

## Matthew 28

A synopsis of the four Gospel accounts concerning Christ's resurrection with reference to Matthew 28.

*Mar 15:46* And **Joseph** bought a linen shroud, and taking **Him** down, wrapped **Him** in the linen shroud and laid **Him** in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. *47* **Mary Magdalene** and **Mary** the mother of **Joses** **saw where He was laid.**

**Mat 28:1** Now after the **Sabbath**, **toward** (*Gk.2020- to begin to grow light*) the dawn of the first day of the week (*thus still dark*), **Mary Magdalene** and the other **Mary** (*"the mother of James and Salome"- Mk 16:1*) went to see the tomb. (*Spices couldn't be purchased during the Sabbath [Neh 13:15-22] so once the Sabbath ended they purchased them and went to the tomb, Mary Magdalene knowing where He was.*)

*Joh 19:31* Since it was the day of **Preparation**, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the **Sabbath** (for that **Sabbath** was a high day), the **Jews** asked **Pilate** that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.

- To the Jew their days began at 6 AM whereas we begin our days at 12 midnight.

*Mar 16:3* And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"

*Joh 20:1* Now on the first day of the week **Mary Magdalene** came to the tomb early, while it was **still dark**, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

- The four synoptic Gospel accounts are from four different perspectives as though a puzzle of four pieces. Here, **John** only mentions **Mary** since in his account, and particular time, she was alone and was the **first** to see **Jesus** alive. **Luke** (*24:10*) names three who were there adding, "and the other women" but not at the same time **Mary** first saw **Jesus**. Before the women arrived...

**Mat 28:2** ... behold, there was a great earthquake, for an (*not "the" Angel of the Lord\**) angel of the **Lord** descended from **Heaven** and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it.

- \* "The **Angel of the Lord**"- Although mentioned in **Acts 7:30** by **Steven** concerning **Moses'** encounter with **Him** at the burning bush (*Ex 3:1-6*) **the Angel of the Lord** does not appear in the New Testament! (*Mat 28:2 KJV uses "the" whereas the ESV uses "an" as does the Interlinear.*)

Rhodes: *"This is highly significant. After reading about the active role played by the Angel throughout the Old Testament history, His sudden disappearance after the incarnation would be strange indeed unless He was the pre-incarnate manifestation of Jesus Christ. There is no other way to explain the Angel's complete inactivity among humans in New Testament times unless He is recognized as continuing His activity as God's incarnate, that is, as Jesus Christ."*

*Exo 23:20* "Behold, I send an angel (*"My Angel"- Brenton's English Septuagint*) before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. **21** Pay careful attention to Him and obey His voice; do not rebel against Him, for He

will **not pardon your transgression**, for My name (*Heb.8034- authority*) is in Him."

**Mar 2:5** And when **Jesus** saw their faith, **He** said to the paralytic, "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**" **6** Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, **7** "Why does this man speak like that? **He** is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but **God** alone?"

- These scribes inadvertently recognizing that only **God** can forgive sin, ascribed Deity to **Jesus**.

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**Mar 16:4** And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back--it was very large.

- The purpose of the stone being rolled away wasn't for **Jesus** to exit the tomb since **He** later appeared with "the doors being locked where the disciples were" (*Jn 20:19*). The tomb being opened was for those who had yet to believe in **His** resurrection to witness that **He** wasn't there.

**Mar 16:5** And entering the tomb, (*with the "spices, so that they might go and anoint Him"* -*Mk 16:1, "they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus"* - *Lk 24:3*) they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed.

- Of course this wasn't the only angel as we'll see shortly. This incident does not conflict with the other **Gospel** accounts since, again, these four inspired accounts were written from four different perspectives. Just because one account **excludes** information that another account **includes** isn't reason to disbelieve the combined record.

**Mat 28:3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. (*Like that of Moses from being in the presence of God- Ex 34*) **4** And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. (*When the women showed up they saw the guards as though dead from fear.*)

**Mat 28:5** ut the angel said to the **women**, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek **Jesus** (*"of Nazareth"* - *Mk 16:6*) Who was crucified (*they came back with the spices*). **6** He is not here, for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay (*showing that they didn't even look inside the tomb the first time they were there*). **7** Then go quickly and tell His disciples (*"and [especially] Peter"* - *Mk.16:7*) that He has risen from the dead, and behold, He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him. See, I have told you."

- To single out **Peter** has some significance. **Peter** was headstrong, having already denied his **Lord** three times (*Mat 26:69-75*), and would have needed some extra convincing (*as did Thomas- Jn 20:25*). For the angel to tell the women that **Jesus** was "going before you to Galilee" wasn't saying **He** had already left but was going to meet them there. But they were so stunned that they needed further convincing. This happened "when the sun had risen" (*Mk 16:2*).

