

Valley Bible Church – Life of Christ

FOCUS #10

THE PASSION WEEK OF JESUS

Resurrection Sunday

THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF THE LORD:

We are now ready to consider the final UNIT of this outline. As we do so, we will deal with items #196 - 212 in the PROPOSED HARMONY.

Emphasis: As we consider these final days of our Lord on this earth, it is good to keep before us the truth enunciated by Paul in Romans 1:4 - that Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power...by the resurrection from the dead." The resurrection of the Lord is absolutely vital to any Biblical concept of Christianity.

UNIT FOUR: . . . and go to the Father." (John 16:28d)

I. "He is not here, for He is risen." (Matthew 28:6)

(The resurrection of Jesus is discovered by His disciples)

SUNDAY --a day of messianic pronouncement

Notes:

1) This was a day of pronouncement in the sense of Romans 1:4. By means of the resurrection of Jesus, the Divine Pronouncement was made to all the world that this Jesus of Nazareth was exactly what He had claimed to be, indeed, that the very claims for which He had been crucified by the unbelieving Jews - the claims to be Messiah, God in the flesh, the only and sufficient Savior of mankind - were entirely and wonderfully true!

2) The New Testament records many events which happened in a very short time; sometimes the task of harmonization becomes very difficult for this period of Jesus' earthly ministry. We will not concern ourselves with technical matters of harmonization; rather, we will quickly survey the events of this day, and of the forty days which followed, culminating in the ascension of Jesus to the Father.

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#196 The women set out for the tomb to anoint Jesus' body, very early Sunday (Mathew 28:1; Mark 16:1)

1. Remember that after sundown, the first day of the week began by Jewish reckoning. There is some discussion as to exactly when Jesus arose from the dead, but it was clearly on the first day of the week. Thus, Jesus' resurrection had already occurred when these women approached the tomb very early on Sunday morning.
2. These women were evidently bringing spices they had prepared (Luke 23:56) in order to show their devotion to Christ by anointing His corpse.

"The Sabbath, Saturday...concluded at sunset and the new Jewish day, Sunday...began. That evening after sunset the women who had witnessed Jesus' death and burial (cf [Mk] 15:40,47) bought spices, aromatic oils, to anoint Jesus' body (lit., Him') the next morning. This indicates that they did not expect Jesus to rise from the dead (cf. [Mk] 8:31; 9.31; 10:34~. Spices were poured over a dead body to counteract the odor of decay and as a symbolic expression of loving devotion. Embalming was not a Jewish custom." John D. Grassmick, BKCNT, 193

#197 The earthquake, the rolling away of the stone, the fright of the soldiers (Mt 28:2-4)

This evidently occurred before the women arrived at the tomb, perhaps even as they were on their way there. Probably the only eyewitnesses to this work of the angel (not "The Angel of the Lord," but "an angel...") were the Roman soldiers who had been posted to prevent the disciples from stealing the body (cp. Mt 27:62-66). Those soldiers "did shake, and became as dead men" when the angel arrived to fulfill his liberating task.

#198 The women arrive at the tomb SUNDAY MORNING and hear the angel's glad message (Mt 28:5-8; Mk 16:2-8; Luke 24:18; John 20:1)

1. When the women arrive at the tomb, they discover the stone already rolled away and an angel awaiting them.

Notice that the angel insists that Jesus' had carefully foretold His resurrection (Mt 28:6, "as He said," cp. Mt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19).

2. One very important proof of the reality of the resurrection is appealed to by the angel at this time, is, the empty tomb (Mt 28:6, "Come see the place where the Lord lay.").
3. The angel gave the women a two-fold instruction (Mt 28:7): first, to go tell the disciples of the resurrection of the Lord; and second, to proceed to Galilee where Jesus would meet with them as He had instructed them before His passion (Mt 26:32).

Note: There is nothing in the instruction of the angel to suggest that Jesus would not encounter any of these women before the encounter in Galilee. In fact, He did confront these women shortly after they departed the tomb (see II. a. Ib/2b below). Evidently the meeting in Galilee was to be a very important and large meeting of the resurrected Jesus with a great company of His followers (Mt 28: 16-20), and thus special and specific instructions concerning that meeting were issued at this time.

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4. Notice the very special word of invitation issued to Peter at this time (Mk 16:7).

#199 The women report to the apostles; Peter and John visit the tomb (Luke 24:9-12; John 20:2-10)

1. Notice the reaction of the eleven to the words of the women: "their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." The New Testament is absolutely clear in establishing the fact that those closest to Jesus, the eleven believing disciples, simply did not believe the prophecies of Jesus concerning His own resurrection.

