

The Most Important Events of the World

Part 5: The Resurrection of Christ

Dora Beck

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The Resurrection of Christ



After Jesus died, His body remained on the cross until evening. Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate, the Roman ruler, whether he could remove Jesus' body. With the help of Nicodemus, a secret disciples of the Lord, Joseph took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in a linen sheet. Nicodemus had brought sweet-smelling herbs for putting between the layers of the sheet. Both men carried the body of Christ to a nearby garden and put it in a tomb which had been carved out of rock. A large round stone was rolled in front of the tomb's entrance.

Some women who loved Jesus were also with Joseph and Nicodemus. They saw how the body of Christ had been placed into the tomb.

So it was that Jesus lay dead in a tomb. The disciples and women who had followed Him thought that everything was over. He will not talk with us anymore. Everything is so sad now that He has left us, they said.

Most of them had forgotten that Jesus had said: I will die, but on the third day I will rise from the dead.

The leaders of the people did not forget these words of Jesus. On the morning of the following day, on a Saturday (Sabbath), they went to the ruler and told Him: We remember that this deceiver said that he will rise from the dead on the third day. We have to do something about it.



The priests continued: We have a good idea. Command the grave to be guarded closely until the third day, so that the disciples do not steal the body and say that He has risen from the dead. This would be a second deception, even worse than the first. So Pilate said: You have guards. Go and make the grave secure, as you have suggested.

The priests and soldiers went together to the tomb and sealed the stone to its entrance. This meant that no one could roll away the stone and open the grave. The guards remained there. The priests left satisfied that no one would be able to create problems for them. They could prove that Jesus had really died, and they were assured that nothing would happen to His body.



The guards stayed by the grave continually. Everything was quiet on Saturday, for no one came to disturb the grave.

Suddenly, on Sunday morning, the earth shook. A great angel of the Lord came down from heaven, approached the grave, and rolled the stone away. The angel shone brilliantly like lightning and his garment was white as snow. The soldiers were terrified by his appearance, and they fell to the ground as if they were dead. When they awoke, they run to the city and told their commanders what had happened.



The priests wondered what to do. They bribed the soldiers with money and told them, Say that the disciples came and stole his body at night, while you were asleep. The guards accepted the money and did as they had been ordered.

At dawn the next day, Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of Jacob), Salome and other women went to Jesus' tomb. On the previous evening, they had bought spices to anoint His body, as was the custom at that time.

On their way they said to one another, Who will roll away the big stone for us? But when they arrived at the garden they were astonished, for the stone had already been rolled away from the

tomb! How did this happen? Who had rolled it away?

As soon as Mary Magdalene saw the tomb open, she left the other women and ran to Peter and John and said to them, They took the body of the Lord from the grave and we do not know where they put Him!



But the other women went inside the tomb. They were terrified when they saw a young man sitting in a long white gown. He said to them: "Do not be afraid. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth who was nailed to the cross. He is not here. He rose from the dead. Here is the place where he was. Go quickly to His disciples and tell them that He has risen from the dead.

The women ran out of the tomb trembling with excitement and joy. They were not able to talk about what they had just witnessed. Their hearts rejoiced: Christ is alive! Christ is risen! He is really risen!



After Mary Magdalene had told the disciples what had happened, she hurried back to the tomb with John and Peter who raced on ahead.

John was faster and arrived at the grave first. He glanced quickly inside the tomb and saw the white linen put aside, but he did not enter.

After a little while Peter, the oldest among the disciples, arrived and went immediately inside. He also saw the linen, put aside and folded, but the cloth that had been wrapped around the head of Jesus was in another place! John then entered and saw everything. Great joy was in his heart. He believed that Jesus had really risen.



Until then, John had not understood the prophecies about the crucifixion of Christ and His resurrection, although he had remembered clearly that Jesus said He would die and then rise from the dead. Now he understood that the Saviour was alive and that He had really risen. This knowledge helped him face the future with hope.

John returned with firm assurance; Jesus' grave was no longer frightening, because He was no longer in it. John and Peter returned to the city. They were excited about what the future would bring.