**Luk 24:4** While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. **5** And as they **were frightened** and **bowed** their faces to the ground (*in fear and not in reverence to the angel- Rev 22:8-9*), the men (*Victor A. Knowles: "There is no support in scripture for the idea that angels are sexless [genderless] beings. The word angels in scripture always appears in the masculine form, never in the feminine*

*or neuter. God is always referred to in the masculine gender and so are His angels.")* said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but has risen. Remember how He told you, while He was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." 8 And they remembered His words, 9 and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

**Mat 28:8** So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell His disciples.

- When they left they were “trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they **said nothing to anyone**, for they were afraid” (*Mk 16:8*) until they first informed the disciples of His resurrection. So, while it was still yet dawn they...

**Joh 20:2** ...ran and went to **Simon Peter** and the other disciple, the one whom **Jesus** loved (*John*), and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." (*Still in shock and not yet having yet comprehended the resurrection, they felt someone must have taken the body.*) 3 So **Peter** went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. 4 Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran **Peter** and reached the tomb first. 5 And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then **Simon Peter** came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the face cloth, which had been on **Jesus'** head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.\* 8 Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the **Scripture**, that **He** must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples **went back to their homes**.

- \* “The providence of God ordered these very little matters, so that they became the fullest proofs against the lie of the chief priests, that the body had been stolen away by the disciples. If the body had been stolen away, those who took it would not have stopped to strip the clothes from it, and to wrap them up, and lay them by in separate places.”  
Adam Clarke

**Mar 16:9** Now when **He** rose early on the first day of the week, **He** appeared first to **Mary Magdalene**, from whom **He** had cast out seven demons.

- **Mary returned with Peter and John but was alone after** “the disciples went back to their homes”. **The other women having gone...**

**Joh 20:11** ...**Mary** stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. 12 And she saw two angels in white (*most likely the same two that will appear to the women in Lk 24:4*), sitting where the body of **Jesus** had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. 13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." 14 Having said this, she turned around and saw **Jesus** standing, but she did not know that it was **Jesus**. 15 **Jesus** said to her, "**Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?**" Supposing **Him** to be the gardener (*Along with the fact that Jesus, as John saw Him on Patmos as “a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain”, was still disfigured from the scars and beating He received from the Roman soldiers, Mary didn't recognize Him at that point. As Isa 50:6 prophetically states, “I gave My back to those who strike, and My cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not My face from disgrace and*

*spitting.*” Thus giving us an idea of how we will appear at the resurrection; our bodies will appear in the same form they died in, not in the form that the undertaker prepared for viewing. Vanity is of the human nature and thus non-existent in Heaven.), she said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." (How did this supposed gardener know her name? Recognizing His voice...) She turned and said to Him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (meaning Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me (her clinging to Him here was as though she wouldn't see Him again as the context will show), for I have not yet ascended to the Father; (I'm not leaving immediately for Heaven)" but go to My brothers ("not ashamed to call them brothers"- Heb 2:11) and say to them, 'I am ("I will soon be") ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.'"

**Mat 28:9** And behold, Jesus met them (the disciples behind locked doors "for fear of the Jews-Jn 20:19) and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him.

- To "[take] hold of His feet" showed their reverence toward Him as did the Shunammite widow toward Elisha when he raised her son from the dead in 2 King 4:37. They weren't holding Him as though they would never see Him again as did Mary Magdalene in Jn 20:17.

**Mat 28:10** Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell My brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me."

**Luk 24:10** Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who **told these things** to the apostles, 11 but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

**Jn 20:18** Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, ("as they mourned and wept"-Mk 16:10) "I have seen the Lord"--and that He had said these things to her. (Here again, John only mentions Mary Magdalene. She was first to report that someone had taken Jesus' body but here she states that she had seen Him alive.)

**Mar 16:11** But when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it. In the meantime...

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**Mat 28:11** While they were going, behold, some of the guard (who had revived after witnessing the stone being rolled back by the angel) went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. 12 And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers 13 and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.' 14 And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble."

"The military law of the Romans required that guards who allowed the escape of a prisoner, and rendered no satisfactory account of it, should be put to death."

McGarvey

**Act 12:18** Now when day came, there was no little disturbance among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. 19 And after Herod searched for him and did not find him, he examined the sentries and ordered that they should be put to death.

