

**HE**

**AROSE**

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## **Introduction**

Christianity is based upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If Jesus was not resurrected from the grave we are serving a dead Savior. A dead Savior could not save anyone.

Some people of past days and present days deny the resurrection of Jesus. We have too much evidence to deny the resurrection of Jesus. There were hundreds of witnesses who saw the resurrected Jesus with their own eyes Jesus after his death walking, talking and even eating. One man who doubted was even given the opportunity to thrust his hand into Jesus' open side.

Jesus was triumphant over death; the grave was not able to hold him: *“Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.”* (Acts 2:24) Soldiers were paid to lie about the resurrection of Jesus; yet thousands believed.

The purpose of this writing is to erase any doubt that may be in the minds of those who read this. I will not waste anymore of your time with my introduction; I will get right to the meat of the case at hand.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Christ's Resurrection Was Prophesied**

Throughout the Word of God you will read of many different events that were foretold to take place; this was done to prove the truthfulness of the event. The resurrection of Jesus is one such prophecy; it was foretold so when it occurred there would be no doubt! The Jews who knew their scriptures were all aware of prophecies of concerning the resurrection of Jesus. There should have been no doubt in their minds and there was no doubt in the minds of thousands on the day of Pentecost. If prophecies motivated so many to believe then should they not also motivate us today? So we begin by looking at the prophecies of Christ's resurrection.

The twenty fourth Psalms tells of the king of glory coming: (Psalms 24:7) *“Lift*

*up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.*” If someone knocks at your door and you don’t have a window or a peek hole there is a good chance you will ask, “Who is there” before you open the door to allow them entrance. This is the very question that David pens: (Psalms 24:8) *“Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.”* He even asks the same question a second time: (Psalms 24:10) *“Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah”* So this is a good question for our consideration.

This probably refers to the bringing in of the ark into David’s tent. Let us remember that the ark represented the presence of God. (Joshua 3:11) *“Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.”* Everyone should open the doors of our hearts to allow God entrance. However, this definitely represents Jesus as it points to Christ, of whom the ark, with the mercy-seat, was a type. Jesus is the one who had authority to demand that the doors be opened. The demand of the gospel is that we open the door of our hearts to allow obedience to Jesus.

David wrote a prophecy concerning Jesus “ascending on high” or Jesus ascending into heaven; which could never have taken place if Christ had remained in the grave. Here is what David wrote: (Psalms 68:18) *“Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.”* The apostle Paul connects this prophecy of David to Jesus Christ: (Ephesians 4:8) *“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”* Here Paul actually quotes Psalms 68:18 to show Jesus as the ascended Messiah who overcame Satan. Remember Jesus could not have ascended to heaven if he had not be raised from the grave by his heavenly Father.

## CHAPTER 2

### **If Christ Be Not Risen**

The apostle Paul was inspired to write the consequences if Jesus Christ had not been resurrected from the grave: (1 Corinthians 15:14) *“And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.”* This is pretty plain language; allow me to elaborate on this message. If the resurrection of Jesus never

occurred then the preaching of the gospel would be unreal and empty. Here is something to think about; if Christ had remained dead we would have not assurance of the forgiveness of sins. It was the power of God that raised Jesus from the dead and it is the power of God that forgives our sins.

It seems as though there were some who did not believe that Jesus had actually been raised from the dead; perhaps they thought it was impossible. But is anything impossible with God? If He could create the universe out of nothing and create man out of dust He certainly could have resurrected His only begotten Son. So since there was doubt in the minds of some Paul goes on to argue and prove that Jesus had in fact been resurrected. He starts his argument by saying if there is no resurrection then Christ is not risen: (1 Corinthians 15:13) *“But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:”* He lays it on the line; he declares if there is no such a thing as a resurrection then Christ was not raised from the dead.

As you recall from the introduction there were prophecies declaring that Christ would be resurrected; since there were those who denied the resurrection of Jesus they were in reality saying that God did not know what He was talking about, was unable to perform that which He said He would do or God was a liar.

The supposition that Jesus wasn't resurrected would make the preaching of all the apostles vain, empty and worthless. Were the apostles only pretending to be witnesses for God? Did not the miracles they performed prove them to be true witnesses for God? Didn't the miracles they performed confirm the words they spoke and taught? Over and over again they proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus. Peter argued the resurrection of Jesus on the day of Pentecost: (Acts 2:23-28) *“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. (25) For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: (26) Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: (27) Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. (28) Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.”* On this particular day the resurrection of Jesus was received and believed: (Acts 2:41) *“Then they that gladly*

*received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*” That is right; about three thousand “gladly received” Peter’s message about Christ’s resurrection and they did not make one single argument. The public teaching of all of the apostles was based on the resurrection of Jesus.

