark and Matthew. This lesson will focus upon the first part of Luke's account.

Luke 23:50-24:24

⁵⁰Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, ⁵¹who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. ⁵²This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. ⁵⁴It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. ⁵⁵The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. ⁵⁶Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

^{24:1}But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. ²And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. ⁵And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." ⁸And they remembered his words, ⁹and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, ¹¹but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹²But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

¹³That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have

happened there in these days?" ¹⁹And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²²Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some 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."

Questions / Comments

1. Joseph of Arimathea again.
 - a. What additional information about Joseph does Luke provide? And what significant information does he not include?
 - b. Luke identifies Arimathea as a "Jewish" town. What may that imply about his readers?
 - c. Luke does not mention that the Joseph laid the body of Jesus in his *own* tomb, but he does mention what significant fact?
2. According to Luke's account, when did the women prepare the spices they planned to use to anoint the body of Jesus? Does this agree with Mark's account?
3. Do verses 2-3 describing the women's arrival at the tomb agree better with Mark's or Matthew's account?
4. Consider the message of the angels (= "two men ... in dazzling apparel", cf v.23).
 - a. What additional information do they provide that Mark and Matthew did not?
 - b. The message includes a statement about Galilee, but how is it different than what Mark or Matthew recorded?

<p style="text-align: center;">Early Traditions Related to the Gospel of Luke</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Luke wrote his Gospel for Gentiles.2. Luke was a physician by training.3. Luke was a companion of the apostle Paul.

5. Based on Matthew's, Mark's, and Luke's record, which women went to the tomb on Sunday morning?

Any others?

6. Following the women's report to the apostles and the Luke's statement that the apostles did not believe the women, what additional new fact does Luke record?

Besides the apostles, the women also reported their experiences to "all the rest." Who are they?

7. Luke records Jesus' appearance to two men who were traveling to Emmaus.
 - a. Are these the same men mentioned in Mark 16:12-13?
 - b. Luke says that "their eyes were kept from recognizing him." Was this a problem God imposed on their eyes, or was it that Jesus was in "another form" (Mark 16:12)?
 - c. What was their view of Jesus?
 - d. What is the implication of the word "amazed" in v.22?
8. The *Gospel of Peter* is a document from the second century that was referred to in the writings of early Christians (e.g. Eusebius), but no copies existed until archaeologists found a partial copy in the grave of a Christian monk in 1886. It makes for interesting reading. In some instances it is clearly wrong (e.g. exonerating Pilate of his crime), thus it is not certain if any of its details are correct. The following translation is by Raymond Brown, a highly respected Catholic scholar. For an extended discussion of this document, see Brown, Death, Vol.2, Appendix 1, p.1317-1349.

What are the significant differences with the Gospel accounts?

The Gospel of Peter

Translated by Raymond Brown

[1] But of the Jews none washed his hands, neither Herod nor one of his judges. And since they did not desire to wash, Pilate stood up. [2] And then Herod the king orders the Lord to be taken away, having said to them, 'What I ordered you to do, do.'

[3] But Joseph, the friend of Pilate and of the Lord, had been standing there; and knowing they were about to crucify him, he came before Pilate and requested the body of the Lord for burial. [4] And Pilate, having sent to Herod, requested his body. [5] And Herod said: 'Brother Pilate, even if no one had requested him, we would have buried him, since indeed Sabbath is dawning. For in the Law it has been written: The sun is not to set on one put to death.'

And he gave him over to the people before the first day of their feast of the Unleavened Bread. [6] But having taken the Lord, running, they were pushing him and saying, 'Let us drag along the Son of God now that we have power over him.' [7] And they clothed him with purple and sat him on a chair of judgment, saying: 'Judge justly, King of Israel.' [8] And a certain one of them, having brought a thorny crown, put it on the head of the Lord. [9] And others who were standing there were spitting in his face, and others slapped his cheeks. Others were jabbing him with a reed; and some scourged him, saying, 'With such honor let us honor the Son of God.'

[10] And they brought two wrongdoers and crucified the Lord in the middle of them. But he was silent as having no pain. [11] And when they had set the cross upright, they inscribed that THIS IS THE KING OF ISRAEL. [12] And having put his garments before him, they divided them up and threw as a gamble for them. [13] But a certain one of those wrongdoers reviled them, saying: 'We have been made suffer thus because of the wrong that we have done; but this one, having become Savior of men, what injustice had he done to you?' [14] And having become irritated at him, they ordered that there be no leg-breaking, so that he might die tormented.

[15] But it was midday, and darkness held fast all Judea; and they were distressed and anxious lest the sun had set, since he was still living. [For] it is written for them: Let not the sun set on one put to death. [16] And someone of them said: 'Give him to drink gall with vinegary wine.' And having made a mixture, they gave to drink. [17] And they fulfilled all things and completed the sins on their own head. [18] But many went around with lamps, thinking that it was night, and they fell. [19] And the Lord screamed out, saying: 'My power, O power, you have forsaken me.' And having said this, he was taken up.

[20] And at the same hour the veil of the Jerusalem sanctuary was torn into two. [21] And they drew out the nails from the hands of the Lord and placed him on the earth; and all the earth was shaken, and a great fear came about. [22] Then the sun shone, and it was found to be the ninth hour. [23] And the Jews rejoiced and gave his body to Joseph that he might bury it, since he was one who had seen the many good things he did. [24] And having taken the Lord, he washed and tied him with a linen cloth and brought him into his own sepulcher, called the Garden of Joseph.

