



The Resurrection of Jesus

In the Psalms as well as other places in the Bible the resurrection of Jesus was foretold. *Ps 16:10* “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”

When Christ was addressing the Pharisees, they demanded of him a sign of Him. But a hardened and apostate people had no right to demand a sign, and had it been given they would not have accepted it. There was nothing to be gained by casting “pearls before swine” (Mt. 7:6). In Moses and the prophets, there was sufficient light to guide men into the way of salvation, and accordingly the basic reason why the scribes and Pharisees refused to accept Christ was that they had not really accepted the Old Testament Scriptures that testified of Him. However, Christ answered the Pharisees by referring to the Old Testament scriptures by revealing the experience of Jonah in *Matt. 12:40* “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

Jonah was a type of Christ, and Christ resurrection was the supreme miracle of His mission to earth, and to that great future event Christ now directs His critics. Christ here no doubt refers to the time He spent in Joseph’s tomb, from late Friday afternoon to early Sunday morning. This referral is significant because the sign of the prophet Jonas consisted not only in his miraculous escape from the whale’s belly, but also in his successful ministry for the people of Nineveh. This foretells of Christ authority and power over death and the grave and the ministry that He is carrying forth for His people today.

Again He referred to the Old Testament by telling His disciples that which the prophets wrote about Him would come to pass. *Luke 18:31-33* “Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. ³² For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: ³³ And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.”

In Matthew chapter 16, the disciples were inquiring as to whether Jesus was indeed the Messiah. At this point Jesus felt the conversation about His Messiahship was a fitting time to introduce the subject, for the first time of His imminent sufferings, death, and resurrection. The Bible says in *Matt. 16:21* “From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.”

Also in **Matt. 17:22, 23** *“And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: ²³ And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.”*

Luke 9:22 *“Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.”*

Matt. 20:17-19 *“And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, ¹⁸ Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, ¹⁹ And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.”*

Prior to this occasion Jesus had not discussed His Messianism even with the Twelve, nor had He mentioned to them the fact that, as the Messiah, He must die for the sins of the world. From this time forth, however, Jesus repeatedly discussed the matter with His disciples, in an endeavor, no doubt to wean their minds away from the false, popular concepts the Jews then entertained concerning the Messiah and His kingdom. Jesus pressed upon them the instruction so they would understand that there was no way in which He could accomplish His mission but by the way of the cross.

In John 2:13-21 states that the Jews Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem and found people or merchants in the temple selling oxen, sheep and doves, and the Bible says that Jesus drove out the money changers and told the people “make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise.” Let’s look at these verses and then notice what response it stirred up in the Jews.

John 2:12-17 *“After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days. ¹³ And the Jews’ passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, ¹⁴ And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: ¹⁵ And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables; ¹⁶ And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise. ¹⁷ And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.”*

This was Jesus’s first Cleansing of the Temple, His first act of national importance. By it He declared His right to administer the affairs of the Temple and announced His mission as the Messiah. The Temple was God’s dwelling place among men. Again and again the Jews criticized Jesus for speaking of God as His Father. They also claimed God as their Father, but realized that Jesus did so in a higher sense. They perceived that, in these words, Jesus spoke of the Temple as “my house”. This act and Jesus words caused the Jews to question His Messianism. The leaders demanded evidence that Jesus had the right to assume direction in the affairs of the Temple. His act posed a direct challenge to their authority, one that they could not overlook. And as usual they demanded a sign.

John 2:18-21 *“Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. ²⁰ Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? ²¹ But he spake of the temple of his **body**.”*

Notice how Jesus responded to their question. He said “destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Bible is clear in verse 21 what He was talking about. “But he spake of the temple of

his body.” In these words Jesus intimates for the first time the fate that awaited Him at the end of His earthly pathway. The Jews were already plotting His death. But here Jesus referred to His **resurrection**. But the Jews, not fully understanding the import of the declaration, thought of the literal Temple structure.

