


Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

The Resurrection

¹ Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in.

⁶ Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen.

⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

Q1. What is your guess – what was the usual consequence for Roman guard malfeasance, such as losing a prisoner?

Q2. Why did the faster John wait for Peter to arrive and enter the tomb first?

Q3. What was their initial suspicion as to the whereabouts of the Lord's body?

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Q4. What was the size of the ‘stone’ that sealed the tomb? Large? Small? And would it have been easy or hard to roll it aside?

Size?

Difficulty?

Q5. Is there significance in that the grave clothes were folded? (If Jesus were a ghost, would the body simply float up through the grave clothes? If people robbed the tomb and carried off the Lord’s body, would they have taken the time to fold the grave clothes?)

Q6. Verse 8: “He saw and believed.” What did the Apostle John believe?

 Matthew’s eye-witness account continues.

Matthew 28:1-15 [The Message (MSG)]

¹⁻⁴ After the Sabbath, as the first light of the new week dawned, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to keep vigil at the tomb. Suddenly the earth reeled and rocked under their feet as God’s angel came down from heaven, came right up to where they were standing. He rolled back the stone and then sat on it. Shafts of lightning blazed from him. His garments shimmered snow-white. The guards at the tomb were scared to death. They were so frightened, they couldn’t move.

⁵⁻⁶ The angel spoke to the women: “There is nothing to fear here. I know you’re looking for Jesus, the One they nailed to the cross. He is not here. He was raised, just as he said. Come and look at the place where he was placed.


⁷ “Now, get on your way quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He is risen from the dead. He is going on ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there.’ That’s the message.”

⁸⁻¹⁰ The women, deep in wonder and full of joy, lost no time in leaving the tomb. They ran to tell the disciples. Then Jesus met them, stopping them in their tracks. “Good morning!” he said. They fell to their knees, embraced his feet, and worshiped him. Jesus said, “You’re holding on to me for dear life! Don’t be frightened like that. Go tell my brothers that they are to go to Galilee, and that I’ll meet them there.”

¹¹⁻¹⁵ Meanwhile, the guards had scattered, but a few of them went into the city and told the high priests everything that had happened. They called a meeting of the religious leaders and came up with a plan: They took a large sum of money and gave it to the soldiers, bribing them to say, “His disciples came in the night and stole the body while we were sleeping.” They assured them, “If the governor hears about your sleeping on duty, we will make sure you don’t get blamed.” The soldiers took the bribe and did as they were told. That story, cooked up in the Jewish High Council, is still going around.

Lesson 27: John 20:1-31

Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to their homes, ¹¹ but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. ¹³ They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

^{14a} "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him."

Q7. Why was Mary crying?

Q8. When Mary said to the angels, "They have taken away my Lord", to whom does "they" refer?

^{14b} At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

Q9. Why did she not recognize Jesus?

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¹⁵ "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

Q10. Why do you think Mary suddenly recognized the Lord?

John 10:4 [NIV-1984]


When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

John 10:27 [NIV-1984]

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

¹⁷ Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' "

Q11. Why did Jesus tell Mary, "Do not hold on to me"? Could she have been holding on to the Lord Jesus as if she would never let go of Him? Or was there more to it than that?


 Mary probably threw her arms around Jesus' knees and feet with such fierceness that it seemed she would never let go of Him. Jesus had to adjust her expectations with firm tenderness – He gave her a job to do – carry a message to His disciples.

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.


Q12. How do you think the disciples reacted to Mary's news?

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Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

 If I could go back in time, this would be the conversation upon which I would love to eavesdrop! Imagine the significance of verses 25-27 and having the Lord “[teach and emphasize] everything in the [Old Testament] Scriptures that referred to him”. I simply cannot imagine having the tapestry of Old Testament prophecy laid-out in an understandable manner by the author and teacher.

Luke 24:13-35 [The Message (MSG)] [Teaching On the Road to Emmaus]

¹³⁻¹⁶ That same day two of them were walking to the village Emmaus, about seven miles out of Jerusalem. They were deep in conversation, going over all these things that had happened. In the middle of their talk and questions, Jesus came up and walked along with them. But they were not able to recognize who he was.

¹⁷⁻¹⁸ He asked, “What’s this you’re discussing so intently as you walk along?”

They just stood there, long-faced, like they had lost their best friend. Then one of them, his name was Cleopas, said, “Are you the only one in Jerusalem who hasn’t heard what’s happened during the last few days?”

¹⁹⁻²⁴ He said, “What has happened?”

They said, “The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene. He was a man of God, a prophet, dynamic in work and word, blessed by both God and all the people. Then our high priests and leaders betrayed him, got him sentenced to death, and crucified him. And we had our hopes up that he was the One, the One about to deliver Israel. And it is now the third day since it happened. But now some of our women have completely confused us. Early this morning they were at the tomb and couldn’t find his body. They came back with the story that they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive. Some of our friends went off to the tomb to check and found it empty just as the women said, but they didn’t see Jesus.”

²⁵⁻²⁷ Then he said to them, “So thick-headed! So slow-hearted! Why can’t you simply believe all that the prophets said? Don’t you see that these things had to happen, that the Messiah had to suffer and only then enter into his glory?” Then he started at the beginning, with the Books of Moses, and went on through all the Prophets, pointing out everything in the Scriptures that referred to him.

