

V.III. Lambs to Rams: Christ's Resurrection: The Synoptic Gospels

The following four combined accounts of Christ's resurrection are akin to four reporters reporting on the same house fire; one from the South, one from the North, one from the East and one from the West. Their different positions don't make one any less accurate than the others. The reporter from the North sees smoke but no fire whereas the reporter from the South sees fire. The reporter from the West sees people being rescued whereas the reporter from the East sees nobody leaving the property, yet, they all witnessed the same event. Such is the case here yet from differing 'inspired' perspectives.

Joh 19:31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

Mar 15:46 And he (*Nicodemus*) 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. 47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Joses beheld where He was laid. (*Emp. added*)

Mat 28:1 In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn **toward** (*Gk.2020- to begin to grow light [thus it was still dark]*) the first day (*Jewish days began at 6 AM*) of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (*"the mother of James and Salome"- Mk 16:1*) to see the sepulchre. (*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 laid.*) (*Emp. added*)

Mar 16:2 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 were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" (*Emp. added*)

Luk 24:1 Now upon the first *day* of the week, **very early in the morning**, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them. (*Emp. added*)

Joh 20:1 The first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was **yet dark**, unto the sepulchre, and saw the stone taken away from the sepulchre. (*Emp. added*)

The four synoptic Gospel accounts are from four different inspired perspectives as though a puzzle of four pieces. In John's account he only mentions Mary "because he appears to wish to give a more detailed history of her conduct than of any of the rest" (*Adam Clarke*). 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 (*see IX.2.- Angel of the Lord*) angel of the Lord descended from Heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door. and sat upon it.

Mar 16:4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

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 into the sepulchre, (*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, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

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 viewpoints. Just because one account **excludes** information that another account **includes** isn't reason to disbelieve the combined record.

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

Mat 28:5 And the angel answered and said unto the **women**, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, *("of Nazareth"- Mk 16:6)* Who was crucified. 6 He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay *(showing that they didn't even look because of the angel's presence)*. 7 And go quickly, and tell His disciples *("and [especially] Peter"- Mk.16:7)* that He is risen from the dead; and behold, He goeth before you to Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you." *(Emp. added)*

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 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments *(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.”): 5 And as they **were afraid** and **bowed** down their faces to the earth (*in fear and not in reverence to the angel- Rev 22:8-9*), 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 on the third day rise again. 8 And they remembered His words, 9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. (*Emp. added*)*

Mat 28:8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word.

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

Joh 20:2 ... runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved (*John*), and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him. (*Still in shock and not having yet comprehended the resurrection, she felt someone must have taken the body.*) 3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. 4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. 5 And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. 6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, 7 And the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.* 8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. 9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that He must rise again from the

dead. 10 Then the disciples **went away again unto their own home.** (*Emp. added*)

* “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 *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.

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 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre, 12 And seeth two angels in white (*most likely the same two that appeared to the women in Lk 24:4*) sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. 14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if Thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.

Along with the fact that Jesus, as John saw Him on Patmos as “a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain” (*Rev 5:6*), was still disfigured from the scars and beating He received from the Roman soldiers, Mary didn't recognize Him at that point (*Isa*

52:14). 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.

Joh 20:16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. (*How did this supposed gardener know her name? Recognizing His voice...*) She turned herself, and saith unto Him, (in Aramaic) Rabboni; which is to say, Master. 17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not (*her clinging to Him here was as though she wouldn't see Him again as the context will show**); for I am not yet ascended to My Father: (*I'm not leaving immediately for Heaven*) but go to My brethren, (*“not ashamed to call them brothers”- Heb 2:11*) and say unto them, I (*I will soon*) ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.

*Mat 28:9 And as they went to tell His disciples (*the disciples behind locked doors “for fear of the Jews- Jn 20:19*), behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and **held Him by the feet, and worshiped Him.** (*Emp. added*)

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 said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me.

