

Episode #949 Matthew 28 Part 2-The Risen Lord

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord had died on the cross and been buried. Now, we are considering the glorious climax of the book of Matthew and the King’s great victory in resurrection.

III. Earthquake at the Tomb. Matthew 28:1-8.

- A. Verse 4. Notice that this incident is only in Matthew, which is also the only gospel that tells about this guard. Yet at the same time, the actual resurrection of the Lord Jesus is not described, nor in any of the four gospels. Since no one was there to see it, it is never recorded. This is the key event in the gospel: did He rise? We just read about the aftermath, presenting to us the evidence that it actually happened. Describing the event would not be evidence, since no one saw that. This was not the resurrection. He may have already been gone once the angel came down and did this, passing out of the tomb just as He passed out of the grave clothes.
- B. Verse 5. Note that verses 2-4 are an interpolation, describing what had happened much earlier, before the women arrived. It is because of what the angel did that the stone was rolled away and they find him now sitting on it. The other records have them see angels in the tomb, Mark and Luke. Apparently, the angel sitting on the stone did not appear until now. Mark, Luke, and John do not relate how the stone was moved. “Be afraid” is the verb related to the noun in verse 4: do not fear, be terrified, or flee. There is no word here whether they expected to find Jesus alive or dead. This was a later visit than those in Mark, Luke, and John. These women were both returning after having been and seen that He was gone once before. One Who was crucified was dead. Death as we know it is a final thing, something we are powerless to change. I can kill a mosquito, a simple thing, yet once it is dead, I cannot bring even a mosquito back to life again. This is how it was with the Lord Jesus Christ. Men had given up their all to follow Him, but now they had taken Him and crucified Him and He was dead. It seemed to be all over. But now suddenly He is alive again. He has risen. He is no longer in the state of death, for He had risen from it. People sing “Low in the grave He lay, Jesus my Savior,” but do they really believe it? They believe He had gone somewhere else, and it was not Jesus their Savior Who lay in the tomb, but just a husk of His body. Yet that is not the truth. He was dead, and He arose. If the dead rise not, then even Christ and those dead in Him have perished.
- C. Verse 6. A crucified Man was laid here, but the angel described to them a resurrected Man! This word, meaning to arouse oneself or to go into action, we have seen throughout Matthew. Here, however, in the context of death, it takes on a whole new, deeper meaning. For someone who was dead to arise and go into action...that is an entirely different and greater thing. That is what He had done. This is resurrection from among the dead. This is resurrection life. Now the Lord predicted His Own resurrection. The same Word that spoke the heavens and the earth into existence spoke and said that He would rise from death after three days, and it was so. The Bible does not waste words telling us about them obeying this command and looking at the place, but we assume that they obeyed the command and did so. God does not

waste words by talking about what they saw. We can read about what the place where He lay looked like in John.

- D. Verse 7. They obeyed the command to “go quickly” per verse 8. “From” is *apo*, from among. The dead remained, but He left them. Both Matthew and John speak of the Lord appearing to His disciples in Galilee after His resurrection. Mark never mentions Galilee but that He appeared to them while they ate (probably in Judea), and Luke tells about Him appearing to them in Judea, not mentioning anywhere else.
- E. Verse 8. They went out quickly as they were instructed. As in Matthew 27:60, “the tomb” means the burying place or monument. Fear and great joy mixed together are a far different matter than fear without joy. Fear with joy is a great thing indeed!

IV. Meeting the Risen Lord. Matthew 28:9-10.

- A. Verse 9. “To tell” is the same in Greek as “to bring word” in verse 8, *apangello*. Our translators are trying to not repeat the same word over and over, as is preferred in English. Greek writers had no compunction against this, however. The Lord encountered them, or Bullinger says confronted, as from an opposite direction. The word can also be used for a hostile encounter, though clearly that is not the case here. “Rejoice!” Greek *chairete*, was a common greeting, though certainly it was an appropriate word to use in this case. Earlier Judas and the mocking soldiers had addressed the Lord this way, in hypocrisy and mockery. He had the final say, however, and He gave true cause to rejoice. Came is *proserchomai*; they approached the resurrected King. In John 20:17, the Lord told Mary Magdalene not to touch Him, since He was ascending to His Father. Yet here, they held Him by the feet, and He allowed it. This seems to imply that He ascended to His Father after talking to Mary and presented Himself as the completed sacrifice in the heavenly temple, then returned to earth to appear to the women, as here. “Worshiped” is *proskuneo*. This was worship, not just reverence.
- B. Verse 10. They formerly had fear and joy mixed. Now He tells them to have fear no longer. Is “brethren” the same as His disciples? Or does this literally mean His brothers? In I Corinthians 15:7, we learn that James saw Him after His resurrection. It seems that His brethren went from not believing in Him, John 7:5, to believing in Him after His resurrection. In Acts 1:14, the twelve were with the women, Mary His mother, and “His brethren.” Perhaps because He appeared to them? Were they among the “five hundred brethren” Paul mentions in I Corinthians 15:6? At any rate, it seems to me quite possible that the Lord literally wanted His brothers told at this time, as well as His disciples. “And there” could be “there also.” Could this be because they would “also” see Him with His disciples?

V. Conclusion: The women returned to the tomb and saw that the Lord had, indeed, risen. The angel instructed them to run and tell His disciples. As they went, Jesus met them, and this time allowed them to touch Him. He instructed them to tell His brothers, and He might well have meant His literal brothers. The women saw the truth: the Lord rose! By that resurrection, He purchased the victory over death for all His people, praise God!