But Mary Magdalene was sad, standing all alone in front of the tomb, crying, for she did not yet know that the Lord had risen. She still thought that someone had carried off the body of Jesus having hidden it somewhere.



Where should she search for Jesus? She peered into the dark entrance of the tomb. Suddenly she

saw two men in white clothes sitting where the body of the Lord had been. One sat where the Lord's head had rested, and the other, where His feet had lain.

These were two angels, but Mary Magdalene did not know it. They asked her why she was crying. She answered, They have taken my Lord and I do not know where they have put Him.

Then she turned around and saw a person close to her. It was Jesus. She did not recognise Him, for her eyes were filled with tears. He asked, Who are you looking for and why these tears? Mary thought He was the gardener. Sobbing, and with tears streaming from her eyes, she asked: O sir, did you take Him? Tell me where you put Him so that I may bring Him back.

At that point, Jesus looked at her and tenderly called her by name: Mary.

Mary then knew from the voice who it was that stood before her. She joyfully cried out, My Lord!

She wanted to touch Him, but Jesus told her gently: Do not touch Me, for I will not stay here. I will return to My Father. Go to My disciples and tell them that I am going to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.



Mary heard the words of her Lord and obeyed. She was the first witness of the good news about her Lord whom she loved with all her heart. Now her sadness was replaced by joy, so she ran to the disciples in a big hurry, telling them: I saw the Lord! He is alive, and He spoke to me!

She told the disciples all that Jesus asked her to say. But they did not believe that Jesus was alive and that she had seen Him with her eyes. They did not believe her words and did not share her joy in His coming back from dead, His resurrection.

Their unbelief was like an obstacle in their path; even John was still waiting for proof that Jesus had truly risen.



On the evening of the same day, the disciples gathered in a locked room, for they feared the people who had crucified Jesus. All of a sudden, they heard knocks at the door, and they froze in terror. But they sighed with relief when they saw two disciples of the Lord standing at the door. These two called the rest in the room to gather around. They said: Our Lord is risen! We met Him on our way to Emmaus. We did not recognise Him at first; it was when we ate supper that our eyes were opened, for He took bread and gave thanks for it. Then He broke it and handed some to us.



As the disciples were talking, the Lord suddenly appeared in their midst. He greeted them and said, Peace be with you. At first they were troubled by His appearance.

How is it possible for a person to enter this room while the door and the windows are all locked they wondered? But Jesus said to them: Do not be afraid, for I am He. Come and see My hands and feet. As He was talking, He showed them His hands and feet where the wounds from His crucifixion were still visible.

The disciples were overwhelmed with joy, surprise, and relief that the One who spoke with them was really Jesus. He asked them if they had any food. One of them immediately rose and brought Him a piece of fish and honeycomb. Jesus ate in front of them all. Then they believed that He was the Lord, that He had risen from the dead and was alive. This faith gave their lives new hope and meaning.



As was His custom, Jesus sat in the midst of His disciples, as a teacher. He wanted to help them through the coming difficulties in the near future. He taught them from the Torah saying, Remember, what is written in the Psalms and the prophets, that Christ had to suffer and be crucified and rise from the dead on the third day. And He added: This good news has to be brought to all nations so that they can know that in Me they have the chance to return to God and receive the forgiveness of sins. You are witnesses to this. You will not carry out this task on your own strength, for My Father will send to you the Holy Spirit to empower you. In His strength you will preach what you've seen and heard from Me.

Quiz

We hope you have enjoyed reading this story. Below are some questions about it. When you have answered them, mail them to us.

1. Where was the body of Christ put after it was taken down from the cross?
2. What do the leaders of the townspeople remind you of?
3. Who rolled the stone away from the door of the grave?
4. What lie did the soldiers spread?
5. What did the angel say to the women?
6. To whom did Jesus first appear after His resurrection?
7. What did Mary Magdalene have to tell the disciples?
8. Why couldn't the disciples share in Mary's joy right away?

9. How did the disciples regard Jesus' appearance that Sunday evening?
10. What was the job Jesus gave to the disciples?
11. What job has Jesus given to you?

Do not forget to print your full name and address clearly on your answer sheet as well as on the envelope. Our address is:

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