

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Newsletter

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

No. 02

April 2012



The Resurrection of our Lord



“Christ died . . . He was buried . . . and He rose again” . . . 1 Cor. 15:3-4

Recently while walking through a bookstore a book on Egyptian history caught my attention. I was intrigued as I turned the pages and had presented to me by words and pictures the glories of ancient Egypt. There were pictures of Tutankhamun's coffin, Cleopatra, and illustrations of the great library at Alexandria etc. Then looking very carefully, I discovered a major part of their history left out! Why would any historian leave out a major piece of history? That which was not added to the book was the defeat of the Egyptians at the Red Sea! What an important piece of history, and yet not a single line concerning it. Why? The answer was not hard to discover. Nations and individuals boast of their conquests, but no individual, nation, people, or infernal hordes want to publicize their shameful defeats. Indeed, they will seek to do all they can to obscure it, deny it, and obliterate it from the annals of history. In like manner Satan will seek to do all he can to deny the truth of the resurrection and the day it memorializes, the first day of the week. What are some of the evidences Jesus rose from the dead? The truth of the resurrection is expanded in the booklet: “The Doctrine of the Resurrection”.

The Empty Tomb

Oftentimes people speak and write about the empty tomb, and we know what they mean, but I thank God the tomb was not empty, the grave clothes were left in it! When the Lord rose from the dead He evacuated the tomb, but left the grave clothes showing that He had risen. Putting it another way, He abandoned the tomb, never to return to it again. Christianity is the only religion in the world the foundation of which is built on a vacated tomb. Christ was buried but He is not an entombed Christ. The headstones, richly carved tombstones, mausoleums and pyramids all give evidence that a life was once lived, but there was a time when the individual breathed their last, and this was their final resting place. Praise God it was never that for the Lord for he vacated it as Lazarus did, but in contrast to Lazarus, he raised Himself from the dead and He lives never to die again. He lives in the power of an indissoluble life and speaking to John said: “I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore” (Rev. 1:18).

1) **He Was Seen**

- (a) Some will say, “Nobody saw Him rise from the dead, so prove that He did”. Ah, how foolish this is. The fact is that He was seen not by one, but by many on multiple occasions. He was seen at least 14 times.
- (i) There were eleven appearances between His resurrection and ascension:
1. To Mary Magdalene when alone at the tomb. (Jn. 20:14)
 2. To certain women who were returning from the sepulchre. (Matt. 28:9-10)
 3. To Simon Peter. (Lk. 24:34)
 4. On the road to Emmaus. (Lk. 24:13)
 5. To the ten disciples, and those possibly with them, in the upper room. (Jn. 20:19)
 6. To the eleven disciples, and those with them, in the upper room. (Jn. 20:26-29)
 7. To the disciples when they went fishing. (Jn. 21)
 8. To the disciples and others, possibly the one hundred and twenty. (Matt. 28:16; Acts 1:15)
 9. To over five hundred at once. (1 Cor. 15:6)
 10. To James. (1 Cor. 15:7)
 11. To the disciples and others when they went as far as “Bethany” (Lk. 24:50), to the Mount of Olives before His ascension (Acts 1:12). The decision has to be made by the reader if this was the same as Matt. 28:16 or a different occasion.
- ii) There were three appearances after His ascension:
1. To Stephen. (Acts 7:55)
 2. To Saul on the Damascus Road. (Acts 9:4-6)
 3. To John on the Isle of Patmos. (Rev. 1:1, 4, 12-18). The “He” in verse one is the Lord, which the following verses and chapters confirm.

2) **The Changed Lives of The Disciples**

- (a) Before the death of the Lord there was, to my understanding, only one person who believed the Lord would rise from the dead, and that was the thief on the cross. It will be remembered that Mary anointed his body for his burial (Matt. 26:12), but only the thief confessed: “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into thy Kingdom” (Lk. 23:42). Even after some had looked in the opened tomb, they still did not believe (Lk. 24:11). Furthermore, when they met in the upper room that Sunday night, despite the witness of those who had seen and spoken to the Lord, they still did not believe (Lk. 24:41). Added to this was the fact that they were a frightened group of people who met behind barred doors (the word used for shut intimates this). Yet forty days later they go to the Mount of Olives and see the Lord ascend. There is no fear and they went back to Jerusalem rejoicing and worshipping (Acts 1:9-12). Ten days later they are preaching openly in Jerusalem, speaking boldly, and declaring that though they had killed Jesus, God raised Him from the dead (Acts 3:15; 4:10; 13:30). In time they faced major opposition but they continued until the authorities were at a loss how to contain it (Acts 5:24).
- (b) What would have changed these men from fearful unbelievers to bold preachers, from the deepest of sadness to the heights of gladness, from hopelessness to hope, from being incredulous to having solid factual conviction? Certainly not the self deceiving of themselves with a lie that he had risen from the dead. Indeed, it was that very fact that they proclaimed with such deliberateness. The change in them was only because they knew and believed Jesus had risen from the dead.

3) **The Changed Lives of People Today**

- (a) Many spend millions of dollars on rehabilitation and rejoice if there is a 10-30 percentage success rate. Glory to God for the one power that does not rehabilitate an individual but renews them, making them a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17) with a one hundred percent success rate. That power is the life of the risen Christ. In it alone is the power that can change a drug addict to a clean individual, that can take the worst of criminals and make them respectable law abiding individuals. The reason is, at the moment of salvation, the power of the resurrection of Christ works in their life (Eph. 1:19-20; 2:1).

What Are The Truths Flowing From That Fact?

1) The Work of Redemption Is Complete

- a) Fulfil the work of redemption
 - i) The death, burial and the resurrection of Christ are indissolubly united in the scriptures.
 - 1. The Lord died and entered death to rise in the “power of an endless (indissoluble) life (Heb. 7:16); never to die again but to live forever, the mighty victor over death (Rev. 1:18).
- b) Each was necessary for the reconciliation of humanity: “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life”. (Rom. 5:10)
- c) Each was necessary as the model and power for the life of a believer: “For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God”. (Rom. 6:10)
- d) Each was necessary for the functioning of His Heavenly priesthood: “It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us”. (Rom. 8:34)
- e) Each was necessary for the unilateral Lordship of Christ: “For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living”. (Rom. 14:9)
- f) Each was necessary for the coming union of the church: “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him”. (1 Thess. 4:14-16)

What if He Did Not Rise From The Dead?

- 1) If His claims of resurrection were shown to be false and He was a false prophet, consequently, He could never be a sacrifice for sins. The result of that is our sins are not forgiven and there is no heaven at the end of life's journey. (1 Cor. 15:17)
- 2) The pictures of the Old Testament of the priest waving the sheaf of firstfruits was nothing more than a dead ritual, void of any significance. (Lev. 23:11)
- 3) God never gave a seal to the person and work of His Son. (Acts 2:32)
- 4) There is no resurrection of the dead, consequently there is no judgment. (Acts 17:31)
- 5) When the Lord gave the historical illustration of His resurrection by Jonah, he was wrong. (Matt. 12:40)
- 6) He was not, and never will be, the Son of God. (Rom. 1:4)
- 7) The scriptures which foretell it are not the scriptures of truth but a combination of fanciful stories. (Dan. 10:21)

When this breaks into the heart and soul of the redeemed, the wonder is that they sing so little of:

“Christ the Lord is risen on high, Alleluia”

or

*“Up from the grave He arose, with a mighty triumph o'er his foes,
He arose a Victor from the dark domain and He lives forever with His saints to reign,
He arose, He arose, Hallelujah Christ arose.”*

. . . Rowan Jennings

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