

## ***What Happened at the Resurrection?***

1. Satan hoped that Jesus' death was the end!

When Jesus was laid in the grave, Satan triumphed. He dared to hope that the Saviour would not take up His life again. He claimed the Lord's body, and set his guard about the tomb, seeking to hold Christ a prisoner. He was bitterly angry when his angels fled at the approach of the heavenly messenger. When he saw Christ come forth in triumph, he knew that his kingdom would have an end, and that he must finally die. {DA 782.4}

2. Two angels descended. One rolled the stone back. Gabriel called Jesus who "came forth."

- a. An earthquake marked the hour when Christ laid down His life, and another earthquake witnessed the moment when He took it up in triumph. He who had vanquished death and the grave came forth from the tomb with the tread of a conqueror, amid the reeling of the earth, the flashing of lightning, and the roaring of thunder. {DA 780.1}
- b. When the voice of the mighty angel was heard at Christ's tomb, saying, Thy Father calls Thee, **the Saviour came forth from the grave by the life that was in Himself.** Now was proved the truth of His words, "I lay down My life, that I might take it again. . . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Now was fulfilled the prophecy He had spoken to the priests and rulers, "Destroy this temple, and in three days **I will raise it up.**" John 10:17,18; 2:19. {DA 785.2}
- c. Only He who is one with God could say, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. In His divinity, Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death. {DA 785.3}
- d. These angels were of the company that had been waiting in a shining cloud to escort Jesus to His heavenly home. **The most exalted of the angel throng, they were the two who had come to the tomb at Christ's resurrection, and they had been with Him throughout His life on earth.** {DA 832.1}

3. Many "came forth" with Jesus from their graves.

- a. As Christ arose, He brought from the grave a multitude of captives. The earthquake at His death had rent open their graves, and when He arose, they came forth with Him. They were those who had been co-laborers with God, and who at the cost of their lives had borne testimony to the truth. Now they were to be witnesses for Him who had raised them from the dead. {DA 786.1}
- b. During His ministry, Jesus had raised the dead to life. He had raised the son of the widow of Nain, and the ruler's daughter and Lazarus. But these were not clothed with immortality. After they were raised, they were still subject to death. **But those who came forth from the grave at Christ's resurrection were raised to everlasting life. They ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave. These, said Christ, are no longer the captives of Satan; I have redeemed them. I have brought them from the grave as the first fruits of My power, to be with Me where I am,**

**nevermore to see death or experience sorrow.** {DA 786.2}

- c. These went into the city, and appeared unto many, declaring, Christ has risen from the dead, and we be risen with Him. Thus was immortalized the sacred truth of the resurrection. The risen saints bore witness to the truth of the words, "Thy dead men shall live, together with My dead body shall they arise." Their resurrection was an illustration of the fulfillment of the prophecy, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. 26:19. {DA 786.3}
4. The soldiers guarding the tomb became like dead men.
    - a. At the death of Jesus the soldiers had beheld the earth wrapped in darkness at midday; but at the resurrection they saw the brightness of the angels illuminate the night, and heard the inhabitants of heaven singing with great joy and triumph: Thou hast vanquished Satan and the powers of darkness; Thou hast swallowed up death in victory! {DA 780.2}
    - b. Christ came forth from the tomb glorified, and the Roman guard beheld Him. **Their eyes were riveted upon the face of Him whom they had so recently mocked and derided.** In this glorified Being they beheld the prisoner whom they had seen in the judgment hall, the one for whom they had plaited a crown of thorns. {DA 780.3}
    - c. At sight of the angels and the glorified Saviour the Roman guard had fainted and **become as dead men.** When the heavenly train was hidden from their view, they arose to their feet, and as quickly as their trembling limbs could carry them, made their way to the gate of the garden. Staggering like drunken men, they hurried on to the city, telling those whom they met the wonderful news. They were making their way to Pilate, but their report had been carried to the Jewish authorities, and the chief priests and rulers sent for them to be brought first into their presence. A strange appearance those soldiers presented. Trembling with fear, their faces colorless, they bore testimony to the resurrection of Christ. The soldiers told all, just as they had seen it; they had not had time to think or speak anything but the truth. With painful utterance they said, It was the Son of God who was crucified; we have heard an angel proclaiming Him as the Majesty of heaven, the King of glory. {DA 781.1}
  5. The priests responded to the resurrection.
    - a. The priests, in putting Christ to death, had made themselves the tools of Satan. Now they were entirely in his power. They were entangled in a snare from which they saw no escape but in continuing their warfare against Christ. When they heard the report of His resurrection, they feared the wrath of the people. **They felt that their own lives were in danger. The only hope for them was to prove Christ an impostor by denying that He had risen. They bribed the soldiers, and secured Pilate's silence. They spread their lying reports far and near. But there were witnesses whom they could not silence. Many had heard of the soldiers' testimony to Christ's resurrection. And certain of the dead who came forth with Christ appeared to many, and declared**