If the apostles were falsely proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus what about those who believed their preaching; where does that leave them? Their faith was just as vain as the preaching of the apostles. They would still be guilty of their sins: (1 Corinthians 15:17) *“And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.”* They would still be guilty and under the condemnation of sin: (Ephesians 1:7) *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;”* If the apostles could not be believed concerning the resurrection of Jesus neither could it be believed that we have “redemption through his blood. If the apostles were lying we are still dead in our sins!

Here is a question that deserves our consideration; “If Jesus had been held under the power of death how could he free us from the power of death?” We cannot be justified nor could we have salvation if Jesus is still in the grave.

Paul continues his argument by referring to those who had “fallen asleep” [I.e. those who had died]: (1 Corinthians 15:18) *“Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.”* If God did not raise Jesus from the grave then those who died believing that Christ was resurrected have perished. Even those who died in Christian faith have no hope of being raised from the grave nor do they have any hope of eternal salvation if Christ was not resurrected. Paul gives them the cold hard facts.

If any of these suppositions are believed this would mean that the apostles, preachers, teachers, servants and all Christians are “most miserable”: (1 Corinthians 15:19) *“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”* Anyone who does not believe in the resurrection of Jesus only has hope while living on the earth; they have no hope of a future resurrection to spend eternity with God.

If Christ had not been raised from the grave the scriptures would not have been fulfilled: (Luke 24:45-46) *“Then opened he their understanding, that they might*

*understand the scriptures, (46) And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:”* Jesus wanted his disciples to understand the Old Testament. His purpose for them and us is not to make us wiser than what was written in the scriptures but to make us wiser of what is written in the Word of God. The only way that you and I can accomplish this is to study. Study is what Paul recommended to Timothy: (2 Timothy 2:15) *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* If you want to be wise in the scriptures study, study and then study some more. Jesus is telling them what ever you find written in the Old Testament must be fulfilled and you will need to know this for the task that lies ahead of you; that is preaching the gospel. These disciples truly loved Jesus and would not want to see harm come to him; however there were hard things written in the Old Testament concerning the Messiah and all these hard things must be fulfilled. The hardest and heaviest things must come to pass; even the vinegar because he could not say “It is finished” until that was fulfilled. It might be said that Jesus was removing the veil from their hearts so they could better understand the prophecies of the Old Testament. All men need to have a better understanding of God’s Word; David prayed “open my eyes and give me understanding”. Do you pray for understanding as you read your Bible? (James 1:5) *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”* Jesus wanted them to have and understanding of these fulfillments of prophecies because they were to be witnesses: (Luke 24:48) *“And ye are witnesses of these things.”*

If Jesus had not been raised from the grave we would not be justified: (Romans 4:24-25) *“But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; (25) Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”* In verse twenty five we are given a brief meaning of the death and resurrection of Jesus. He died to make atonement for our sins; he was raised to make justification; by this I mean that he made our justification complete. In a sense as Jesus was lying in the grave he was a prisoner of death; on the third day an angel was sent to roll away the stone and free him. When Jesus arose from the grave justice was satisfied; the debt for our sins had been paid. You and I shall never have justification by our own merit; we

could only receive justification by the death of Christ and his resurrection is proof of that justification.

If Jesus Christ had not been raised from the dead we would have no forgiveness of our sins: (1 Corinthians 15:17) *“And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.”* Could Paul be saying here that even the death of Christ could not have succeeded in forgiving our sins without the resurrection? I think so. It was the resurrection of Christ that made us right with God; read Romans chapter four verse twenty five again. We have redemption through his blood; the forgiveness of sins: Thanks to the resurrection of Jesus we do have redemption and forgiveness of our sins: (Ephesians 1:7) *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;”* Even if Jesus had shed his blood and his life taken away what evidence would we have of being justified without his resurrection? If Jesus had remained under the power of death what power would he have had to free us from our sins?

If Christ had not been resurrected we would have no hope: (1 Corinthians 15:19) *“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”* I can't imagine living without having hope of being resurrected and living throughout eternity and being in doubt as to whether or not I will be resurrected.

