

# Jesus Is Risen!

Psalm 16:8-11; Acts 2:22-36

Immediately after the resurrection, Jesus showed Himself to some of the women who followed Him. Early that first Easter morning they arrived at the tomb to complete the embalming process used by the Jews at that time. The tomb was empty. Confused, they ran to tell the disciples. No one believed Jesus was alive until he saw Him with his own eyes. *No one* expected to find Jesus alive.

They expected to find a dead man—a corpse—not an empty tomb. Scripture shows us the following events where Jesus presented Himself to His followers:

## His First Appearance With Mary Magdalene

Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-18

*"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" (Mark 16:9). When she recognized Jesus she probably reached for Him.*

Jesus said to Mary, *"Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, 'I ascend to My Father and to your Father, and My God and your God'" (John 20:11-17).*

Here Jesus prevented Mary from touching Him because He was about to ascend to His Father. This was prophesied in Hebrews: *"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12).*

The worth of any blood is measured by the character and dignity of the creature who owns it. Let me illustrate. A piece of cloth in a store may be worth three or four dollars a yard. To stick a knife through it would cost but little. But when a king wears that cloth on His own body, it is worth infinitely more. And to stick a knife through it then is murder. I'll say this to you plainly. You are insane when you treat, by word or act, the blood of the Son of God as a common thing.

"The blood of sprinkling" takes you back to the Old Testament. It takes you to the day of atonement. The High Priest took the blood in a basin into the Holy of Holies, and with his hand sprinkled it, before it coagulated, on the golden lid of the mercy seat, under the wings of the cherubim. He prayed to God. Suddenly the Shekinah light appeared. Then he returned through the veil to bless the people. Take note!

***From the time he offered the sacrifice, to the time he placed the blood on the mercy seat, no person was allowed to touch him.***

**This is the reason Jesus said to the women, "Don't Touch Me..."**

Christ took His own blood which He had shed, and went into the third heaven, in the blazing presence of the eternal Father, and sprinkled His own blood on the mercy seat of this universe before the Father in heavens Tabernacle. Then He returned. He appeared before the disciples and told them to touch Him – to handle Him and know that He was alive. He later asked Peter the same.

Have you asked yourself, "What became of the blood Christ shed?" The crown of thorns drew blood from His head. The mockers plucked His beard, and blood was drawn from His face. He was scourged with knotted cords, and blood was drawn from His back. That made three blood sheddings

before He went to Calvary. Each hand was pierced and each foot. His side was opened. That adds five more blood sheddings. What became of all that blood?

Our Catholic friends assume that at His resurrection He acquired all that blood back into His body. Therefore every mass said means a fresh shedding of blood. This is contrary to the Bible. He shed His blood once for all, with "no more sacrifice for sins" (Hebrews 10:26). Where is that blood?

The ninth chapter of Hebrews tells us that Christ entered into the heavenly places – into the presence of God – and placed the blood there, as our High Priest. I'll read it to you.

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with bands,... but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world bath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:24-26).

The Bible says, His body "saw no corruption" (Acts 13:37). No corruption touched that blood. The blood remains upon the mercy seat. It was shed on the cross, but it was sprinkled on the mercy seat. It is there speaking for us.

He immediately presented His own blood before the Father in the Holy Place in heaven to have it ratified, so to speak, in legal terms. However, in Spiritual terms, Jesus died for our sins even from the foundations of the world.

If Jesus had not presented His own blood before the Father in Heaven's Holy Place till the ascension forty days after the Resurrection, the disciples would not have received salvation until Pentecost actually arrived. Friend, that's fifty days with absolutely no one having any opportunity to be saved!

Then also, the cloud of witnesses who were imprisoned in Abraham's bosom and delivered by Jesus on His Resurrection, though delivered, would not have been saved. That means this cloud of witnesses would have no place to go for another fifty days. Hell would have enlarged itself when the great gulf was broken down, but `heaven' would not have been an option since they would not have yet been saved by the blood of Jesus.

Therefore, when the High Priest of the Old Covenant entered into the Holy Place of the Tabernacle with the blood of the sacrificial lamb, it was to finalize the "covering" of the sins of the Israelite nation for another year. Only then would the sins of the people be fully covered. But at Calvary, Jesus died one time for the sins of the world. So what we do henceforth, whether for the world, or through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ by His Spirit, will exactly define our eternity.

