

TODAY ~ IN OUR MESSAGE ON JESUS' RESURRECTION, ~ ¶¶

WE'RE GOING TO BROADEN THE SCOPE ~ ¶¶

▶▶ and not just focus on the events of the resurrection itself. ⇔⇔ Matt. 27:62-28:20

▶▶ We'll begin ~ with the leaders' futile attempt ~ to keep Jesus in the tomb, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ then look at the events of that first resurrection Sunday, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ and then go beyond ~ to the issuing of the great commission, ~ 40 days after.

▶▶ All of this ~ ties into Jesus' resurrection.

▷▷ In doing this, ~ we'll get a fuller picture ~ of the resurrection narrative.

LET'S BEGIN ~ WITH THE EVENTS OF THE DAY BEFORE THE RESURRECTION.

▶▶ Matt. 27:62-66

▶▶ The sealing of the tomb ~ and the placing of armed guards ~ ¶¶

▷▷ add to the dramatic triumph of Jesus' resurrection ~ despite every human precaution.

▶▶ It highlights the futility of Jesus' enemies' attempts ~

at trying to keep him in the tomb. 1/13 ¶¶

THE FUTILE PRECAUTIONS TO KEEP JESUS IN THE TOMB ~ ALSO STAND ~ as a representative ~ ¶¶

▷▷of the overall ineffectual efforts ~ of sinful human beings throughout history ~ to dethrone God.

↳↳See, ~ the problem for them ~ is that ~ their machinations ~ always run into ~ ¶¶

→→the absolute sovereignty and omnipotence of God.

▶▶I always come back to Ps. 2:1-6

▶▶In Job 23:13, ~ Job says of God, ~ "But he is unchangeable, ~ and who can turn him back? ~ What he desires, ~ that he does."

▶▶In 14:27, ~ Isaiah says, ~ "For the Lord of hosts has purposed, ~ and who will annul it? ~ His hand is stretched out, ~ and who will turn it back?"

▶▶And through Isaiah, ~ in Is. 55:10-11, ~ God declares, ~ "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven ~ and do not return there but water the earth, ~ making it bring forth and sprout, ~ giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; ~ it shall not return to me empty, ~ but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, ~ and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

ALL THIS ADDS UP TO THE FACT ~ THAT JESUS' ENEMIES COULD NOT ~ AND DID NOT ~ keep him in the tomb.

▶▶All of this also adds up to the fact ~ that whatever else God has planned and promised ~ for our present lives & future ~ will happen.

▷▷Never leave or forsake. ⇔⇔ Coming back for us. ⇔⇔ New heavens and new earth.

▷▷Think about all the promises in Scripture. ⇔⇔ Will come to pass. 2/13 ¶¶

THE ACTIONS OF THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE PHARISEES ~

STAND IN STARK CONTRAST TO THE WOMEN ON EARLY SUNDAY A.M.

▶▶ They came to pay homage ~ to the dead Jesus.

▶▶ Mark gives us a little more detail here. ~~ Mk. 16:1-3.

▷▷ When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"

THIS MEANS ~ THAT THEY WERE NOT EXPECTING A RESURRECTED, ~ glorified Jesus.

▶▶ This helps to refute the fictitious theory ~ that the disciples hallucinated, ~ 77

▷▷ seeing images in their minds that corresponded with what they wanted to see.

▶▶ Beyond the women ~ none of them ~ expected to see a resurrected, ~ glorified Jesus.

▶▶ It seems James became a believer after the Lord appeared to him.

▷▷ Remember that Jesus' half brothers including James rejected Jesus.

▷▷ James' testimony is highly significant, ~ because it's the testimony of a skeptic.

▷▷ It took the resurrection to bring him to his senses.

▷▷ So it was extremely doubtful 3/13 11

▶▶Paul had been a persecutor of the church.

▷▷Pretty safe to assume ~ he was not looking for a risen Jesus on that first Resurrection Sunday.

FURTHERMORE, ~ SPEAKING OF THE WOMEN, ~ IN ALL OF THE MAJOR RESURRECTION narratives, ~ ¶¶

▶▶they are credited as ~ the first and primary ~ eyewitnesses.

▶▶In our modern culture ~ we don't appreciate the significance of this fact.

▶▶But ~ this would be an odd invention ~ at that time ~ if the resurrection were not true.

▷▷Since in both ~ the ancient Jewish and Roman cultures ~ women ~ were thought very little of.

↳↳Their testimony ~ was regarded as ~ insubstantial ~ and dismissible.