[25] Then the Jews and the elders and the priests, having come to know how much wrong they had done themselves, began to beat themselves and say: 'Woe to our sins. The judgment has approached and the end of Jerusalem.' [26] But I with the companions was sorrowful; and having been wounded in spirit, we were in hiding, for we were sought after by them as wrongdoers and as wishing to set fire to the sanctuary. [27] In addition to all these things we were fasting; and we were sitting mourning and weeping night and day until the Sabbath.

[28] But the scribes and Pharisees and elders, having gathered together with one another, having heard that all the people were murmuring and beating their breasts, saying that 'If at his death these very great signs happened, behold how just he was,' [29] feared (especially the elders) and came before Pilate, begging him and saying, [30] 'Give over soldiers to us in order that we may safeguard his burial place for three days, lest, having come, his disciples steal him, and the people accept that he is risen from the death, and they do us wrong.' [31] But Pilate gave over to them Petronius the centurion with soldiers to safeguard the sepulcher. And with these the elders and scribes came to the burial place. [32] And having rolled a large stone, all who were there, together with the centurion and the soldiers, placed it against the door of the burial place. [33] And they marked it with seven wax seals; and having pitched a tent there, they safeguarded it. [34] But early when the Sabbath was dawning, a crowd came from Jerusalem and the surrounding area in order that they might see the sealed tomb.

[35] But in the night in which the Lord's day dawned, when the soldiers were safeguarding it two by two in every watch, there was a loud voice in heaven; [36] and they saw that the heavens were opened and that two males who had much radiance had come down from there and come near the sepulcher. [37] But that stone which had been thrust against the door, having rolled by itself, went a distance off the side; and the sepulcher opened, and both the young men entered. [38] And so those soldiers, having seen, awakened the centurion and the elders (for they too were present, safeguarding). [39] And while they were relating what they had seen, again they see three males who have come out from the sepulcher, with the two supporting the other one, and a cross following them, [40] and the head of the two reaching unto heaven, but that of the one being led out by a hand by them going beyond the heavens. [41] And they were hearing a voice from the heavens saying, 'Have you made proclamation to the fallen-asleep?' [42] And an obeisance was heard from the cross, 'Yes.' [43] And so those people were seeking a common perspective to go off and make these things clear to Pilate; [44] and while they were still considering it through, there appear again the opened heavens and a certain man having come down and entered into the burial place. [45] Having seen these things, those around the centurion hastened at night before Pilate (having left the sepulcher which they were safeguarding) and described all the things that they indeed had seen, agonizing greatly and saying: 'Truly he was God's Son.' [46] In answer Pilate said: 'I am clean of the blood of the Son of God, but it was to you that this seemed [the thing to do].' [47] Then all, having come forward, were begging and exhorting him to command the centurion and the soldiers to say to no one what they had seen. [48] 'For,' they said, 'it is better for us to owe the debt of the greatest sin in the sight of God than to fall into the hands of the Jewish people and be stoned.' [49] And so Pilate ordered the centurion and the soldiers to say nothing.

[50] Now at the dawn of the Lord's Day Mary Magdalene, a female disciple of the Lord (who, afraid because of the Jews since they were inflamed with anger, had not done at the tomb of the Lord what women were accustomed to do for the dead beloved by them), [51] having taken with her women friends, came to the tomb where he had been placed. [52] And they were afraid lest the Jews should see them and were saying, 'If indeed on that day on which he was crucified we could not weep and beat ourselves, yet now at his tomb we may do these things. [53] But who will roll away for us even the stone placed against the door of the tomb in order that, having entered, we may sit beside him and do the expected things? [54] For the stone was large, and we were afraid lest anyone see us. And if we are unable, let us throw against the door what we bring in memory of him; let us weep and beat ourselves until we come to our homes.' [55] And having gone off, they found the sepulcher opened. And having come forward, they bent down there and saw there a certain young man seated in the middle of the sepulcher, comely and clothed with a splendid robe, who said to them: [56] 'Why have you come? Whom do you seek? Not that one who was crucified? He is risen and gone away. But if you do not believe, bend down and see the

place where he lay, because he is not here. For he is risen and gone away to there whence he was sent.' [57] Then the women fled frightened.

[58] Now it was the final day of the Unleavened Bread; and many went out returning to their home since the feast was over. [59] But we twelve disciples of the Lord were weeping and sorrowful; and each one, sorrowful because of what had come to pass, departed to his home. [60] But I, Simon Peter, and my brother Andrew, having taken our nets, went off to the sea. And there was with us Levi of Alphaeus whom the Lord ...

<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/gospelpeter-brown.html>

LESSON 5

Luke's Burial and Resurrection Narrative (II)

Introduction Luke gives particular attention to the appearances immediately following Jesus' resurrection.

Luke 24:25-24:53

²⁵And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

²⁸So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" ³³And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

³⁶As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" ³⁷But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. ³⁸And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." ⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate before them.

