

Synchronizing the Resurrection Narratives, Event #22: The Fifth and Last Group Appearance of Jesus to the Disciples—on the Mount of Olives where He ascended into Heaven (Mark 16:19-20; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-12).

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.
- Event #22: 40 days after the resurrection. Jesus’s last group appearance, and His ascension into Heaven, Mk 16:19-20; Lk. 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-12.

Mark 16:19-20, So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. 20 And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed.

Luke 24:50-53 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 51 And it came about that while He was blessing them, He parted from them. 52 And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple, praising God.

Acts 1:1-12 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, 2 until the day when He was taken up, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. 3 To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. 4 And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." 6 And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; 8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." 9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; 11 and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." 12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

I would like to focus on three grand truths contained in Acts 1:3, "*To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.*" First, note the evidential value of the resurrection appearances of the Lord over a period of forty days: "He also presented Himself alive . . . by *many convincing proofs.*" We have noted the many appearances to individuals as well as to groups of disciples: to Mary in her deep and solitary grief (event 7); to the women who ran from the tomb (event 11); to Peter for a very private meeting (event 15); to the two travelers on the road to Emmaus (event 16); to the disciples without Thomas (event 18); to the disciples with Thomas (event 19); to the disciples on the shore of Galilee (event 20); to eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee (event 21); and now after forty days on the Mount of Olives (event 22). These appearances were not the results of wishful thinking, quite the contrary. They were at all hours—in the morning, midday, and evening; they were in many places—in houses, outdoors, when the doors were shut. These appearances of Jesus demonstrated true corporeity—He was seen, touched; He ate; He showed them the scars on His hands and side. Any doubt of the historicity of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ can only be explained by some kind of mental pathology due to suppression caused by the noetic effects of sin.

Second, we not only have continuity between Jesus's old body and new resurrected body, we have continuity of His disposition. Recall the many beautiful links with the past: the language with Mary when He told her to go and tell *My brethren*; His familiar disposition where He was *known in the breaking of the bread*; the familiar conversation in the miraculous catching of the

fish on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Throughout all of these appearances, the same Lord that they walked with for years is the same person with the same message after death and resurrection. Throughout the forty days we have revelation of the same heart, the same love, and the same words of comfort, strength, purpose, mission, and peace. He showed Himself after His physical death as the same old Self, the same Lover of man's soul. We see the perpetuity of His love. The same Grace Man who embraced the lost, from the very self-righteous (Nicodemus) to the prostitutes (Mary) is the Same Resurrected Man today. The same voice who said 'Mary' before His physical death and resurrection is the same one who uttered the old tones of tenderness on resurrection morning, 'Mary.' Because of Him, we too shall show ourselves alive with same memories after we have experienced the change of death and gain our resurrection bodies at the Rapture.

Third, we have His forty day preparation of the disciples for their future edification and work. During the forty days He appears at intervals. He comes among them and then disappears. He is seen in the morning light by the lake-side then goes away. He tells them to come and meet Him in Galilee and then after a short time He disappears again. This intermittent presence was all part of the preparation of the disciples for His departure. It was painful and educative. It carried out His own word, "And now I am no more in the world" (John 17:11). He is preparing them for His session at the right hand of the Father. He will not be able to physically dwell with them, and go in and out among them, so He is preparing them. However, this preparation for His *physical* departure (human body) was a preparation for them to know Him in a different, better, and more profound manner:

John 14:17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. 18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 "After a little while **the world will behold Me no more; but you will see Me**; because I live, you shall live also.

Christ came to this world as prophesied throughout the Old Testament. The world beheld Him as He performed miracles, taught in the Temple and to the masses, and fulfilled Old Testament prophecies. His death on the cross culminated His work on earth, "It is finished"! This marks distinctively that His earthly mission on earth was ended when He died. He is now at the right hand of the Father and engaged in ministries based on that work:

Hebrews 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 8:1 Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

Hebrews 10:12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,

Our Lord's intermittent appearances over forty days was His preparation for a new relationship with them. Not one based on empiricism, which is a poor conduit for spiritual realities and absolute truths. This new relationship would be based on the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the divine revelation of Bible doctrine. This relationship is a great advance on the relationship the disciples had with Jesus during His earthly life. The relationship the disciples had with Jesus throughout Acts (when Jesus was not physically present) far exceeded the relationship they had with Him when they walked with Him throughout the land of Israel. They grew in far greater love and knowledge of Him when He was not physically present. They knew Him better and better through the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit and the grand doctrines contained in the epistles. The Peter who wrote the two epistles which bear his name reflects far deeper knowledge of Christ than the Peter in the gospels. The Peter of the epistles enjoyed far more confidence in the reality of Jesus Christ as the God-man, the unique person of the universe, than he dreamed of while Jesus was with him on earth.

These forty days are full of wonderful doctrinal lessons, chief among them is that real fellowship with Jesus is attained by faith in Him which is made possible through the ministry of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine. Through the ministry of the Holy Spirit we can enjoy a kind of deep fellowship with the indwelling Christ that was not possible for the disciples who walked and ate with Jesus. Wow!

John 14:16 "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. 18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. "After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also. 20 "In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

John 16:7 "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

Colossians 1:27 . . . Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Revelation 3:20 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.

In His Sacred Love,

Pastor Don