

STORY OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

INTRODUCTION

Great events of history are recorded in the Bible (Creation, Flood, Birth, life and death of the Son of God, the Church). But one event, the RESURRECTION of Jesus is the icing on the cake. THIS event will affect what will happen in OTHER events, such as the end of the world, the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment of mankind.

The resurrection of Jesus is recorded in all four gospel writings, near the end of their writings (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). There are nine (9) very special things that we can glean from these writings, ALL BEGINNING WITH THE LETTER "S", that we shall examine NOW.

DISCUSSION

I. SEPULCHRE.

Sepulchre is first mentioned in Matt. 28:1, then in the other 3 accounts of the resurrection. A sepulchre is the equivalent to our word "grave" today, for the burying of the dead. It was usually hewn or cut out of rock in the side of a mountain or high point of land. There are grave sites in the land of Palestine that are much like in our country, but not all, for there ARE places where rock sepulchres are found in Palestine. Often times, the sepulchre became a large room, that would accommodate large families. Decades ago, such a sepulchre was discovered on a hillside in Jerusalem, and when opened, the tomb was empty, and is generally believed to be the one where Jesus was buried, from which He was resurrected. This tomb was previously owned by Joseph of Arimathaea (Luke 23:50-53) and has one place in the tomb that has been used, but has no body remains present today.

II. SABBATH.

It was on the "sabbath" day that women came to the sepulchre to anoint the body of Jesus. The text says in the "end of the sabbath". Two things come to mind: 1) That the keeping of the sabbath has ENDED for us today (Col. 2:14-17); 2) That that particular sabbath HAD ended, the day His body "rested" in keeping with the law of Moses. We are reminded that the death of Jesus DID indeed end sabbath keeping for God's people, and replaced with worship on the Lord's day, the first day of the week, the day the women came to anoint the body of Jesus, and the day of the resurrection of Jesus. (Mark 16:1; cf Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2)

III. SWEET SPICES.

The women came to anoint the body of Jesus with "sweet" spices for it's preservation, to prevent its decay, which would be accomplished in a few days. We know of no significance in the spices being "sweet" or otherwise.

IV. STONE.

When the women arrived at the tomb, they saw that the stone that closed up the sepulchre had been "rolled away" (Mark 16:3). This stone was a large wheel-like stone that could be rolled to the front of the tomb to protect the deceased, and prevent unlawful entrance by thieves. The stone found decades ago AT the site of the present empty tomb, is about 5 feet in diameter, 14-16 inches thick, and probably weighs around 2 tons, or 4000 pounds. There is a large groove in front of the tomb, so the stone could be rolled on it's edges or outer part, with the efforts of a group of men. The women knew they could not move the stone, and were concerned about WHO they could get to come move the stone for them that they might anoint Jesus' body. The stone was "very great" (Mark 16:4). To their amazement and joy, when the women arrived, they saw that someone had already rolled away the stone.

God raised Jesus from the dead. A vital part of the resurrection was the moving of the stone from the tomb. The two angels were evidently used by God for this purpose. The two angels did more in moving the stone than any four men could have done. The angels could not have used the disciples for they were not there yet, nor the women for they were not there, and could have done little to help. The keepers at the cemetery could not have helped, for they were as dead men, from what they had already seen.

V. SEALING.

Before the stone could be rolled away, the “seal” had to be broken. The seal was some kind of strap or cord that would secure the stone, once in place. The stone had been removed, so as the stone of Jesus’ sepulchre could be rolled away. It had been placed there under the instructions of Pilate, to prevent the disciples of Jesus coming and stealing Jesus’ body, and then claiming that He was risen from the grave (Matt. 27:63-66). They ALSO set a watch, making it SURE such would not happen. Even all this could not prevent the resurrection, for even God had said Jesus could not be “holden” or held back, or kept IN the grave by men (Acts 2:24, cf NKJ). God defied the efforts of men, so we have the story of the resurrection.

VI. SEEKING.

The women came to the stone, seeking the body of Jesus to anoint it. The “young man inside the sepulchre (one of the angels) said, “Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified.” HOW would he or all the angels **know** WHY these women came, unless they were from GOD, and knew all there was to know about the resurrection? The two angels at the tomb said “Why **seek** ye the living among the dead?” (Luke 24:5). This was the first reference to the resurrection, that Jesus was among the “living”. Earlier Jesus said to Mary, “whom **seeketh** thou”, though Mary did not recognize Him, for she thought He was the gardener.”

VII. STATEMENTS.

The first statement of interest at the resurrection site was by the angels, who asked Mary, when they said to Mary, “Why weepest thou?” (John 20:13) A little later Mary actually saw Jesus standing (evidence He was alive), and **He** spoke to Mary, and said “Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?” (John 20:15) Then, He told Mary not to even touch (embrace?) Him as there would be time enough for that later, because He had not “yet” ascended, and there was something right then that needed to be done, for her to go and speak to the disciples, His brethren. The angels told Mary to go and tell the disciples that Jesus was risen, and to remind them that they were to go to Galilee (where Jesus had engaged in His personal ministry), and Jesus would meet them there, as the angels were aware of what Jesus had previously told them (Mark 16:16-17). This tells us that Jesus alluded to His own resurrection when He promised to meet with the disciples in Galilee AFTER His death (Matt. 28:7-10; Luke 24:41).

VIII. SIGHTINGS.

The first significant sighting was the sight of two angels by Mary, as she looked into the sepulchre. One angel was at the head of Jesus, on the right right side, and the other at His feet. The countenance of one was like lightning. Think about this! The keepers of the tomb had shaken with the sight of the angels, and were as dead men—paralyzed with fear. One of the angels was described as a “young man” (Mark 16:5). Both angels wore “shining garments.” The linen clothes that had wrapped the body of Jesus (Luke 23:53) were “lying in a place” probably in an order as they HAD wrapped the body of Jesus, but there was no

body in them. Then there was the napkin Peter saw, wrapped in a place by itself (John 21:7). It was as if Jesus just slipped out of the linen garments and left them in place.

IX. SKEPTICISM.

When the disciples learned of the resurrection of Jesus, they had difficulty believing it had happened. The same first day of the week, the disciples were gathered privately for fear of the Jews, and the doors were shut, and suddenly Jesus appeared in their midst and said, "Peace be unto you." He showed them His hands and His side to let them know that the body that was crucified, was the one they were now viewing. Then He committed to them what we call "the great commission." One of the disciples, Thomas, was missing. When the disciples told Thomas of what happened, he said he would not believe until he could see the hands and feet of the Lord, for him to **know** Jesus was alive. Then, the next first day of the week, the disciples were assembled again, and Jesus appeared in their midst, and Jesus went immediately to Thomas and showed him His hands and feet. Jesus **knew** what Thomas had said to the disciples about this. When Thomas saw the hands and feet, he said, "'My Lord and my God.'" (John 21:28). Then Jesus replied, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (v. 29)

CONCLUSION

Why was Jesus raised from the dead? John declares that all the signs Jesus did were for believers to have salvation. Then, Jesus became the firstfruits of a future resurrection. Paul declared in 1 Cor. 15:23, "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits: afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Ultimately, this salvation in this life will lead to eternal life in that day. What a glorious day it will be when the bodies of believers will be changed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body. (Phil. 3:21)

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