⁴⁴Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

⁵⁰Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. ⁵¹While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Questions / Comments

1. Luke records Jesus' rebuke to Cleopas and his companion for their unbelief.
 - a. Instead of mentioning their unbelief of the women's testimony, who was it that Jesus rebuked them for not believing?
 - b. What had the prophets foretold about Jesus?
2. Luke says that Jesus began with "Moses and the Prophets" and "interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."
 - a. What does that say about the necessity of understanding the Old Testament for a proper understanding of the New?
 - b. What other words do various translations use for the word "interpreted"? Is there implied a sense in which the meaning of Scripture is hidden until it is interpreted? (consider also 24:45).
3. Earlier, Luke said that "their eyes were kept from recognizing him" (v.16), but after the meal, Luke records that "their eyes were opened, and they recognized him" (v.31).
 - a. Is this implying that God prevented them from recognizing Jesus? If so, why?
 - b. Is it just interesting or is it significant that immediately after their eyes are "opened" that the two disciples describe Jesus' expounding the Scriptures as "he opened to us the Scripture"?
 - c. When the two disciples tell the eleven about their encounter with Jesus, they associate their recognition of him with the "breaking of the bread". Do you see any overtones to the Lord's Supper in this account?
4. Jesus "vanished from their sight" (v.31). Does this mean he simply departed, or is it suggesting a miraculous departure?

5. When the two disciples go the eleven, the statement is made that Jesus “appeared to Simon”.
 - a. Who is making this statement? The two disciples or the eleven?
 - b. Is Peter the Simon under consideration?
 - c. Do any of the Gospels record a private appearance to Peter?
6. In what city were the eleven when Jesus appeared to them?

Where were they in Matthew’s account? Explain.

7. Luke records Jesus’ strong rebuke of the two for their slowness to understand the significance of the day’s events (“O foolish ones...), but does not record Jesus’ rebuke of the disciples (like that recorded by Mark). Any ideas why?
8. In addition to the information he provides in his Gospel, Luke begins Acts (the second volume of his account to Theophilus) with a summary of the events following Jesus’ resurrection.
 - a. In the Gospel, Luke simply reports that Jesus says that he is sending the “promise of my Father” and that the disciples are to stay in Jerusalem until they receive the “power from on high.” What is the promise and the power as told in Acts?
 - b. In the Gospel, a reader could easily get the impression that Jesus only met with his disciples once following his resurrection and that he ascended on the same day as his resurrection. What does Luke tell us about that in Acts?

Thus, did Jesus tell his disciples to “stay in Jerusalem” in his first meeting with them?

What does this tell us about the nature of the narratives in the Gospels?

Does that mean that they are unreliable?

Women in Jewish Society

All four Gospels record that the women who followed Jesus were the first to see him following his resurrection and were the first to report Jesus' resurrection to the eleven apostles. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Joses and James, Salome, and Joanna are specifically mentioned in the Gospel accounts as being within the group of women who saw Jesus, although Mary Magdalene receives special attention in Mark and John. Luke had earlier recorded how these women followed Jesus and that some of them helped financially support Jesus and his disciples out of their own means (Luke 8:1-3). It is interesting then when we read of Paul's list of those that saw Jesus in 1 Corinthians 15:5-8 that Paul does not mention any of these women. Why not?

The answer generally given is that in Jewish society at the time of Jesus women were not permitted to be legal witnesses. Thus, the value of their testimony would have been seen as worthless. A hint of this is perhaps suggested by the response of the eleven apostles when they heard the testimony of the women; their words "seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them" (Luke 24:11).

Jeremias provides this account of the position of women in Jewish society at the time of Jesus:

"Eastern women take no part in public life. This was true of Judaism in the time of Jesus, in all cases where Jewish families faithfully observed the Law. When the Jewess of Jerusalem left her house, her face was hidden by an arrangement of two head veils, a head-band on the forehead with bands to the chin, and a hairnet with ribbons and knots, so that her features could not be recognized... Any woman who went out without this headdress, i.e. without her face being hidden, committed such an offense against good taste that her husband had the right – and indeed the duty – to put her away from him...

Rules of propriety forbade a man to be alone with a woman, to look at a married woman, or even to give her a greeting. It was disgraceful for a scholar to speak with a woman in the street...

It was considered preferable for a woman, and especially an unmarried girl, in general not to go out at all... Philo says that the Jewish woman of Alexandria were kept in seclusion, 'never even approaching the outer door. As for their maidens, they remained confined to the inner chambers...and for modesty's sake avoided the sight of men, even of their closest relations. [Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, p.359-361, references omitted.]

Jeremias goes to say that there were exceptions to these customs, and more so in the rural areas.

Edwards summarizes the religious restrictions placed on women:

"Women's participation in public worship was limited. In Herod's temple they were confined to an outer court fifteen steps below the men's. It is generally believed that they were separated also in synagogue worship...Rabbinic writings attest other restrictions. Women did not count as part of the *minyan* (quorum for a congregation; by custom they were not called upon to read lessons at worship; they could not act as legal witnesses; they could not pronounce the blessings at meals; they were even discouraged from studying the law..." [ISBE, Revised, Vol.4, p.1093]

But God so willed that Jesus be first seen by women!

LESSON 6

John's Burial and Resurrection Narrative (I)

John 19:38-20:29

³⁸After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. ³⁹Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. ⁴⁰So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴²So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

^{20:1}Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. ⁴Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, ⁷and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples went back to their homes.

¹¹But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. ¹²And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. ¹³They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." ¹⁴Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus 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." ¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to

them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' " ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"—and that he had said these things to her.

¹⁹On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²²And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld."

²⁴Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

²⁶Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Questions / Comments

1. What additional information does John give about Joseph of Arimathea?

Summarize everything we know about Joseph.

2. On what earlier occasions does John tell us about Nicodemus?

3. What new bits of information does John tell us about the burial of Jesus?

And what does John not tell us that the other Gospel writers do?

Early Traditions Related to the Gospel of John

1. John dictated the Gospel to Papias, a disciple of John, who wrote it down.
2. John was living in Ephesus at the time the gospel was written.