Luk 24:10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles. 11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed

them not. (*Emp. added*)

Jn 20:18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples (“*as they mourned and wept*”-Mk 16:10) that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her. (*Mary Magdalene was the first to report that she had seen Him alive but was with the other women previously when they reported Jesus’ body was missing.*)

Mar 16:11 And they, when they had heard that He was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. In the meantime...

Mat 28:11 Now when they were going (*before Jesus appeared to Mary- Lk 24:10*), behold, some of the watch (*who had revived after witnessing the stone being rolled back by the angel*) came into the city, and shewed 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.

“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.”

J.W. McGarvey

Act 12:18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. 19 And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded 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 taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

At the time of Matthew’s writing (“to this day”) it was commonly spread that Jesus really didn’t rise 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.

Joh 20:19 Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

Mar 16:14 Afterward He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was 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, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when

He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

Luk 24:37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. 38 And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. 40 And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them *His* hands and *His* feet. 41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here any meat? 42 And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. 43 And He took *it*, and did eat 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 unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, **while I was yet with you**, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and *in* the prophets (*the “two witnesses”- Rev 11*), and *in* the psalms, concerning Me. (*Emp. added*)

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 Then the eleven disciples (*12 minus Judas Iscariot*) went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17 And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name (*Gk.3686- authority*) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe **all things**

whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. (*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”. [Emp. added]) (*Christian dispensation) Amen.*

When Jesus stated in Mat 5:5 that “the meek shall inherit the earth”, the meek did inherit the earth on the day of Pentecost. The meek are Christians who are now stewards of the earth via the Great Commission.

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 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2 For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them (*the Jews*): but the word preached **did not profit them, not being mixed with faith** (*Gk.4102- reliance upon Christ for salvation*) in them that heard (*Gk.191-understand*) it. (*Emp. added*)

1Co 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. 7 After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. In the end He was with the eleven apostles when...

Act 1:4 ... being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith He*, ye have heard of Me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye

shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? (*Mat 28:17*) (*They still didn't understand the concept of a spiritual kingdom on earth, a.k.a., the church.*) 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem (*Isa 2:3*), and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (*This is where Mat 28:18-20 fits in, giving them the Great Commission.*) 9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; (*again, multiple angels- "on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established"- Deu 19:15*) 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee (*speaking here to the apostles only- Act 2:7*), why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. 12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey.

"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 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither **on a Sabbath day**. (*Emp. added*)

****Num 35:5** And ye shall measure from without 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; and the city *shall be* in the midst: this shall be to them the suburbs of the cities.

Act 1:13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother* 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 gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias (*mat-thee'-as*); and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Act 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they (*the twelve according to 1:26 and 2:7*) were all with one accord in one place.

V.3. Questions

1. When did a new day begin according to the Jews? a) midnight; b) 6 AM; c) noon.
2. Who of those who followed Him was first to see Jesus alive?
a) Mary the mother of Salome; b) Jesus' mother Mary; c) Mary Magdalene.
3. Why was the stone rolled away from the tomb? a) so Jesus could exit it; b) so the angels could enter it; c) as witness to His resurrection.
4. Why were the linen cloths that covered Jesus' face neatly folded apart from where His body was laid? a) because Jesus was a neat Person; b) because His disciples placed them there; c) as proof that His body wasn't stolen.
5. When John saw Jesus on the island of Patmos, it shows what? a) how we will appear in the resurrection; b) how we will appear at the moment of death; c) both 'a' and 'b'.
6. What punishment did Roman soldiers receive for dereliction of duty? a) they lost their jobs; b) they received a cut in pay; c) they would be executed.
7. How did Jesus finally convince the disciples that He truly rose from the dead? a) He ate with them; b) He showed them His hands and feet; c) both 'a' and 'b'.
8. How many people were in the upper room when Matthias was chosen to replace Judas? a) 200 persons; b) 140 persons; c) 120 persons.