### **His Second Appearance With The Other Women At The Tomb**

Jesus greeted other women who had arrived soon after Mary Magdalene. *"And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him."* Jesus said to them, *"Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they shall see Me"* (Matthew 28:8-10).

It's obvious Jesus left immediately after speaking to Mary at the tomb. He went to present His own blood before the heavenly Holy Place as an atonement for our sins. Only a short time passed when Jesus returned and spoke to the other women. So what's the difference here?

They *"took hold of His feet and worshiped Him."* These women were able to do this without restriction because Jesus had now been to the Father and presented His own blood in its perfection for the fulfillment of our salvation. Yet, we must come to Him! I want to repeat this: Between the time Jesus met with Mary and when He later that same morning met with the other women, He had been to the Holy Place before the Father with His Own Blood in the Tabernacle made in Heaven.

Salvation has now been fulfilled legally as well as Spiritually! There were no more sacrifices for sin. Neither was there a waiting period of fifty days necessary in order for men to be saved.

Now that salvation was accomplished for all who would come to Him, Jesus planned to meet His disciples at Galilee, where He would, among other things, do the following: 1) provide for Himself a place in the hearts of His people forever; and 2) Build His Church, a church of love and unity impenetrable by the wiles of Satan; a clean, holy and righteous church unspoiled from the world.

### **His Third Appearance With Peter In Jerusalem**

Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5

Peter was the next person to meet with Christ according to Luke 24:34, when the two Emaus travelers, after recognizing Jesus, mentioned this fact in passing. The incident of these two travelers is extremely interesting, and important. We should not miss anything from this great event as told by Luke. The story goes something like this:

### **His Fourth Appearance With The Two Travelers On The Road To Emaus**

Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-35

They were walking toward the town of Emaus discussing the tragic events of the weekend. All hope had been shattered because Jesus had been humiliated and crucified. A stranger joined them as they walked, so at the proper place, the men invited Him in for a meal. As Jesus broke the bread and blessed it *"their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight."* Amazed at the revelation of Jesus' resurrection from the dead, they turned back toward Jerusalem and headed for the place where Jesus would meet with them. Though these two were headed for Emaus, they turned around and went back to Jerusalem! The excitement was bringing joy to their souls. The disciples also told them, *"The Lord is risen, and has appeared to Simon."*

### **His Fifth Appearance With The Ten Disciples behind Closed Doors**

Luke 23:36-43; John 20:19-25

After returning to Jerusalem, the two travelers were relating the story how they recognized Him in the breaking of the bread. Then *"Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace be unto you.'" "He showed them both His hands and His side"* (John 20:19-20). They were "startled and frightened." Jesus said, *"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."* Jesus showed them His hands and His feet.

They gave Him a piece of boiled fish and He took it and ate it in their sight (Luke 24:33-43).

Jesus is strongly encouraging these disciples of the reality of His resurrection, and that He now has a solid body of flesh and bones. Yes, He is real ... and alive! He tells them to look upon Him and to see the wounds on His body. Jesus asked them to touch Him because He had now been before the Father in the Temple with His own blood in a sacrificial act of presenting this precious and perfect blood before the Father for His legal stamp of approval. It is finished!

Jesus then continued, *"Look, This is what I told you while I was still with you: everything which is written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."*

Now read this: *Jesus then opened up their minds that they would understand the scriptures.* Why did Jesus encourage His disciples to examine Him by touch ... and open up their minds that they might understand the scriptures? Why would Jesus' actions at this meeting encourage the disciples to 'understand' so much? Don't stop reading just yet. Imagine the revelation beginning to infiltrate the minds of the disciples and all the followers of Jesus on that day.

Now, let's go to the very same incident in the book of John. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples she had seen the Lord, and he had spoken these things unto her.

*"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. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained (John 20:19-23).*

It was a terrible time for the disciples. First, Peter had denied the Lord those three times, and found himself weeping in grief. Then, all the others except John left Jesus alone and forsaken. They hid in a place that was likely isolated from those who would seek to imprison/kill them. (John 20:32-33). Full of the fear of man, and especially the Jews, the disciples had locked the doors and closed any windows. They may have been in a close circle attempting to make some kind of sense of what they had witnessed three days ago.

They had given everything that they might be numbered with the King of the Jews. They had grown to love Him with all their hearts ... but now all seemed hopeless. They had nowhere to go except back to their former lives. How could they ever walk in the presence of other men again?