4. John only tells us of Mary's visit to the tomb, and even that in a very brief way.
 - a. Any problem with it being "still dark" when she came to the tomb?
 - b. What was Mary's explanation to the Peter and the "other disciple" for why the tomb was empty?
 - c. Who is the "other disciple"?
5. Luke also describes Peter's visit to the tomb. What are the differences between Luke's and John's account?
6. John's record of Mary Magdalene encountering the angels is in a different sequence than that in the Synoptic Gospels.
 - a. Where does Mary see the angels?
 - b. What is absent in John's narrative of the angels that we find in the other gospel narratives?
7. Jesus' comment to Mary (v.17) has been variously understood with alternate translations proposed. But all major modern translations rendered it something like the ESV above. So why does Jesus tell Mary to stop touching (clinging) to him?
8. Jesus appears to the disciples on the evening of his resurrection day.
 - a. John says that the disciples had gathered behind locked doors "for fear of the Jews" (20:19). Is there any significance to the fact that John uses the same phrase to describe Joseph earlier (19:38)?
 - b. Compare John's account with the other Gospel writers. Which account is most like John's?
9. Thomas has been introduced previously by John. (Thomas and Didymus (KJV) are the Hebrew and Greek words, respectively, that means *twin*.)
 - a. Where?
 - b. What type of person was Thomas?
 - c. Is Thomas deserving of the negative title "Doubting Thomas"?
10. On what day of the week did the Lord meet with the disciples the second time?

Why would the disciples wait a week until going to Galilee (as they were instructed in the other Gospels)?

First-Century Burial Confirms Gospel Details
Good News magazine, March/April 2005, Vol. 10, Num. 2

For years scholars have puzzled over a curious detail mentioned in the Gospel of John concerning Jewish burial practices in the first century. In describing the entombments of Jesus Christ (John 20:7) and His friend Lazarus (John 11:44), John writes of both men having had their bodies wrapped with a linen cloth for burial, but with a separate, smaller cloth wrapped around their heads.

While archaeology has confirmed many details of the Gospels, ancient fabrics are very fragile and decay completely within a few decades unless preserved under extraordinary circumstances. However, in the spring of 2000, a set of extraordinary circumstances led to a once-in-a-lifetime discovery for several archaeologists.

That morning Israeli archaeologist Shimon Gibson and Professor James Tabor of the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, with some of Dr. Tabor's archaeology students, happened on a first-century Jewish tomb in Jerusalem's Hinnom Valley that apparently had been plundered only the night before.

They immediately notified the Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA) of the crime and, since Gibson worked for the IAA, they received permission to enter and examine the pillaged tomb.

Most tombs in the Jerusalem area, of which more than a thousand are known, were plundered long ago. A few, however, have remained intact over the centuries. This had been one of the few. Now it had been broken into and pillaged for artifacts that could perhaps be sold on the antiquities market.

Inside the multilevel tomb the group found the remains of several ossuaries, small limestone boxes that had held the bones of Jewish men and women who had been entombed there. Regrettably, they had been shattered by the thieves, who then stole fragments that apparently bore the names of those whose bones had been contained in the ossuaries.

The most important find, however, remained undisturbed in one of the tomb's small chambers. "In the third level [of the tomb], which is the lowest level, we found . . . the skeleton of a person with a burial shroud still over his shoulders," reported Dr. Tabor. But even more remarkable, the man's body had been wrapped with two pieces of fabric—one around the body and a separate, smaller piece around the head, just as described in John's Gospel.

Small samples of the fabric were radiocarbon dated to the first century—the time during which Jesus lived. Clearly John had faithfully and accurately recorded this detail of Jewish burial practices from the first century.

Due to the find's importance, announcement of the discovery was postponed until scientific analysis could be completed and material prepared for publication.

How had the fabric been preserved all those centuries? Through a geological fluke, a crack in the limestone from which the tomb had been carved had drained ground moisture away from that one particular chamber, leaving it dry and protected—and leaving us evidence that the Gospels indeed are an accurate historical record of real first-century events. (*Source: Lecture by Professor James Tabor, International Symposium on Archaeology and the Bible, Jan. 14.*)

LESSON 7

John's Burial and Resurrection Narrative (II)

John 20:30-21:25

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

^{21:1}After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. ²Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. ³Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

⁴Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." ⁶He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. ⁷That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. ⁸The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

⁹When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹²Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. ¹⁴This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁵When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." ¹⁷He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to

him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." ¹⁹(This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me."

²⁰Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had been reclining at table close to him and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" ²¹When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" ²²Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!" ²³So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?"

²⁴This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

²⁵Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

Questions / Comments

1. Verse 20:30 sounds like the conclusion to the Gospel (but there are no Greek manuscripts that end with this verse). Why is this "conclusion" appropriate?

2. It is interesting that John uses the word "revealed" (21:1) to describe the appearance recorded in chapter 21. (A word not uncommon with John, cf. 1:31; 2:11; 17:6.)
 - a. What does the word "revealed" suggest as compared to the word "appeared"?

 - b. Is Jesus' appearance limited to the Eleven (apostles)?

3. The incident with the fishes is reminiscent of the occasion recorded in Luke 5:1-11.
 - a. What is similar and dissimilar about the two events?

 - b. Any symbolic meaning intended by John?

Shroud of Turin and the Sudarium of Oviedo (From Wikipedia)

The **Shroud of Turin** is an old linen cloth bearing the image of a man who appears to have been physically traumatized in a manner consistent with crucifixion. It is presently kept in the royal chapel of the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist in Turin, Italy. Some believe it is the cloth that covered Jesus when he was placed in his tomb and that his image was somehow recorded on its fibers at or near the time of his proclaimed resurrection. Skeptics contend the shroud is a medieval hoax or forgery - or even a devotional work of artistic verisimilitude. The Catholic Church, owners of the shroud, have made no pronouncements claiming it is Christ's burial shroud, or that it is a forgery.

