

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

MARK 16:1 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

2 And very early in the morning the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5 And entering into the sepulchre,

they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, **Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.**

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man*; for they were afraid.

NOTES

Jesus Overcomes the Grave

(Easter)

Lesson Text: Mark 16:1-8

Related Scriptures: Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:1-11;
Mark 14:26-28; Acts 2:22-32; Revelation 1:17-18

TIME: between A.D. 26 and 30

PLACE: Jerusalem

GOLDEN TEXT—“And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him” (Mark 16:6).

Lesson Exposition

JOURNEY TO THE TOMB— Mark 16:1-3

As we read this story, we are reminded of the devotion that Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome displayed. These women set out with a purpose that speaks volumes about their unwavering love. Each woman has a unique background and significance. Mary Magdalene was healed by Jesus, who cast seven demons out of her (Luke 8:2). Mary the mother of James was one of the women who followed Jesus and ministered to Him. Salome is also understood to be among the women who followed Jesus. Their devotion serves as an example for us all.

The women came to the tomb on the first day of the week, after the Sabbath. This underscores the transition from the Jewish Sabbath to the first day of the week and the dawn of a new era with the resurrection. Additionally, the timing aligns with three prophecies Jesus gave that He would rise after three days (Mark 8:31-33; 9:31-33; 10:30-32).

The Jewish understanding was that any part of a day counted as a full day. Jesus was in the grave for parts of three days and rose on the third day (cf. 8:31).

Anointing the dead served as an act of love for the deceased. It was not a simple task. Their preparedness shows their faithfulness, although they did not understand Jesus' claim that He would rise again from the dead. These faithful women challenge us to reflect on our own lives. Are we prepared to serve in the face of loss?

ENCOUNTER WITH THE MESSENGER—Mark 16:4-6

The women's unexpected discovery of an empty tomb marked the beginning of a radically new trajectory for the human race. Usually a round, heavy rock covered a tomb. The rock would require several strong individuals to move. As the women entered the tomb, they saw a young man in white.

The other Gospel accounts tell us that the messenger was an angel,

while Mark simply describes the messenger as dressed in a white robe (Mark 16:5; cf. Matt. 28:2-3). Perhaps Mark's depiction emphasizes the message itself rather than the messenger. Jesus had been raised from the dead!

THE MESSAGE OF RESURRECTION—Mark 16:7

The messenger told the women to go to the disciples and Peter. Peter failed Jesus and denied knowing Him (14:66-72). Perhaps Peter was wondering whether God could ever forgive him. The messenger may have specifically mentioned Peter to ensure Peter knew that Jesus wanted to see him.

The women, who had come to the tomb sorrowful, were the first bearers of the greatest news ever received. They were called to share the news of Christ's victory over death. They fled from the tomb, trembling and bewildered, a mix of fear and amazement gripping their hearts. Their reaction was probably one of shock but perhaps also informed by the promises Jesus had made. Could He have truly been resurrected just as He said?

This commission is significant for several reasons. First, it dramatically underscores the pivotal role of women as the first witnesses. God's plan challenged cultural norms that often diminished women's legal testimony. Second, the commission highlights the role of every believer in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. The commission to go and tell extends to all who have encountered the risen Lord.

THE REACTION TO THE MESSAGE—Mark 16:8

The messenger explained to the women what happened at the tomb. Jesus, who was crucified, had risen from the dead. He also gave them a task. But the women's initial response was not one of faith. They remained silent about what they saw and heard.

When Jesus had told the disciples about His impending death and resurrection, they did not understand and were afraid to ask questions (9:30-32). At the time of Christ's greatest triumph, having been entrusted with the most important message of all time, the women's initial response was fear, flight, and silence (16:8).

Now the question remains—what are we going to do about Jesus? Are we going to trust Him or continue to live in fear? Are we willing to tell others about the salvation available through faith in the resurrected Son of God?

—Page Brooks

QUESTIONS

1. What character qualities of the women are emphasized by their visit to the tomb?
2. Why is the presence of each woman at the tomb important?
3. What was important about the timing of the women's arrival at the tomb?
4. What does the women's plan to anoint Christ's body tell us about Jesus?
5. What two astonishing things did the women see at the tomb?
6. What was the messenger's message concerning Jesus?
7. What were the messenger's instructions to the women?
8. Why did the messenger mention Peter by name and not the other disciples?
9. What were the women's initial responses to the instructions?
10. What does Mark's account of the resurrection highlight concerning believers' responsibility with the message?

—Glenn Weaver

PRACTICAL POINTS

1. Sincere devotion to Christ is often shown in small tasks (Mark 16:1).
2. Serving Christ often happens at inconvenient times (vs. 2).
3. Obstacles may hinder our attempts at serving God (vs. 3).
4. Obstacles are often removed without our knowledge of how God did it (vs. 4).
5. Prepare for unexpected events when serving the Lord (vs. 5).
6. What He declares, God will bring to pass (vs. 6).
7. God uses devoted disciples to deliver His message (vs. 7).
8. Fear may overcome even the most dedicated disciple (vs. 8).

—Glenn Weaver

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. How should the prominence of women in the resurrection account affect how we view women today (Mark 16:1)?
2. What acts of devotion might we show Christ?
3. Knowing there was a stone blocking the tomb, the women did not plan a way to move it. What could be the reason behind this apparent lack of preparation?
4. Give examples of times when faith required seeing God's actions before trusting Him (vs. 7).
5. In what ways are the disciples' failure to believe Jesus' words concerning His resurrection similar to our own failures?
6. Why do you think the women were so afraid to tell anyone that Jesus had risen (vs. 8)?

—Glenn Weaver

Golden Text Illuminated

“And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him” (Mark 16:6).

The empty tomb stands as a powerful symbol of hope amid the despair and confusion that often characterize our human experience. The angel's words “He is risen; he is not here” resound through the ages as a declaration of Jesus' triumph over the grave. The tomb could not hold Him; the powers of darkness could not prevail against Him. Through His resurrection, Jesus demonstrated His complete mastery over the forces that seek to oppress and destroy us. This triumph serves as a powerful reminder that, in Christ, we too have the promise of victory over sin and death.

The implications of the resurrection extend far beyond the comfort and assurance it provides to believers. It serves as a powerful validation of Jesus' identity and mission. Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Through His victory over death, Jesus demonstrated His divine authority and established His claim as the Savior of the world.

In a world often full of darkness, the empty tomb shines with hope, pointing us to the One who overcame the world. May we earnestly seek Jesus and find in Him hope, joy, and victory. As we celebrate His resurrection, let us share this hope with a world that needs it. Let us boldly proclaim the truth of the risen Christ! His triumph over death is the foundation of our faith.

—Gene Kissinger