- For these “chief priests” to bribe these guards like this was astounding. They knew that Christ’s resurrection confirmed He was the Messiah as was evident by the overwhelming proof, but their pride and status would not allow them to admit it. The guards’ very lives depended on such a lie. By law they would have been put to death and they knew that whether they reported the missing body or not, either way, this showed the influence these “chief priests” had, not only on public opinion among the Jews, but, on these Roman guards, the governor and on how the governor would react toward their dereliction of duty; a missing body would have declared these soldiers incompetent to be Roman guards. *(Pilate didn’t want to crucify an innocent man to begin with, so it may have been easy to convince him that the body, he allowed Joseph of Arimathea to retrieve from the cross for burial, was then taken by the disciples in order to show disdain for these insubordinate, trouble making Jews.)*

**Mat 28:15** So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

- “to this day”- At the time of Matthew’s writing it was commonly spread that Jesus really didn’t raise up from the dead, only that the guards were asleep and the disciples stole the body in order to promote their teachings of Jesus being the Christ. Even still today there are those who believe such and seek His remains.

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**Joh 20:19** On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

**Mar 16:14** Afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and He rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw Him after He had risen.

- To appear in a locked room shows Christ’s resurrected state which will be the ultimate appearance of “those who love God... who are called according to His purpose” (*Rom 8:28*).

**1Jn 3:2** Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is.

**Luk 24:37** But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. **38** And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? **39** See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Touch Me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." **40** And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. **41** And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" **42** They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, ("and of an honeycomb"- *KJV*). **43** and He took it and ate before them. *(Thus satisfying their fright as though they had seen a ghost, since a spirit without a body didn't have to eat to satisfy the hunger of the body it once inhabited.)* **44** Then He said to them, "These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

- During His time with the disciples Jesus often told and showed them evidence of His being the Messiah. This was a reminder of Old Covenant writings concerning Him. It

wasn't until Pentecost that they received their ultimate appreciation and would defend the Gospel with their lives, unlike their fragile faith in Christ before that event.

**Mat 28:16** Now the eleven disciples (*12 minus Judas Iscariot*) went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. **17** And when they saw Him they worshiped Him, but some doubted. **18** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe **all that I have commanded you**. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (*Gk.165- Thayer, "of the age preceding Christ's return, with which will be connected the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, the demolition of the world and its restoration to a more excellent condition"- i.e., "new heaven and new earth"- Rev 21).*"

- Many believe there are 'other' churches where there are saved Christians within their membership because they were 'baptized'. The only way that can be true would be if "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching (*via their epistles*) and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (*Act 2:41-42*). That would be the **only** way to "observe all that [Jesus] commanded [them]".

*Heb 4:1* Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. *2* For good news came to us just as to them (*Jews*), but the message they heard **did not benefit them**, because they were **not united by faith** (*Gk.4102- reliance upon Christ for salvation*) **with those who listened** (*Gk.191- understand*).

**1Co 15:6** "Then He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. **7** Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles." In the end He was with the eleven apostles when...

**Act 1:4** ... while staying with them He ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, "you heard from Me; **5** for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." **6** So when they had come together (*Mat 28:17*), they asked Him, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (*They still didn't understand the concept of a spiritual kingdom on earth, a.k.a., the church.*) **7** He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority. **8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (*This is where Mat 28:18-20 fits in, giving them the Great Commission.*) **9** And when He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. **10** And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, (*again, multiple angels- "on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established"- Deu 19:15*) **11** and said, "Men of Galilee (*speaking here to the apostles only- Act 2:7*), why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, Who was taken up from you into Heaven, will come in the same way as you saw 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.

- "Sabbath day's journey"- "This was 2,000 paces or cubits, or seven furlongs and a half - not quite one mile. See the notes on *Mat 24:20\**. The distance of a lawful journey on the Sabbath was not fixed by the laws of Moses, but the Jewish teachers had fixed it at

2,000 paces. This measure was determined on because it was a tradition that in the camp of the Israelites, when coming from Egypt, no part of the camp was more than 2000 paces from the tabernacle, and over this space, therefore, they were permitted to travel for worship. Perhaps, also, some countenance was given to this from the fact that this was the extent of the suburbs of the Levitical cities, Num 35:5\*\*. Mount Olivet was only 5 furlongs from Jerusalem, and Bethany was 15 furlongs.” Albert Barnes

“Mat 24:20 Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath.

\*\*Num 35:5 And you shall measure, outside the city, on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits, the city being in the middle. This shall belong to them as pastureland for their cities.

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Act 1:13 And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James.

- In that upper room there were “about 120” persons (v. 15) and from them “they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias” (v. 23).

Act 1:26 And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias (mat-thee'-as), and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Act 2:1 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they (the twelve according to 1:26 and 2:7) were all together in one place.

Charli Yana  
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