## CHAPTER 2

### Jesus Foretells His Resurrection

This is the third time that Jesus tells of his sufferings, death and resurrection: (Matthew 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.”* Notice from verse seventeen how Jesus took the twelve apostles aside and spoke to them in private. If Jesus were to make this announcement publicly at this time they would have been many that would have been afraid to follow him, therefore; he only foretold this to his twelve apostles. If Jesus had spoken these words publicly there

could have been an uproar; which was something the people feared: (Matthew 26:5) *“But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.”*

Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover as this was where the Passover was to be celebrated: (Deuteronomy 12:5) *“But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:”* Jerusalem was the place that God had chosen and Jesus was on his way there to present himself as the supreme sacrifice for our sins.

Jesus had earlier foretold them of his forthcoming suffering and resurrection: (Matthew 16:21) *“From that time forth began Jesus to show 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.”* (Matthew 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.”* We could certainly expect them to be sorrowful upon receiving such news.

Jesus frequently spoke of his death and resurrection to inform the apostles and also to comfort them because there is no doubt they would be discouraged and afraid. [Also see Mark 9:9; 14:28; Luke 18:33; John 2:19-22].

Jesus often spoke of his death and his resurrection because he was aware that he had enemies. The very ones who claimed to be religious and men of God were the enemies of whom Jesus so often spoke: (Matthew 28:11-15) *“Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed 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.* We may not always know who our enemies are but Jesus was well aware of who his enemies were; but even this knowledge did not stop him from doing his Father’s will: (Luke 22:42) *“Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”* Even as Jesus was being crucified he was more con-

cerned with doing God's will than he was with his enemies. Are you a Christian? Are you more concerned with doing God's will than you are of winning an argument with your enemies; Jesus was. To be a Christian is to have the mind of Jesus and to be as obedient as Jesus was!

## CHAPTER 3

### Appearances of Jesus After Resurrection

In the New Testament you can read of ten different appearances of Jesus after his resurrection. We will list each. [1. To Mary Magdalene at tomb - John 20:11-18; Mark mentions the same event Mark 16:9-11]. [2. To certain women Matthew 28:1-10]. [3. To Simon Peter alone Luke 24:1-11; 1 Corinthians 15:5] [4. To the two disciples on the road to Emmaus Luke 24:13-35 cf. Mark 16:12,13]. [5. To ten disciples; Thomas wasn't with them John 20: 19-24]. [6. Again to the disciples; Thomas being with them Mark 16:14-18; Luke 24:33-40; John 20:26-28; Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:5]. [7. To disciples while fishing John 21:1-23]. [8. To the eleven and five hundred brethren 1 Corinthians 15:6 compare with Matthew 28:16-20]. [9. To James 1 Corinthians 15:7]. [10. To the apostles just before his ascension Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-52; Acts 1:4-10].

If you should be harboring any doubts in your mind I would strongly suggest that you carefully read each of the above scripture references. As you read these be careful to notice that Jesus gave everyone ample opportunity to either prove or disprove that he had actually been resurrected from the dead. The apostle Paul also gave people the opportunity to refute the resurrection: (1 Corinthians 15:6) *"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."* On this occasion that Paul mentions was more than likely on a mountain in Galilee where Jesus said he would meet his disciples after his resurrection: (Matthew 26:32) *"But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."* After his resurrection we have this record: (Matthew 28:7) *"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."* (Matthew 28:10) *"Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me."* (Matthew 28:16) *"Then*

*the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.”*

As already noted the resurrected Jesus was seen on more than one occasion by more than one person. Paul now informs us that Jesus was seen one time by more than five hundred brethren at one time. If it takes eye witnesses to prove something to you; here is your proof! Paul admits that some of this five hundred had already died but there was still sufficient numbers of them remaining to prove his point or disprove it as well. Not to be forgotten is the fact that those who gave witness were endangering their own safety and lives. Yet many were the witnesses who were willing to tell what they had seen.

There is one more witness that we have not mentioned as of yet and that would be the apostle Paul himself. As Paul was on his way to Damascus to arrest Christians and take them back to Jerusalem he also saw Jesus: (Acts 9:3-6) *“And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: (4) And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? (5) And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. (6) And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

Saul as he was known at this time was an enemy to Christianity; if there was ever anyone who would like to deny the resurrection of Jesus it would have been Saul. Yet he openly and honestly admitted to have seen the resurrected Jesus on this famous scene while on the road to Damascus.