Arguments and evidence cited against a miraculous origin of the shroud images include a letter from a medieval bishop to the Avignon pope claiming personal knowledge that the image was cleverly painted to gain money from pilgrims; radiocarbon tests in 1988 that yielded a medieval timeframe for the cloth's fabrication; and analysis of the image by microscopist Walter McCrone, who concluded ordinary pigments were used.

Arguments and evidence cited for the shroud's being something other than a medieval forgery include textile and material analysis pointing to a 1st-century origin; the unusual properties of the image itself which some claim could not have been produced by any image forming technique known before the 19th century; objective indications that the 1988 radiocarbon dating was invalid due to improper testing technique; and repeated peer-reviewed analyses of the image mode which contradict McCrone's assertions.

The shroud is rectangular, measuring approximately 14.4 x 3.6 ft. The cloth is woven in a herringbone twill and is composed of flax fibrils entwined with cotton fibrils. It bears the image of a front and dorsal view of a naked man with his hands folded across his groin. The two views are aligned along the midplane of the body and pointing in opposite directions. The front and back views of the head nearly meet at the middle of the cloth. The views are consistent with an orthographic projection of a human body.

The "Man of the Shroud" has a beard, moustache, and shoulder-length hair parted in the middle. He is well-proportioned and muscular, and quite tall (5 ft 9 in) for a man of the first century (the time of Jesus' death) or for the Middle Ages (the time of the first uncontested report of the shroud's existence, and the proposed time of possible forgery). Dark red stains, either blood or a substance meant to be perceived as blood, are found on the cloth, showing various wounds:

- at least one wrist bears a large, round wound, apparently from piercing (The second wrist is hidden by the folding of the hands)
- in the side, again apparently from piercing
- small wounds around the forehead
- scores of linear wounds on the torso and legs, apparently from scourging.

In 1898, amateur Italian photographer Secondo Pia took the first photograph of the shroud and was startled by the negative in his darkroom. The negative gave the appearance of a positive image, which implies that the shroud image is itself effectively a negative of some kind, as a negative of a negative is a positive. Observers often feel that the detail and heft of the man on the shroud is greatly enhanced in the photographic negative. Pia's results intensified interest in the shroud.

As a depiction of Jesus, the image on the shroud corresponds to that found throughout the history of Christian iconography. For instance, the Pantocrator icon at Daphne in Athens is strikingly similar. But the locations of the piercing wounds in the wrists on the shroud do not correspond to artistic renditions of the crucifixion before close to the present time. In fact, the Shroud was widely dismissed as a forgery in the 14th century for this very reason, as the Latin Vulgate Bible stated that the nails had been driven into Jesus' hands and Medieval art invariably depicts the wounds in Jesus' hands. Modern biblical translations recognize this as an error translating the Greek text of the Gospels. Additionally, modern medical science reveals that the metacarpal bones are incapable of supporting a crucified body, and that, contrary to the almost universally held belief in the 14th century, the nails had to have been driven through the victim's wrists, as depicted in the Shroud.

In the northern Spanish city of Oviedo, there is a small bloodstained piece of linen that is also revered as one of the burial cloths mentioned in John 20:7. John refers to a "sudarium") that covered the head and the "linen cloth" or "bandages" that covered the body. The **sudarium of Oviedo** is traditionally held to be this cloth that covered the head of Jesus.

The sudarium's existence and presence in Oviedo is well attested since the eighth century and in Spain since the seventh century. Before these dates the location of the sudarium is less certain, but some scholars trace it to Jerusalem in the first century. Forensic analysis of the bloodstains on the shroud and the sudarium suggest that both cloths may have covered the same head at nearly the same time. Based on the bloodstain patterns, the Sudarium would have been placed on the man's head while he was in a vertical position, presumably while still hanging on the cross. This cloth was then presumably removed before the shroud was applied.

LESSON 8

Jesus' Foretelling of His Resurrection

Introduction Throughout Jesus' ministry, Jesus told his disciples both of his crucifixion and his resurrection.

Matthew 16:21-23

From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²²And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." ²³But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Mark 8:31-33

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him ³³But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Luke 9:21-22

And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, ²²saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised."

Questions / Comments

1. What is the context for this section, i.e. what happens immediately before and after this occasion?

How does Jesus' prediction "fit" the context?

2. Jesus is emphatic that he must suffer and be killed.
 - a. Why "must" that be the case?
 - b. Why must it happen in Jerusalem and at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and scribes?

Matthew 17:22-23

As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, ²³and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day." And they were greatly distressed.

Mark 9:31-32

For he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." ³²But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

Luke 9:44-45

"Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men." ⁴⁵But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

Questions / Comments

3. What is the context for this saying of Jesus?
4. On the earlier occasion, the disciples apparently understood the thrust of Jesus' statement. (Mark says that Jesus spoke "plainly" (8:32) and Peter's response suggests that he understood.)
 - a. So why do they not understand now?
 - b. How do you reconcile that Jesus wanted them to understand ("Let these words sink into your ears") and that the saying was "concealed from them"?
5. People may be afraid to ask another because they fear the wrath of the one asked or perhaps because of the sensitivity of the subject matter. Which is the reason the disciples are afraid to ask Jesus about his statement?