It was not until this prediction had been fulfilled that the disciples were able to understand the deeper meaning of some of His words and acts. After the resurrection the Holy Spirit led them into a more perfect understanding of the meaning of His words and deeds. **John 2:22** “*When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.*”

After Christ was crucified on the cross, the chief Priest and Pharisees sought to prevent the fulfillment of Christ’s words concerning His resurrection. The Gospel record makes evident that there were no lengths to which the priests and rulers would not go. Furthermore, their deep apprehension throughout the preceding two days, (trial) that they might not succeed in their sinister plot to destroy Jesus, together with their suspicion that He was indeed the Messiah, would lead them to do the very thing Matthew ascribes to them.

Matt. 27:62-64 “*Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, ⁶³ Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. ⁶⁴ Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. ⁶⁵ Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. ⁶⁶ So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.*”

After Jesus resurrection the priest fabricated a false story or lie in an attempt to spread disbelief in the words of Jesus, that He would rise again on the third day. But their story turns out to be inconsistent with itself.

Matt. 28 11-16 “*Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. ¹² And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, ¹³ Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. ¹⁴ And if this come to the governor’s ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. ¹⁵ So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day. ¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.*”

Their efforts to prevent the knowledge of Christ resurrection was futile as we will note in the following passages.

Matt. 28:1-10 “*In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. ² And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. ³ His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: ⁴ And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. ⁵ And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. ⁶ He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷ And go quickly, and tell his disciples*

*that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.*⁸ *And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.*⁹ *And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.*¹⁰ *Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.”*

The empty tomb proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus. All the Jewish authorities needed to do to disprove the resurrection story was to produce the dead body of Jesus. But they could not. Had they been able to, they would certainly have done so. At their own suggestion and under their own supervision the tomb had been sealed, and some of their own number had no doubt witnessed the sealing. Praise the Lord, He was seen of the women and disciples.

Was it possible for Christ to be holden of death? No, and Peter while addressing the people of Jerusalem spoke of Christ resurrection. **Acts 2:23,24** *“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: ²⁴ Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.”*

Paul also speaks of the resurrection of Christ and how He was **seen** of men in **1 Cor. 15:3-8** *“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; ⁴ And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: ⁵ And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: ⁶ After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. ⁷ After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. ⁸ And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.”*

We need to understand the importance that is attached to Christ resurrection which Paul brings out in verses 14-18. He begins his closely woven arguments concerning the resurrection. In the previous verses, he has established the historical basis of the resurrection by presenting testimony from a multitude of reliable eyewitnesses. He now asks how, in the light of this well-proved fact, any believer can deny a general resurrection of the dead. He explains if a resurrection of the dead is considered to be impossible, and belief in it to be absurd, then it must follow that Christ did not rise from the grave, for the general objection to the resurrection of the dead would apply in His case also. Therefore it is not possible to deny the general resurrection without denying the well-established resurrection of Jesus. This, Paul says, is the inevitable result of denying the resurrection, and involves a denial of Christianity, the removal of the Christian’s hope of eternal life.

1 Cor. 15:14-18 *“And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. ¹⁵ Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. ¹⁶ For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: ¹⁷ And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. ¹⁸ Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.”*

Paul has historically proved the truth of Christ’s resurrection, and emphasized the destructive effects of denying the resurrection. He can now claim to have demolished the negative teaching, and can triumphantly state the certainty of Christ’s resurrection. He also offers a positive assurance of the resurrection, and the great truths and promises that follow.

1 Cor. 15:20-23 “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. ²¹ For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.”

Through John the revelator, we have been given a cheering message that Christ has sent to His people regarding His resurrection. **Rev. 1:18** “I am he that **liveth**, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

Christians have been given an ordinance as a memorial of Christ’s burial and resurrection; baptism, the symbol of the new birth. **Rom. 6:3-5** “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:”