It is implied by the words of Luke that there may have been others who also saw Jesus after his death and burial: (Acts 1:3) *“To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:”* I will readily admit there is no doubt in my mind; Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead. What about you; do you share my belief?

## CHAPTER 4

### The Resurrection Was An Act Of God, Christ Himself and The Holy Spirit

It was prophesized by David that God would raise Jesus from the dead: (Psalms 16:10) *“For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”* Peter makes application of Psalms sixteen verse ten in the first gospel sermon: (Acts 2:25-27) *“For David speaketh concerning him, I fore-saw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: (26) Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: (27) Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”* It was not possible that Jesus could be held in the grave with the dead: (Luke 24:5-8) *“And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? (6) He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, (7) Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. (8) And they remembered his words,”* If we go down to verse thirty two there is a direct statement stating that God raised Jesus from the dead: (Acts 2:32) *“This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.”* How could Peter possible know this? The only way that Peter could have possibly gained this knowledge was through inspiration from the Holy Spirit.

In the second gospel sermon Peter again states that God raised Jesus from the dead: (Acts 3:15) *“And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.”* In verses thirteen through fifteen Peter names the sins they were guilty of: (1) they delivered Jesus to Pilate (who wanted to release him), (2) they denied the Holy One and Just (and chose a murderer instead), and (3) they killed the Author of life (but God raised him). What a tragic mistake they made; they chose to free someone who took a life and did not pick someone who could give life. Peter says “you thought you could deprive “the Prince of life” of his life but you were wrong; God raised him from the dead. Peter once again declares that he and many others are witnesses to Christ’s resurrection. The

apostles had conversations with him, ate with him and were even given permission to touch him if they so desired. This is undeniable proof.

The apostle Paul also gave testimony to the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead: (Ephesians 1:20) *“Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,”* Not only does Paul tell us that God raised Jesus from the dead he tells us that God has set Jesus at “his own right hand”. In other words God has given Jesus authority; which he also affirms in verse twenty two: (Ephesians 1:22) *“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,”* This was to fulfill a promise: (Psalms 110:1) *“The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”*

Jesus said he would raise his dead body in three days: (John 2:19) *“Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”* This was used against Jesus at his trial; but they twisted his words around. He did not say what they accused him of saying; what he meant was if you destroy this temple [meaning his body] he would raise it up in three days, thus showing his authority over his resurrection: (John 10:18) *“No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”* This shows that the death of Jesus was not that of a martyr; instead it was a voluntary sacrifice and it also shows that he had the power to raise it up again. Jesus had power that you and I don't have; he had the power to lay it down and power to raise it up once again

The Holy Spirit is also credited with raising Christ from the dead: (1 Peter 3:18) *“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:”* In his sufferings Christ was put to death in his human form; but he was quickened and brought to life by the Holy Spirit. If Jesus who was perfect and committed no sin suffered and died then entered into glory should we who are sinners not be patient when we suffer [which actually work to strengthen us] knowing that we shall follow him to glory.

## CHAPTER 5

### What Are the Results of Christ's Resurrection?

The results of Christ's resurrection are many; let us look at a few!

First of all the resurrection proves that God was pleased with what Jesus had done. If Jesus had not done what God wanted him to do I doubt that God would have raised him from the dead. But since God did raise Jesus from the dead it testifies that his actions were exactly what God desired him to do.

Jesus' resurrection was a victory over death and the grave. He also set the example that we too can have victory over death and the grave. More about this will follow.

Since Jesus did arise from the grave it shows that the gospel's message is truth. If he had not risen from the grave who would have believed anything that was said about him?

His resurrection states loud and clear that his sacrifice was an acceptable and final sacrifice. No other ever needs to be offered. Not only is it acceptable to mankind it is also acceptable with God.

Our justification was secured through his death and his resurrection is proof of this fact: (Romans 4:25) *"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."* Christ's resurrection is divine proof and assurance that his sacrifice has put away sin through his sacrifice. Jesus was raised for the perfection and completion of our justification. His resurrection is our assurance that God's divine justice was satisfied.