▶▶Given this fact, ~ it is highly unlikely ~ that any perpetrators of a hoax ~ ¶¶

▷▷in 1st century Judea ~ would elect women ~ to be their primary witnesses.

▶▶The only reason ~ to say that the women saw Jesus first ~ is because ~ ¶¶

▷▷that's what actually happened.

↳↳No one ~ would have made up ~ such a strange detail. 4/13 ¶¶

LET'S CONTINUE WITH MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT OF JESUS' RESURRECTION.

VSS 2-3, ~ AND BEHOLD, THERE WAS A GREAT EARTHQUAKE, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow.

THIS IS THE SECOND EARTHQUAKE AFTER THE ONE FOLLOWING JESUS' DEATH.

▶▶ And together ~ they connect the death and resurrection ~ as a single event ~ in salvation history.

▶▶ They are inseparable.

▶▶ You cannot have Jesus' death ~ without the resurrection.

▷▷ Otherwise, ~ his death would mean nothing.

▶▶ And, ~ obviously, ~ you cannot have the resurrection ~ without his death.

THE LARGE STONE, ~ earlier put in place and sealed by human authorities, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ is now rolled back and the angel sat on it.

▶▶ This symbolizes ~ the triumph of God's power over ~ ¶¶

▷▷ the futile efforts of the Jewish leaders, ~ over Satan, ~ over sin, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ and over death itself. 5/13 ¶¶

▶▶Furthermore, ~ that the angel sat on the stone ~ is also a dramatic statement of supernatural triumph.

▷▷Since the stone, ~ probably disk-shaped, ~ would not naturally accommodate one sitting on it.

THE ROCK BEING ROLLED AWAY ~ was not needed to enable Christ to be raised.

▶▶Jesus' resurrection had already occurred, ~ notwithstanding the massive stone barrier.

▶▶Now, ~ it's extremely important to understand ~ the stone was not moved ~ to let Jesus out.

▷▷The stone was moved ~ to let people in ~ in order to see that he had risen.

THE RESURRECTION ITSELF IS NEVER DESCRIBED ANYWHERE IN SCRIPTURE, ~ ¶¶

▶▶presumably because no one ever saw Jesus leave the tomb.

NEXT, ~ LET'S NOTE THE REACTION OF THE GUARDS AND THE WOMEN TO THE ANGEL.

VSS 4-5.

▶▶And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

▶▶Fear.

▷▷But with a difference. 6/13 ¶¶

HERE'S THE CONTRAST.

▶▶ For the guards, ~ and all who stand against Jesus, ~ the fear is all-encompassing.

▷▷ And they are not told ~ not to be afraid.

▶▶ For the women, ~ and all of Jesus followers, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we are given the assurance by the angel ~ that there is no need to be afraid.

↪↪ And subsequently, ~ fear turns to joy.

MY . . . , ~ WE HAVE NO NEED TO FEAR GOD'S HOLY ANGELS.

▶▶ The author of Heb. writes of angels, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

WE ALSO NEED NOT FEAR OUR RISEN SAVIOR.

▶▶ When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, ~ they were terrified, ~ and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear.

▷▷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."

▶▶ When Jesus met the women coming from the empty tomb, ~ recorded in vss 9-10, ~ he said, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Don't be afraid. 7/13 ¶¶

▶▶ Note John's and Jesus' reactions, ~ when John saw the risen Jesus ~ in all his glory on the island of Patmos.

▷▷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

AND THIS LACK OF FEAR ~ HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE ~ ONLY ~ ¶¶

▶▶ through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

▶▶ In Rom. ~ Paul says that ~ we have peace with God ~ through our Lord Jesus Christ.

▶▶ In Col., ~ Paul writes, ~ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

▶▶ And Peter writes, ~ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

NOW LET'S CONSIDER THIS FROM VSS 5-7.

ALTHOUGH THE WOMEN SEEK THE CRUCIFIED JESUS, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ the angel informs them that ~ he is no longer dead ~ but has risen, ~ just as he said.

▶▶ The words function as a refutation ~ to the earlier charge ~ ¶¶

▷▷ that Jesus is a "deceiver" (vs 63), ~ and thus validate the credibility ~ ¶¶

↪↪ of his earlier predictions of his resurrection. 8/13 ¶¶

BUT NOT ONLY DOES THE ANGEL INTERPRET EVENTS FOR THE WOMEN, ~ ¶¶

▶▶he also calls them to do two things.

▶▶I.e., ~ Come and see . . . then go quickly and tell his disciples.