Note: How does this relate to the oft-revived (no pun intended) conspiracy theories concerning the resurrection of Jesus?

1-The Swoon Theory:

2-The Theft Theory:

3-The Wrong Tomb Theory:

4-The Jewish Theft Theory:

* It is important to note that all of the above theories fail; none are sufficient. The only conclusion that is satisfactory is the fact that Jesus raised from the dead.

2. Peter and John set off in a footrace to the tomb.

The diverse reactions of these two upon their arrival at the tomb are representative of the spiritual makeup of these two men.

3. Notice that up to this point in the narrative Jesus has personally appeared to no one.

". . . He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs" (The post-resurrection ministry of Jesus Christ on this earth)

Five appearances on the day of His resurrection

#200 To Mary Magdalene; a message to the disciples (Mk 16:9-11; John 20:11-18)

At first, Mary did not recognize Jesus, mistaking Him for the gardener. When the Lord spoke the name of Mary, she realized who He was. His instruction, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father," would be better rendered, "Do not cling to me!" The point is that Jesus knew He would soon depart, and thus He was anxious for Mary not to become so fixated on His physical presence that she would again be devastated at His departure.

#201 To the other women (Mt 28:9,10)

The women who had first arrived at the empty tomb now encounter the resurrected Jesus. They fall in worship before Him, and He fortifies the instruction, which the angel had already given them.

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#202 (Meanwhile, some of the soldiers report to the Jewish authorities what has come to pass) [Mt 28:11-15]

Notice the lie which the authorities instructed these eye-witnesses to tell: "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept." This was at once entirely unbelievable and unacceptable: unbelievable because the penalties for a Roman sentry who fell asleep at his post were so harsh that it would be absolutely incredible that the entire unit had committed this trespass, let alone that they had lived to tell about it, with the endorsement of their commanding officers; unacceptable because the testimony of one who claimed to be an eye-witness to something which happened while he slept is ludicrous on the face of it.

#203 To two disciples traveling to Emmaus; Jesus teaches from the Old Testament Scriptures the doctrine of the death and resurrection of the promised Messiah (Mark 16:12,13; Luke 24:13-32)

Notice Jesus' comment as to why the concept of a suffering Messiah was not embraced by Jesus' disciples--

#204 To Simon Peter (Luke 24:33-35)

Note: The appearance to Simon Peter is not narrated anywhere in the New Testament record; it is simply alluded in Luke 24:33-35 and in 1 Corinthians 15:5. It certainly must have been a poignant moment as the Lord whom Peter had denied so vociferously - only after insisting just as vociferously that his allegiance would be unswerving above that of all the other disciples - assured the apostle of His love and forgiveness, and of the fact that there remained a place of service for him

#205 To the astonished disciples (Mk 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25)

Note: Thomas is absent at this time.

Five appearances during the subsequent 40-day ministry

#206 To the disciples again; Thomas is present and convinced (John 20:26-31)

#207 To seven disciples beside the Sea of Galilee; a miraculous catch of fishes (John 21:1-23)

Note: It is at this time that Peter is reinstated and re-commissioned, and that that same apostle was forewarned concerning the death which he would be called upon to suffer.

#208 To above 500 brethren gathered in Galilee; a "great" commission is given them to be obeyed during the absence of the Lord (Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:15-18)

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#209 To James the half-brother of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:7)

Again, this encounter is nowhere narrated, but it is alluded to in 1 Corinthians 15:7 and assumed in a number of ways in the New Testament. It seems that this was probably the conversion experience of James. Further, it may be assumed that perhaps at this same time the resurrected Lord appeared to His other half-brothers, including Jude.

#210 To the assembled disciples, who are given instructions to tarry in Jerusalem until the promise of the Spirit is fulfilled (Luke 24:44-49)

Note: This promise relates to Old Testament prophecies of the New Covenant (Ezekiel 36; Jeremiah 33) and to later prophecies spoken by John the Baptist (John 1).

III. "I go to my Father, and you see me no more." (John 16:9) (The ascension of Jesus to the Father)

#211 The last appearance and ascension to the Father (from Mt. Olivet, between Jerusalem and Bethany) [Mk 16:19; Luke 24:50,51; cp. Ac 1:3-11]

#212 The disciples return to Jerusalem to await the promise of the Holy Spirit (Mk 16:20; Luke 24:52,53; cp. Ac 1:12-14)