His resurrection is indicative of our own resurrection: (Romans 8:11) *"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."* Our bodies are not exempted from death that sin brings about but our spirits have an undying life. The resurrection of believers is totally dependant on the resurrection of Jesus: (1 Corinthians 6:14) *"And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power."* (2 Corinthians 4:14) *"Knowing that he*

*which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.” (1 Thessalonians 4:14) “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”* I cannot think of anything that gives me any more assurance than these words written by Paul. I greatly rejoice in knowing that there is something beyond the grave.

## CHAPTER 6

### Lies Told About The Resurrection

I find it to have been a very sad fact of history that there were those who tried to deny that Christ was resurrected. They lied and bribed the Roman soldiers in an effort to deny what actually took place: (Matthew 28:12-15) *“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 comes 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.”*

First, let me state that if these soldiers who were guarding the tomb that night had actually gone to sleep and if they allowed the disciples of Christ to come and steal the body they would have been in serious trouble; that would have been a capital offense. If I had been one of the soldiers I certainly would not have had much faith in the Jewish leaders to cover-up for me with the governor [verse 14].

What the soldiers were to say is very strange actions for any grave robbers; here is what Matthew Henry wrote under John 20:1-10; “The grave clothes in which Christ had been buried were found in very good order, which serves for an evidence that his body was not stolen away while the soldiers slept.” Robbers of tombs will take away clothes, but I have never heard of grave robbers taking the body and leaving valuable clothes.” To strengthen my statement I remind you that these were fine linen: (Mark 15:46) *“And he bought fine, linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.”* If you were going to steal a body from the grave wouldn’t you rather carry a body with clothes on it

rather than a naked body? Furthermore, if I was to steal a body I wouldn't take the time to neatly fold the clothes while there were soldiers outside watching me.

When you take the time to consider the facts about the lies that the soldiers were bribed to tell they actually seem very absurd. Those who made up these lies don't seem to be very smart, do they?

## CHAPTER 7

### Events After The Resurrection

The Bible very carefully informs us of the resurrection of Jesus; but it does not leave us in the dark concerning what became of the resurrected Son of God.

Forty days after the resurrection Jesus ascended back to heaven to be with his Father: (Acts 1:3) *"To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:"* All of the events that we have been looking at thus far in this writing occurred during this forty day period. The book of Acts repeatedly records the resurrection. This was an effort to prove to the apostles that Jesus did in fact arise from the grave; it also serves as proof to you and I. The record of these forty days is very important to everyone who wants to know the truth. If we read on to verse nine we have the truth about what happened next to JESUS: (Acts 1:9) *"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."* The gospel of Luke gives a fuller account of this occasion: (Luke 24:50-53) *"And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. (51) And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. (52) And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: (53) And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen."* This is what we commonly refer to as "The ascension of Christ." As the disciples watched Jesus ascended up into heaven. It was important to him to witness this so they would not be wondering what had happened to him. It is also important for you and I to know where Jesus went after his resurrection.

The ascension of Jesus took place from Mount Olivet: (Acts 1:12) *“Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day’s journey.”* The town of Bethany was on that part of Mount Olivet and it would have been in sight of Jerusalem. There was a prophecy that his feet should stand there: (Zechariah 14:4) *“And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.”*

The ascension of Jesus was after he had received glory: (Luke 24:26) *“Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?”* It was decreed that the promised Messiah must first suffer and then enter into his glory. God glorified Jesus after He raised him from the dead: (Ephesians 1:20-21) *“Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, (21) Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:”* When God glorified Jesus He gave Jesus all authority and put all things under his feet: (Ephesians 1:22) *“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,”* Authorities and even angels are subject to Jesus: (1 Peter 3:22) *“Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”* It was only fitting that Jesus should now be back in heaven at the right hand of God and thus be given all of the authority that God gave to him.

When Jesus ascended into heaven he became the forerunner for all of his people [I.e. Christians]: (Hebrews 6:20) *“Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”* Nelson’s Study Bible says this about a “forerunner”: “The Greek word for **forerunner** was used in the second century A.D. of the smaller boats sent into the harbor by larger ships unable to enter due to the buffeting of the weather. These smaller boats carried the anchor through the breakers inside the harbor and dropped it there, securing the larger ship. *Forerunner* presupposes that others will follow. Thus, Jesus is not only the believer’s anchor but He is like a runner boat that has taken our anchor into port and secured it there. There is thus no doubt as to whether this vessel is going into port. The only question is whether it will go in with the sleekness of

a well-trimmed sailing vessel or like a water-laden barge.” Believers who have such a hope in the presence of God should come boldly before the throne of grace”. (Hebrews 4:14-16) *“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. <sup>15</sup>For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup>Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”*