Matthew 20:17-19

And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, ¹⁸"See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death ¹⁹and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.

Mark 10:32-34

And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, ³³saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴ And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise."

Luke 18:31-34

And taking the twelve, he said to them. "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. ³²For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. ³³And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise."
³⁴But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

Questions / Comments

6. What is the significance of Jesus pointing out that they were going to Jerusalem?
7. Luke alone refers to those things written by the prophets. What are some of the prophetic statements that refer to Jesus' suffering / resurrection?

Matthew 26:32

"But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."

Mark 14:28

"But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."

Questions / Comments

8. Note the context of this saying: Jesus tells his disciples they will all "fall away." So what is the point of telling them that he go before them to Galilee?
9. Recall the angel's message concerning Galilee following his resurrection (cf. Mt.28:7; Mk 16:7).

Matthew 12:38-40

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." 39 But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

John 2:18-22

So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you will raise it up in three days?" 21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Questions / Comments

10. These passages are not paralleled, but both tell of conversations Jesus had with the Jews when they asked for a sign. What is the only sign that Jesus will offer them?
11. Jesus makes a reference to the "sign of Jonah" in Luke 11:29-32. Is he making the same point in that passage as the one he is making in Matthew 12?
12. Usually Jesus said that he would rise "on the third day" or "after three days". This is the only time (I think) that Jesus (or the Scriptures) uses the expression "three days and three nights". Does this expression give you any problem with the traditional chronology of a Friday afternoon crucifixion and a Sunday morning resurrection?
13. What "Scripture" is John referring to that the disciples believed following his resurrection?

"The Jesus Family Tomb"

In 1980, an ancient family tomb in Talpoit, a neighborhood in southeastern Jerusalem, was excavated that contained ten ossuaries (bone boxes for secondary burial). Amos Kloner, a reputable archeologist, published the first detailed study of this tomb and its contents. Six of the ossuaries were inscribed with the following names: Mariamenon [who is] Mara, Judas son of Jesus, Matthias, Jesus son of Joseph, Joses, and Mary. One of the four unscrubbed ossuaries was later lost.

Although it is interesting that all these names have parallels in the New Testament, it should not be considered unusual, since in the first century Mary was the most popular female name and the four male names inscribed were among the ten most popular male names. As far as "Jesus son of Joseph", it has been estimated that there would have been at least 1,000 men with that name in the first century.

In 2007, Simcha Jacobovici and Charles R. Pellegrino authored a book entitled *The Jesus Family Tomb: The Discovery, the Investigation, and the Evidence That Could Change History* in which they make the sensational claim that this was the family tomb of Jesus. If true, then the Gospel accounts of Jesus physically being resurrected would be untrue (resurrected bodies would not be found in a bone box!). The narrative they suggest is that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and they had a son named Judas (note the inscriptions above).

An additional feature of their story ties into another controversial ossuary discovered in 2002: the "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus" ossuary. Scholars continue to disagree as to whether this is actual bone box of the James of the New Testament.¹ Jacobovici and Pellegrino claim that the "James" ossuary is in fact the lost ossuary from the Talpoit tomb. Although this claim may initially give credence to their narrative (Jesus did have a brother named James), it actually may undermine it since it requires that the Kloner, the archeologist who studied and documented the Talpoit tomb, somehow overlooked the "James..." inscription on the ossuary that was later lost – extremely unlikely for a professional archeologist.

Even though there are a substantial number of New Testament scholars who do not believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus (choosing rather to speak of a *spiritual* resurrection), the claim of Jacobovici and Pellegrino has received scant scholarly support. Charles Quarles assembled a qualified group of scholars to convincingly demonstrate the weakness of Jacobovici and Pellegrino claim.² Unfortunately, such demonstration does not negate the appeal such claims have in the popular mind that is already predisposed to reject Biblical truths.

Notes

¹ In favor of its authenticity: Shanks, Hershal and Ben Witherington III, *The Brother of Jesus*, Harper Collins, 2003. Denying its authenticity: Byrne, Ryan and Bernadette McNary-Zak, eds., *Resurrecting the Brother of Jesus: The James Ossuary Controversy and the Quest for Religious Relics*, University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

² Charles L. Quarles, ed., *Buried Hope or Risen Savior? The Search for the Jesus Tomb*, B&H Publishing Group, 2008.

LESSON 9 Jesus' Resurrection in New Testament Preaching

Introduction The Book of Acts provides the earliest examples of gospel preaching, and hence a prime source for seeing the emphasis placed upon the resurrection in the early preaching. For each passage, note the context.

Acts 1:21-22 "So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us – one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection."

Context:

Questions / Comments

1. Even though the qualifications for Judas' replacement included having accompanied Jesus during the entire period of his ministry until his resurrection, it is the resurrection that is singled out as the event that the apostle must be a witness of. Why?
2. Does that in part explain why someone like Paul, who didn't accompany Jesus during his ministry, could be an apostle?

Acts 2:24-32 "God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. ²⁵For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; ²⁶therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. ²⁷For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. ²⁸You have made know to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' ²⁹Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendents on his throne, ³¹he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. ³²This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses."

Context:

Questions / Comments

3. Consider Peter's sermon on Pentecost.
 - a. What exactly is Peter trying to convince his Jewish audience of? [Notice the 'bookends' of this section, i.e. how Peter begins and ends this section.]
 - b. What are Peter's arguments to support his contention?

Acts 3:15 “and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.”