▶▶The women who had come to look at the tomb ~ are now invited to behold the empty tomb.

THE ANGEL'S EXPLANATION OF THE ABSENCE OF THE BODY ~ ¶¶

▶▶is intended as ~ good news ~ that must be shared with the disciples.

▶▶And that's exactly what Jesus' empty tomb is.

▷▷Good news that must be shared far and wide, ~ all over the earth, ~ to everyone.

↪↪Because ~ it's humanity's only hope for salvation.

▷▷As Paul says in 1 Cor, ~ *And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.*

▷▷But then he immediately adds a note of triumph and good news.

↪↪But in fact ~ Christ has been raised from the dead.

▷▷And as Peter says, ~ speaking about Jesus, ~ ¶¶

↪↪There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. 9/13 ¶¶

IN VSS 11-20, ~ MATTHEW NOTES THREE RESULTS OF THE RESURRECTION.

THE FIRST RESULT MATTHEW NOTES ~ IS THE FALSE CONSPIRACY OF THE LEADERS and guards vss 11-15.

▶▶ We could label this section, ~ "The False Commission."

▷▷ The guards report what happened.

▷▷ The leaders ~ mount a conspiracy to falsify the report, ~ bribe the guards, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ and promise to protect them from Pilate's anger.

▷▷ The leaders come up with their false report, ~ the ridiculous story ~ ¶¶

↳↳ that the disciples stole Jesus' body.

▷▷ The guards were then commissioned to proclaim the false report, ~ which they did.

▷▷ Matt. notes, ~ *And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.*

↳↳ I.e., ~ the story was still being circulated ~ in the days of Matthew's writing his gospel account.

▶▶ And the false commission ~ is still being disseminated today ~ in the 21st century.

▷▷ And of course, ~ over the decades it has branched out ~ ¶¶

↳↳ to include other false theories about the resurrection. 10/13 ¶¶

▷▷ This is a reminder to us ~ that we can expect continuing opposition and slander ~ ¶¶

↪↪ as we proclaim the true gospel.

THE 2nd RESULT OF THE RESURRECTION THAT MATTHEW RECORDS.

▶▶ The divine attributes of Jesus ~ ¶¶

▷▷ his omnipotence (v. 18) ~ and his omnipresence (v. 20) ~ are exercised on behalf of the church.

▶▶ In vs 18, ~ Jesus says, ~ All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

▶▶ This is an allusion to Dan 7:13-14, ~ where the "one like a son of man" ~ ¶¶

▷▷ is "given ~ authority, ~ glory ~ and sovereign power . . . His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

▶▶ Jesus' exaltation, ~ as the result of his resurrection, ~ means that one day ~ ¶¶

▷▷ "every knee" will bow and "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

▶▶ Because of this authority, ~ Jesus has the right to issue marching orders to his followers.

▷▷ But he also has the immeasurable power ~ to help us carry out those orders.

↪↪ And good news.

→→ He does exercise his immeasurable power on our behalf. 11/13 ¶¶

CONTINUING TO LOOK AT THE 2nd RESULT.

▶▶ In vs 20, ~ Jesus says, ~ And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

▷▷ Omnipresence.

▶▶ There is a strong stress on ~ always.

▷▷ Lit., ~ the whole of every day.

↪↪ I.e., ~ each day as we live it.

▶▶ The presence of our risen Lord ~ is with every believer ~ ¶¶

▷▷ at every moment of every day ~ throughout our lives.

▶▶ And we should remind ourselves daily ~ of this awesome promise made by our sovereign God.

▷▷ Is. 41:10, ~ Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

AND THE 3rd RESULT OF THE RESURRECTION THAT MATTHEW RECORDS.

▶▶ The Great Commission.

▷▷ Vss 19-20a (NIV), ~ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. 12/13

▶▶ Make disciples = to become ~ a follower, ~ a pupil, ~ an apprentice ~ of Jesus, ~ 77

▷▷ including ~ doing what He teaches ~ and furthering His cause.

▷▷ This is the central focus of the Commission.

▷▷ Baptizing and teaching ~ describe aspects of the process.

▶▶ Jesus' ministry in Israel ~ was to be the beginning point ~ 77

▷▷ of what would later be a proclamation of the gospel ~ 77

↳↳ to all the peoples of the earth, ~ including not only Jews but also Gentiles.

▶▶ My ..., ~ these are our marching orders, ~ given by our glorious risen Savior, ~ 77

▷▷ the King of kings ~ and Lord of lords.

▷▷ Go and proclaim the good news ~ of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

↳↳ And it is ~ good news. 13/13