In heaven Jesus has another important duty; he ascended into heaven to intercede for you and me: (Romans 8:34) *“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is raised again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”* In verses twenty four and twenty five Paul states the reasons he has for future glory; one of those reasons is that Jesus is in heaven making intercession on his behalf. An intercessor is one who is a go-between; Jesus is there going to God on our behalf. Jesus is not in heaven unconcerned about us; neither has he forgotten us, he is there to make intercession for us. We have all heard of travel agents; it is their job to see to it that your travels go as well as they should. Jesus has done everything he possible could so he could to make sure that our journey to heaven goes well; he shed his own precious blood to give us passage to heaven and he is in heaven making intercession for us. In the epistle to the Hebrews we read more about Jesus making intercession for us: (Hebrews 9:24) *“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:”* An important fact about this passage that might be forgotten is that Jesus is in the very presence of God making intercession for us; Jesus is not far away from God speaking to Him on our behalf, he is in the very presence of God. Jesus did not ascend into heaven just for rest and to receive the glory and honor that is due him; he went there to be in the presence of God and to intercede on our behalf. While it is true that Jesus made his sacrifice here on earth he carried that sacrifice to heaven with him so that he might intercede for us; what a wonderful savior we have!

I will make one final statement as to why Jesus ascended into heaven; he has gone to prepare a place for us: (John 14:2) *“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for*

*you.*” The word “mansions” refers to dwelling places. I don’t know of anyone who does not desire a permanent home. Even the nomads would stop and settle down for a while. A permanent dwelling place has already been set aside for all who are faithful Christians. Jesus says that heaven is a house; not a tabernacle or a tent and in God’s house there are many mansions. Jesus has gone there to “prepare a place” for us; what we need to realize is that this is a promise that Jesus made. This is something that we can depend on; it will come to pass. I want to spend eternity there; don’t you?

## CHAPTER 8

### Conclusion

There is a song that we sing during our worship service that has the words “He arose”; I have always liked to sing this song as the pace of it is catchy and the message is exciting. I suppose I also am fascinated when singing this song because its message is a fact that the gospel message of salvation is based upon.

When you stop to think about it Jesus really arose on two different occasions. First he arose from the grave and then he arose up into heaven to once again be with his heavenly Father. If Jesus does not return to earth before we die we too shall arise twice. When Jesus comes again he will resurrect the dead from the grave and then we shall ascend up into heaven to spend eternity with God, Jesus, angels and all the saints. As another song states “What a day of rejoicing that will be”!

As stated early on this has been an effort to assist those who do not believe that Jesus is truly the Messiah, the Son of God. I have shown his resurrection to be a fact; we have noted many scriptures which with no uncertain words declare that he did arise from the grave. We have looked at the testimony of well over five hundred witnesses who have all claimed to have seen Jesus after his death and burial. We mentioned that there were those who had heard him speak to them, they had talked to him and some had even eaten with him.

Do you still doubt the resurrection? There was one man who after seeing Jesus with his own eyes still doubted; on one occasion when Jesus appeared to the twelve Thomas was not with them: (John 20:24) *“But Thomas, one of the twelve,*

*called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.*” The other disciples told Thomas they had seen the Lord; Thomas did not believe their testimony, he not only wanted to see Jesus he wanted to touch Jesus: (John 20:25) *“The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.”* The next time the resurrected Jesus appeared to them Thomas was present: (John 20:26) *“And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.”* Don’t you find it comforting to know that Jesus greeted them with the words “Peace be unto you”? From the record according to John it does not appear as though Jesus allowed Thomas to ask to thrust his hand into the side of Jesus where the soldiers had pierced Jesus’ side; instead Jesus said to Thomas: *“reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.”* (John 20:27) Then Thomas makes a very bold statement and confession: (John 20:28) *“And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.”* The next words that came out of the mouth of Jesus should be words of great interest to you and I because they actually concern us: (John 20:29) *“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”* I know that I have never seen Jesus and I am also sure that you have not seen Jesus either, but if we do believe having never seen Jesus “blessed” [happy] we should be.

I close with the words of John in an effort to help you to believe: (John 20:30-31) *“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: (31) But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”* Won’t you read the four gospels to learn more about the signs that Jesus performed so that you to might be a believer?

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