²⁸⁻³¹ They came to the edge of the village where they were headed. He acted as if he were going on but they pressed him: “Stay and have supper with us. It’s nearly evening; the day is done.” So, he went in with them. And here is what happened: He sat down at the table with them. Taking the bread, he blessed and broke and gave it to them. At that moment, open-eyed, wide-eyed, they recognized him. And then he disappeared.

³² Back and forth they talked. “Didn’t we feel on fire as he conversed with us on the road, as he opened up the Scriptures for us?”

³³⁻³⁴ They didn’t waste a minute. They were up and on their way back to Jerusalem. They found the Eleven and their friends gathered together, talking away: “It’s really happened! The Master has been raised up — Simon saw him!”

³⁵ Then the two went over everything that happened on the road and how they recognized him when he broke the bread.

³⁶ While they were saying all this, Jesus appeared to them and said, “Peace be with you.”

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¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

Q13. Why did the disciples fear the Jews? Why were they behind locked doors?

Q14. How do you think the disciples reacted when suddenly the Lord Jesus stood among them? Did they see the door open?

The Lord's presence?

Closed door?

²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Q15. Is it important to the disciples (and to us) that the Lord "showed them his hands and his side"?

Q16. Why does Scripture state, "Then the disciples were glad"? Why weren't they happy as soon as they saw Him standing with them?

Luke 24:36-43 [The Message (MSG)]


³⁶⁻⁴¹ While they were saying all this, Jesus appeared to them and said, "Peace be with you."

They thought they were seeing a ghost and were scared half to death. He continued with them, "Don't be upset, and don't let all these doubting questions take over. Look at my hands; look at my feet — it's really me. Touch me. Look me over from head to toe. A ghost doesn't have muscle and bone like this." As he said this, he showed them his hands and feet. They still couldn't believe what they were seeing. It was too much; it seemed too good to be true.

⁴¹⁻⁴³ He asked, "Do you have any food here?" They gave him a piece of leftover fish they had cooked. He took it and ate it right before their eyes.

Lesson 27: John 20:1-31

Day 4

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²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

Q17. Did the disciples receive the Holy Spirit at this time?

Yes? } Thoughts?
No? }

Q18. Verse 22: Is there significance in that Jesus "breathed on them"?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

Genesis 2:7 [NIV-1984]

the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Q19. Regarding "forgiveness", do you think the Lord Jesus gave His disciples special privilege to forgive or to withhold forgiveness?

Q20. Did this ability to forgive repentant sin arrive with Jesus' Words in verse 23, or did it arrive with Jesus' delivery (breathed) of the Holy Spirit in verse 22?


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Matthew 6:14-15 [NIV-1984] [From the ‘Sermon on the Mount’]

¹⁴ For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.


Q21. In verse 23 (↑) Jesus gives His disciples the right to “forgive anyone his sins [or] . . . not forgive”. Yet, in His ‘Sermon on the Mount’ (Matthew 6:15 ↑), Jesus taught that “if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins”. How do you explain the contradiction?

 “The ultimate principles upon which this power rests are those stated above — the being [the Holy Spirit] sent by Christ, and the reception of the Holy Ghost. God has promised forgiveness wherever there is repentance; He has not promised repentance wherever there is sin. It results from every declaration of forgiveness made in the name of the Father through Jesus Christ, that hearts which in penitence accept it receive remission of their sins, and that the hardness of the hearts which [willfully] reject it is by their rejection increased, and the very words by which their sins would be remitted become the words by which they are retained.

“On individual words in this verse it is important to note that in the better text the tense of that rendered “are [forgiven]” is a strict present, while that rendered “are [not forgiven]” is in the perfect-present. The difference is not easy to preserve in English, but the thought seems to be, “Whose soever sins ye remit — a change in their condition is taking place — their sins are being remitted by God; whose soever ye retain — their condition remains unchanged — they have been, and are retained.” [©about 1880, *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/john/20-23.htm>]

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Day 5

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Jesus and Thomas

²⁴ Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came.

²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

Q22. Thomas has been with the Lord and the other disciples for the past three years. Thomas has witnessed the Lord's miracles. Thomas heard the Lord prophesy about His resurrection. Why is Thomas so harsh in his denial?

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Q23. Thomas knew that the Lord was not present with them when he harshly denied the eye-witness testimony of his friends – the Lord's disciples. Yet, the Lord repeats Thomas' demand for proof almost word for word. What do you think went through Thomas' mind?

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Q24. The Lord had told Mary, "Do not hold on to me" in verse 17. Why is it okay for Thomas to touch the Lord?


²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Q25. Does having a person like Thomas, who is an eye-witness to seeing and then touching the wounds of the risen Lord, provide additional credibility to Jesus' resurrection? Is the event fact? Or fiction?

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Day 6

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The Purpose of This Book

³⁰ Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.

Q26. John wrote, “Jesus did many other signs . . . not written in this book.” Why did God through the Holy Spirit limit the length of the Gospel accounts? (“other miraculous signs . . . not recorded in this book”.)

John 21:25 [NIV-1984]

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Q27. What does it mean to “have life in His Name”?

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