Context:

Questions / Comments

4. Simply note the three points made by Peter on this occasion.
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)

Acts 4:1-2, 10 “And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, ²greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead... ¹⁰let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead – by him this man is standing before you well.

Context:

Questions / Comments

5. Why were the Sadducees “annoyed”?
6. Is it simply that the apostles were preaching that Jesus was raised?

Acts 4:33 “And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Context:

Questions / Comments

7. What is suggested by the expression “with great power”?

Acts 5:29-32 “But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³²And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

Context:

Questions / Comments

8. What is the significance of Peter calling the cross “a tree”?
9. How is the Holy Spirit a joint witness with apostles?

Acts 10:39-41 And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.”

Context:

Questions / Comments

10. Peter makes explicit what can be observed by studying the resurrection narratives: Jesus only appeared to certain chosen ones. Why didn't Jesus appear to unbelievers like the Jewish leaders or Pilate?

Acts 13:29-39 “And when they carried out all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. ³⁰But God raised him from the dead, ³¹and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people. ³²And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, ³³this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you.’ ³⁴And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way, ‘I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.’ ³⁵‘You will not let your Holy One see corruption.’ ³⁶For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, ³⁷but he whom God raised up did not see corruption. ³⁸Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything ³⁹from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.”

Context:

Questions / Comments

11. Is it interesting that Paul does not include himself as one of the witnesses of Jesus' resurrection?
12. Jesus is said to “not see corruption”? What does that mean? That his body did not decay the three days he was in the grave?

Acts 17:3 “explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, ‘This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.’”

Context:

Questions / Comments

13. Note that the point that Paul had to explain and prove was that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and be raised, not Jesus was the Christ. What does this tell you about people’s expectation of the Messiah?

Acts 17:18, 32 “Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, “What does this babbler wish to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities” – because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection... ³²Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, ‘We will hear you again about this.’”

Context:

Questions / Comments

14. Was it simply Jesus’ resurrection from the dead that caused some to mocked?

Acts 23:6 “Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, ‘Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial.’”

Context:

Questions / Comments

15. If there is no resurrection of the dead, what hope is there?

Acts 26:22-23 “To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to the small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: ²³that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

Context:

Questions / Comments

16. What is implied when Paul says that Jesus was “the first to rise from the dead”?

Summary What are the common elements to these samples of early gospel preaching?

LESSON 10 *Jesus' Resurrection in New Testament Writings*

Introduction The resurrection of Jesus was not only a focal point in the early preaching it also was prominent in the apostolic writings directed to Christians. As seen in the following selection of passages, a proper understanding of the resurrection is needful and useful for Christians.

Romans 1:4 "and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,"

Romans 10:9 "because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Questions / Comments

1. What is the thrust of the word "declared" in Romans 1:4?
2. Both of these passages speak to the connection between the resurrection of Jesus and his Lordship.
 - a. Review again Peter's sermon in Acts 2. Peter argues on the basis of the resurrection that God made Jesus what? (2:36)
 - b. Compare the ESV translation of Romans 10:9 (above) with the KJV or NKJV. Is there a difference between "confessing the Lord Jesus" and "confessing that Jesus is Lord"?
3. When we say that one must "Hear-Believe-Repent-Confess-Be Baptized", what must be included in that which one must "believe"?

Romans 4:24b-25 "It will be counted to us [as righteousness, cb] who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification."

Questions / Comments

4. This passage comes at the end of Paul's discussion about the Abraham's faith. In this passage what does Paul say we must believe? And how is that different (if it is) than Romans 10:9?

Romans 6:4-5 “We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.”

Colossians 2:12 “having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

1 Peter 3:21 “Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone to heaven and is at the right hand of God...”

Questions / Comments

5. Each of these passages makes some connection (but not necessarily the same one) between baptism and the resurrection. What is that connection for each passage?

Romans:

Colossians:

1 Peter:

1 Corinthians 15:1-28 “Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ²and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain.

³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

¹²Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. ¹⁵We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³But

each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. ²⁸When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all."

Questions / Comments

6. What were some Corinthians saying? (v.12)
7. To contradict their incorrect teaching, Paul reminds them of the truths that he "received" and that he had "delivered" to them. What were the four things of "first importance" that Paul delivered?
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
8. Notice the order of appearances Paul records.
 - a. Does the order of the Lord appearing first to Cephas (Peter) and then to the twelve agree with the Gospel narratives we have studied?
 - b. Who is conspicuously missing from this list of appearances? Why?
 - c. What is uniquely (at least to the best of our knowledge) important about the appearances to James (the Lord's brother) and Paul? (Hint: note Paul's comment in v.9)
9. What is the ultimate sad consequence for Christians of the doctrine that there is no resurrection of the dead? (v.12-19)
10. On the other hand, what is the consequence for Christian of the doctrine that there is a resurrection of the dead? (v.20-28)

Romans 8:11 “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.”

1 Corinthians 6:14 “And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.”

2 Corinthians 4:14 “knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.”

Philippians 3:10-11 “that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.”

2 Timothy 2:18 “who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some.”

1 Peter 1:21 “who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”

Questions / Comments

11. When all is said and done, what is the fundamental basis of our hope of heaven? (Be careful).

And what is the primary evidence that God has given us that he has the power to raise us?

LESSON 11

The Resurrection and the Skeptic

Introduction Since the first century skeptics have denied the resurrection of Jesus. This lesson will look at their arguments. Not all skeptics give the same arguments as evidenced by the fact that some of the following arguments are mutually exclusive. Give thought to the implications of each argument and give a response.

