

The Resurrection

Part 1

The Introduction

Why is the resurrection of such prime importance in the Christian faith? Why is Easter our most important Christian holiday, even more important than Christmas.

Our Study

Before we can answer this question, we need to take a brief look at the events immediately following Jesus crucifixion.

The Scripture: Matthew 28: 1-4

“At dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel came down from heaven and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.”

The Scripture: Mark 16: 6-8

“[The angel] said, ‘Don’t be alarmed....He is risen. He is not here. But go tell his disciples and Peter. He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him just as he told you.’”

The Scripture: Luke 24: 9,11

“When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the eleven and to all the others. But they did not believe the women....Peter, however got up and ran to the tomb.”

The Scripture: John 20: 3-8

“Peter and the other disciple started out for the tomb...Then Simon Peter....went into the tomb.....They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.”

Scripture: Luke: 24:45

“Then he (Jesus) opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures...ÔI am going to send you what my Father has promised (the Holy Spirit) but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

1. Briefly summarize the events given in these scriptures. _____

Following Christ's death why were His disciples so despondent? Hadn't Jesus repeatedly told them He would die but that He would be resurrected after three days?

Perhaps their emotions are partly understandable since the Old Testament speaks very little about this important subject. We receive much of our understanding of Jesus' resurrection in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. If you have a Bible, study this important chapter thoroughly.

The Background

During His ministry on earth, Jesus raised at least three people from the dead: Lazarus, the rabbi's daughter, and the widow's son. However, these events were not true resurrections. Rather, they were resuscitations. The people involved returned to life in the same bodies and the life they had led, while in resurrection we receive new bodies in many respects different from our old ones.

Let's go back and take a brief look at these three miracles.

The Scripture: Matthew 9:18, 23-25

"A ruler came and knelt before him (Jesus) and said, "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live...Jesus got up and went with him. He said, "The girl is not dead but asleep"....After the crowd had been put outside, He went and took the girl by the hand and she got up."

2. Who had died? _____
3. What did Jesus say? _____
4. What did He do? _____
5. What happened? _____

The Scripture: Luke 7:11-15

"Jesus went to a town called Nain....As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out--the only son of his mother, and she was a widow....When the Lord saw her, His heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry." Then He went up and touched the coffin....He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother."

6. Where did this miracle take place? _____
7. Who had died? _____

8. What did Jesus do? _____

9. What did He say? _____

10. What happened? _____

The third miracle concerns Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha. Jesus received word that Lazarus was sick. Still, He remained where He was for two more days. By the time He and His disciples arrived at Lazarus' hometown, Lazarus had been in the tomb four days.

The Scripture: John 11: 38-39, 41, 43-44

“Jesus...deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. “Take away the stone,” He said. So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and [prayed]. Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen.”

11. Describe the burial place. _____

12. What did Jesus say to the mourners? _____

13. What did Jesus call out? _____

14. What happened? _____

Although there are only these three specific recordings of people being raised from the dead, it is possible that there were others.

In Matthew 11:5, the Bible says, *“Go back and report to John (the Baptist)....The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.”*

In the next part of this study, we return to our original question: Why is the resurrection so important to the Christian faith? We will also take a look at the post resurrection state of both the believer and the unbeliever.

The Answers

1. Your summary
2. A ruler's daughter
3. She is not dead but asleep
4. Put His hand on her
5. She got up
6. In a town called Nain
7. The only son of a widow
8. He touched the coffin
9. "Young men, I say to you, get up."
10. The young man sat up and began to talk.
11. A cave with a stone laid across the entrance
12. "Take away the stone."
13. Lazarus, come out."
14. Lazarus came out, still wrapped in his grave clothes.

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