

Synchronizing the Resurrection Narratives, Event #21: The Fourth Group Appearance of Jesus—to the Disciples on a Mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20).

Review of the resurrection *events* up to this point (I have narrowed down the *approximate* hour of the events based on sunset of Saturday, April 4, 33 and the sunrise of Sunday, April 5, 33; MM is Mary Magdalene):

- Event #1: Saturday, 5:45 p.m., April 4, 33: Two Marys go to “look” at tomb, Matt. 28:1.
- Event #2: Sunday, 3:00 a.m., April 5, 33: Earthquake and angel from heaven, Matt. 28:2-4.
- Event #3: Sunday, 4:00 a.m., April 5, 33: MM visits the tomb before daybreak, Jn. 20:1.
- Event #4: Sunday, 4:15 a.m.: MM reports empty tomb to John & Peter, Jn. 20:2.
- Event #5: Sunday, 4:30 a.m.: Peter and John run to the tomb, Jn. 20:3-9.
- Event #6: Sunday, 4:40 a.m.: MM returns to tomb & sees 2 angels, Jn. 20:10-13.
- Event #7: Sunday, 4:50 a.m.: MM sees the Risen Lord, Jn. 20:14-17.
- Event #8: Sunday, 5:00 a.m.: MM tells disciples who do not believe her, Jn. 20:18; Mk. 16:9-11.
- Event #9: Sunday, 6:00 a.m.: MM & other women go to tomb of Jesus, Mk. 16:1-3; Lk. 24:1-2.
- Event #10: Sunday, 6:30 a.m.: Women enter tomb; 3 angels, Mt. 28:5-7; Mk 16:4-7; Lk. 24:3-8.
- Event #11: Sunday, 7:00 a.m.: Women run in fear; Jesus meets them, Mt. 28:8-10; Mk. 16:8.
- Event #12: Sunday, 8:00 a.m.: Women went to tell disciples; soldiers report, Mat 28:11-15.
- Event #13: Sunday, 8:10 a.m.: Once again, the disciples do not believe the women, Lk. 24:9-11
- Event #14: Sunday, 8:30 a.m.: However, Peter runs to the tomb a second time, Lk. 24:12.
- Event #15: Sunday, 8:45 a.m.: Private meeting between Jesus and Peter, 1 Cor. 15:5; Lk. 24:34.
- Event #16: Sunday, 10 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Jesus & 2 travelers to Emmaus, Mk. 16:12; Lk. 24:13-32.
- Event #17: Sunday, 5:00 p.m. The 2 travelers tell the 11 Disciples, Mk. 16:13; Lk. 24:33-35.
- Event #18: Sunday, 5:20 p.m. Thomas leaves; Jesus appears, Lk. 24:36-49; Jn. 20:19-25.
- Event #19: 8 days after the resurrection. Jesus appears to Thomas, Mk. 16:14-18; Jn 20:26-31.
- Event #20: 2 weeks after the resurrection. Jesus appears to disciples on shore of Galilean Sea, Jn 21:1-25.
- Event #21: 3 weeks after the resurrection. Jesus appears to eleven disciples on mountain, Matt. 28:16-20.

This event probably took place three weeks after the resurrection. It is the fourth group appearance, and it was *only* to the eleven disciples. It is straightforward, yet very profound:

Matthew 28:16 But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. 17 And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. 18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

When the disciples suddenly saw Jesus they fell down before him in the act of worship (the verb *proskuneo* indicates dropping to one's knees in worship or worshipful adoration). Some, however, doubted. From the very beginning the disciples had difficulty believing that Jesus had actually risen from the dead (Luke 24:10, 11). When ten finally believed it, one (Thomas) was still unconvinced. He, too, became convinced (John 20:24-29). It is very possible that at first this "mysterious person" appears to them from a considerable distance. He then steps closer, and the doubt disappeared. At any rate, they all eventually become absolutely convinced as evidenced by their later martyrdom for their belief—a belief that they were not predisposed to entertain.

In this event there are at least three grand blessed truths. First, the great claim, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." No words can more absolutely express unconditional, unlimited authority and sovereignty. "All power" marks every kind of power that exists. Note the sphere of the sovereignty: "in heaven and in earth." There is no reason, except the unwillingness of some people to admit the claim, for casting any sort of doubt on these words. No distinction need be made between these words of power and the rest of His words of grace and compassion. Also note the "has been given," which points to a definite period. When was it given? The scriptures point to the period of His investiture with this sovereign power at the resurrection, after His work of salvation on the cross:

Philip. 2:8-11, And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Romans 1:4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

1 Peter 1:21 who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Hebrews 2:9 But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood,

Revelation 5:6 And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.

The very wrists that were nailed to the cross would wield the scepter of the Universe. And on the brow that was wounded and bleeding with the crown of thorns is wreathed with the many crowns of universal Kingdom. Jesus Christ is not only our Savior and Elder Brother, He controls

history. No matter what we may be experiencing in this life, what a comfort to know that Jesus Christ not only loves us with a unilateral love, He is the Sovereign over all of the details of life. Not only is He the power on earth but also “in heaven.” Not only is He in control of everything on earth, He is in control of all in heaven—of course, this includes our future in heaven. One day we will all enjoy a resurrected body, a renewed sinless nature which is capable of bearing an “exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:17). One day we will be conformed to the Lord Jesus Christ, “when He appears, we shall be like Him” (1 John 3:2). What grace and power to take sinful believers and transform them into a glory that is His alone. Wow! What a chill that can send down the spine of any believer who seriously reflects on this future.

A second grand truth is the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19, 20). After Jesus speaks of His all-encompassing power, He proceeds to tell His disciples: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.” “Baptizing them in the name”—the name is one, that of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There is a great deal more here than a baptismal formula, for to be baptized into the Name is but the symbol of being plunged into the communion of this one threefold God of our salvation. These are very deep theological waters! The water baptism is but a symbol of one of the grandest truths, namely the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. Because of being baptized by the Spirit, every believer lives, moves and has his being in the very being of God. Every believer is completely identified with each member of the Trinity. In this commission we see, once again, the absolute authority of Jesus Christ: “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”

A third marvelous truth is the great promise, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” The “I am” speaks of Jesus as Yahweh and Esse, as well as timelessness—covering all of the varieties of *was, is, and will be*. No matter how many days they be or how different—days of summer and days of winter, days of sunshine, and days of storm and troubles—*He is with us in them all. They change, but He is “the same yesterday, and today, and forever”* (Heb. 13:8). Notice the illimitable extent of the promise—“even unto the end of the age.” His promises never fail! No matter what the future holds for us in this temporal life, we can continue to possess an incurable joy and hope because He is always with us—always and forever! Wow!

In His Sacred Love,

Pastor Don