Jesus Did Not Die On The Cross Known as the "swoon theory", it is held that Jesus simply passed out on the cross and that after his burial he revived and exited the tomb.

Jesus Was Buried In A Mass Grave Crucified criminals were usually buried by the Romans in a mass grave. Thus, the argument is simply that it is most reasonable to believe that Jesus too was buried in a mass grave and thus the Gospel accounts are incorrect. Since no one knew or could specifically identify where the body of Jesus was placed, no one could know of his resurrection.

The Body of Jesus was Stolen The very first argument to be put forward to deny the resurrection was that of the Jewish leaders who were an accomplice to the death of Jesus. The story was put forth that the body of Jesus was stolen (Matthew 28:11-15). Of course, according to Matthew, the story was a fabrication. Nevertheless, it is still suggested at times that the body was stolen, presumably by Jesus' disciples.

Jesus' Body was Reburied a Second Time One way of explaining the empty tomb was that Jesus body was moved from Joseph's tomb (possibly on Saturday evening following the Sabbath) and reburied elsewhere. It is suggested that Joseph only intended to provide for temporary internment of Jesus' body because the Sabbath was near, but following the Sabbath he had Jesus body moved to a permanent burial place. It is further suggested that the Joseph was not part of the group of disciples who associated with Jesus (indicated perhaps by Joseph not being assisted by the women in the initial preparations of Jesus' body for burial) and thus the women did not know that Jesus had been moved.

The Women Went To The Wrong Grave The women either did not see where Jesus was buried, or they forgot the exact tomb where Jesus was laid. Thus, on Sunday morning they went to the wrong tomb and jumped to the conclusion that Jesus was raised.

Paul Was Unaware Of The Empty Tomb Paul is universally believed to be the earliest New Testament writer to speak of the resurrection. It is held that Paul does not refer to the empty tomb in 1 Corinthians 15, thus Paul did not share the belief of a bodily resurrection of Jesus.

Mark Was Unaware Of Jesus Appearances Most believe that Mark was the earliest Gospel and since most also believe that Mark's Gospel ended with Mark 16:8, Mark was apparently unaware of any reported appearances of Jesus. Only as time passed and the legends grew did it become commonplace for it to be reported that Jesus was seen after his resurrection.

Jesus' Appearances Were Visions The most common skeptical explanation for the appearances of Jesus is that they were visions. The disciples were distraught and refused to accept the fact that Jesus was dead. In their desire to be with him they had visionary experiences that were mistaken as appearances. Besides wasn't the appearance to Paul a vision?

Jesus Only Appeared to Believers It is argued the New Testament accounts are biased, thus unreliable, as evidenced by the fact that Jesus is only reported to have appeared to believers.

Where Did Jesus Go Afterward? If Jesus rose from the grave, where did he go? If he ascended to heaven as told in Acts, then another doubtful event is required to be believed. This is just too much to be believed by modern men.

The Gospel Accounts Are Unreliable The Gospel accounts of Jesus' burial and resurrection are said to be inconsistent. Thus they are unreliable witnesses and should not be considered when trying to determine what actually occurred. And it could be said that Gospels are not consistent with Paul's writings. Why don't the Gospels mention the five hundred who saw Jesus at one time?

The New Testament Is Anti-Semitic It is held that if the New Testament accounts are taken at face value, then the Jews knew that Jesus rose from the dead, but simply refuse to acknowledge it. This picture of the Jews is consistent with the anti-Semitism of the Bible and is therefore not to be believed.

Dead People Stay Dead Since the time of the Enlightenment, there is a general disbelief in miracles. Man's ability to explain many natural events has convinced many that we must be able to scientifically explain all events. Thus, natural law precludes miracles. But at the time of Jesus' death, ancient people were willing to accept supernatural explanations. In essence, they were gullible.

The Lack of Veneration of Jesus Tomb This observation is used both by Christians and Skeptics. Christians argue that the early Christians did not venerate the tomb of Jesus since it was "empty". Skeptics argue that the early Christians would have desired to enshrine the tomb of Jesus, even though it was empty, but could not because they did not know where Jesus was buried (assuming one of the arguments above concerning the tomb of Jesus is correct).

LESSON 12

The Resurrection and the Christian

Introduction We have seen that the resurrection of Jesus has great implications: death has been conquered and Christians have the hope that the same God who raised Jesus from the dead will also raise them. But this truth gives rise to other questions. Two questions in particular were presented to Paul: “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” (1 Corinthians 15:35). The nature of the resurrected body and the state of individuals between their death and the resurrection day has been the focus of much discussion and speculation. That is probably inevitable, but it is of first importance to see what firm truths the scripture teach. Thus, this lesson will examine a few key passages.

Views of the Resurrection

Earth	Interim	Eternity
SOUL + BODY	BODY DIES SOUL LIVES	SOUL LIVES
SOUL + BODY	BODY DIES SOUL SLEEPS	SOUL LIVES
SOUL + BODY	BODY DIES SOUL LIVES	BODY LIVES SOUL LIVES

DEATH

RESURRECTION

For each passage listed, note what can be learned about the resurrected state.

Matthew 22:23-33//Mark 12:18-27//Luke 20:27-40 Reflect especially upon the statement “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels in heaven.”

Romans 8:9-25 This is clearly one of the most difficult passages in the New Testament. Think about the expressions “give life to your mortal bodies” (v.11) and “the redemption of our bodies” (v.23).

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

1 Corinthians 15:35-58
speaks of?

What can be learned about the “spiritual bodies” that Paul

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Philippians 1:21-24

Philippians 3:17-21

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