**that He had risen.** Reports were brought to the priests of persons who had seen these risen ones, and heard their testimony. The priests and rulers were in continual dread, lest in walking the streets, or within the privacy of their own homes, they should come face to face with Christ. They felt that there was no safety for them. Bolts and bars were but poor protection against the Son of God. By day and by night that awful scene in the judgment hall, when they had cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children," was before them. Matt. 27:25. Nevermore would the memory of that scene fade from their minds. Nevermore would peaceful sleep come to their pillows. {DA 785.1}

6. Christ made eleven distinct appearances after the resurrection and prior to His ascension. These can be documented in Scripture. (see Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:7; 1 Cor. 15:4) The correct order follows:

- (1) to Mary Magdalene near the tomb (John 20:11-18);
- (2) to the women returning from the tomb (Matthew 28:9,10);
- (3) to Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5);
- (4) to the two "disciples" approaching Emmaus in the evening (Luke 24:13-32);
- (5) to all the disciples except Thomas, who was absent (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-23);
- (6) to all the disciples, including Thomas, on Sunday night one week later (John 20:26-31);
- (7) to seven disciples beside the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-25);
- (8) to more than 500 people on an appointed mountain in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-20; possibly parallels 1 Cor. 15:6);
- (9) to James, the half brother of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:7);
- (10) to the apostles at the ascension (Acts 1:3-11); and
- (11) to Paul (1 Corinthians 15:8).

**What difference does all of this make in our lives? How did it affect the disciples? After the resurrection the disciples finally realized: 1) That Christ was God; 2) That He had full power and control over life and death; 3) That their best "Friend" was the King of the Universe; and 4) That death did not really matter any more!!**

## 7. Resurrection Options

The resurrection of Jesus has been interpreted as:

- 1. A Great Hoax (the resurrection is *false*).**
- 2. Mythology (the resurrection is *fiction*).**
- 3. The Supreme Event of History (the resurrection is *fact*).**

The following theories have been proposed to explain the empty tomb and the post-resurrection appearances of Christ:

<b>Theory</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
1. Swoon	Jesus did not actually die.
2. Spirit	Jesus' spirit returned to heaven but His body stayed on earth.
3. Vision	The disciples hallucinated.
4. Legend/Myth	The resurrection is only a myth or story with a teaching point. A real Jesus is probable but not really necessary.
5. Stolen Body	The body was stolen by (1) the Jews, (2) the Romans, (3) the disciples (Matt. 28:11-15), or (4) Joseph of Arimathea (John 19:38ff).
6. Wrong Tomb	The disciples went to the wrong tomb, found it empty, and erroneously concluded that Jesus had risen.
7. Deliberate Lie for Profit	The disciples fabricated the resurrection story for profit.
8. Mistaken Identity	The disciples mistook for Jesus someone who looked like Him.
9. A Literal, Bodily Resurrection	Jesus was raised from the dead, historically and bodily, by the supernatural power of God (1 Cor. 15:3ff.).

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