

“Just As He Said”

Please read Mark 15:40 - 16:8.

As we ponder the events of the last week of Jesus' life before the Cross, and then consider with anticipation the glorious news of the empty tomb, we understand that that empty tomb is the key aspect showing that Jesus was Who He said He was. If no empty tomb, if no literal, physical resurrection from the dead, then everything else Jesus said was, in short, nonsense.

What do we see on that first Easter Sunday morning? These simple things:

1. *Jesus was dead.* His crucifixion was *witnessed*. Dozens of people likely saw the Roman soldiers drive the nails through His hands and feet. Those closest to Jesus, His mother, several cousins, and His disciple John were all there. They endured with Him the terrible suffering He experienced. They heard His agonizing words from the Cross. They saw His blood. They took in those last words, "It is finished!" They saw it all.

It was *verified*. Towards sunset, while the two thieves crucified with Jesus were still in their death throes, the Roman centurion ordered that their legs be broken. This was a common means to hasten their asphyxiation, as a man could spend 3-5 days dying on a cross. The soldiers wanted to be done with this business. When they came to Jesus, though, they found His body limp and dead. None of His bones were broken (in fulfillment of prophecy). There was no mistake: Jesus was declared dead by some of the Roman Empire's best experts in death.

It was *final*. When one is dead, that's pretty much the last of hope for recovery. For all intents and purposes, the hopes and dreams of the disciples ended when Jesus breathed His last. He did not call a legion of angels. He did not miraculously jump down from the Cross. He died. End of story. Period. Finis. The disciples started to update their resumes.

2. *Jesus is risen.* Being dead, one would think that it's over. Yet on the third day after the Crucifixion, the disciples and some women went to the grave to finish preparing Jesus' body for a "proper" burial. What they found—an empty tomb--was disturbing. Where were the guards? Who broke the Roman seal on the grave? Who had stolen the body? Had wild animals somehow gained access? Yet they soon found

the truth. Angels were there, and said, "He is risen!"

That Jesus Christ arose physically, bodily from the grave says at least three things:

The price for all our sins *was paid in full and accepted by the Father*. This comprehensive payment would cover all the sins of all the people who had and would ever trust in Christ by faith. The Resurrection shows it—"He was raised for our justification." Jesus paid it all!

Jesus Christ is alive! Yes, the same body that died on the Cross had arisen, and still (and for eternity) will bear the marks of that Cross in its hands, its feet, and its side. Jesus isn't alive in some mystical sense, but in reality. Let that sink in...a dead man is no longer dead!

We are *alive and in union with Him*. When we trust in Christ, and believe that He died for our sins and arose, then the Bible teaches that we died, we were buried, and we rose again with Him. He then enables us to live for Him and continue in faithfulness until He calls us to Heaven or He returns. We are no longer the walking dead—we, too, are alive, because we have been born again!

3. *“Just as He said.”* Jesus promised *He would rise again*. So the angels said, "Don't be afraid!" Why be *afraid*? It's a simple case of Jesus following through on His promise. Did we, like the disciples, just think that Jesus was saying a bunch of stuff that would not come true?

--He promises *to come again*. If His promise to rise again came true, then certainly His promise to return for His people will come true, too!

--He promises *to make your life new*. Whatever your past, it is all nothing when it comes to Jesus. We are born again. We are renewed. We are no longer in bondage to sin and self.

--He promises *to save those who trust Him*. Our sins are forgiven. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. What a glorious and peace-giving teaching!

--He promises *to give you a resurrected body*. He will give you a renewed body, very much recognizable, and yet every different. It won't be subject to the ravages of sin, time, aging, and so forth.

Do you know Jesus Christ? Not know "about" Him—but truly know Him! He can be your Saviour if you simply put your trust in Him and what He has done for you. Believe in Him today!

May you have a blessed Resurrection Day!