Their hope for all eternity was destroyed in one day! Did Jesus forsake them? That would be the hardest thing they could ever imagine happening to them.

Then when things could not be worse, one looked up and saw Jesus standing in their presence. He said to them *"Peace be unto you"*, while at the same time showing the disciples His wounds. *"Peace be unto you "*. He said again. Then, *"Even as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you"*. In other words, Jesus was telling them He loves them the very same way His Father loved Him; He was trusting them the same way His Father trusted Him, and the same authority and the same power the Father had given the Son was now to be in the hands of the disciples ... and His church. There was to be a great mission, the greatest mission ever in history. That mission was to carry on the will of the Father in the destruction of the works of the devil. In the camp was Joy!

### **Receiving Their Salvation**

Jesus then breathed on the disciples and said, *"Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained"*. Imagine this!

By many proofs in these meetings, we find the disciples did, this same day Jesus was Resurrected, find grace in the eyes of their Lord and Savior. There was no retribution, judgment, or condemnation. He 'blew' the breath of the Holy Ghost upon these unlearned men. He gave Himself that men might 'find' Him by the Spirit of God.

Remember the question earlier? Why did Jesus encourage His own disciples to touch and examine Him; why did He open their minds to understand the scriptures? Simply because the breath of the Holy Spirit made them 'alive' in His Spirit. All things had passed away. All things had become new. They now had a friend Who gives abundant life by His Spirit. Just 50 more days and the Apostles would be filled with the fire of the Lord—Preaching the gospel and ministering miracles to men.

Jesus told them they would have power to bind and power to loose (Matthew 16:19). If you remember the event with Ananias and Sapphira in the book of Acts (5:1-11) you may have an idea of the authority placed as an anointing upon the disciples. Here, Peter rightly judged the husband and wife team who lied to the Holy Spirit when he sent them both before the judgment throne of Christ. This is the authority Jesus was speaking about in verse 23.

In Genesis, Father God breathed upon His new creation, Adam, and he received life and spirit. Later in the twentieth Chapter of John, Jesus breathed upon His newly created disciples, and they received life in the Spirit. The Hebrew word meaning 'breathe' in the Old Testament has the same meaning as the Greek word in the New Testament. Just as it was necessary for God to give life to Adam so he could have an intimate relationship with Himself, so it was also necessary to give Spirit life to the disciples of Jesus in order they too could build themselves up in the love of the Lord.

Some believe there would be no one saved during the fifty days between the resurrection and the day of Pentecost, but we see in the above scriptures Jesus did indeed breathe upon His followers and the Holy Spirit at that time entered into the believers in the form of salvation. Revelation came swiftly upon the saints. They began to see who Jesus really was and why He had to die.

Immediately after Jesus breathed on His disciples, He began to open their minds that His beloved children would be able to understand the scriptures. Until now, they were ignorant and unlearned men. But the revelations they received in just a short period of fifty days are amazing! Imagine the things of the Word of God which literally belonged to them, including the teachings Jesus Himself attempted to minister them over the past three years.

Peter had already confessed to Jesus, "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*". However, before the day of Pentecost arrived, Jesus would reveal to His disciples many wonderful things concerning His Word. These revelations would be foremost in the coming of His Church!

The two most important things I would like you to notice and keep in your heart from the books of John and Acts are 1) the Lord breathed on the disciples, demonstrating to man salvation comes by His Spirit, in faith, and by grace; and, 2) the Lord Jesus commanded these very same disciples to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father "*which you have already heard Me teach*". "*For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence*" (Acts 1:4,5).

## His Sixth Appearance With disciples and Thomas

Mark 16:14; John 20:26-31; 1 Corinthians 15:5

Thomas was not present that night. Of Jesus he said, "*Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.*"

Then, "*After eight days again His disciples were inside a closed room, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, 'Peace be unto you.' Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing.' Thomas answered and said to Him, My Lord and my God!*" (John 20:24-29).

Eight days later Thomas, by the urging of the Lord puts his hand into the wound of Jesus' side. He touched the wounds on the hands of his Master, Thomas' Lord and God.

## His Seventh Appearance With 7 Disciples Fishing

John 21:1-14

This was the morning when the disciples were fishing on the Sea of Tiberias. Jesus, after He was risen from the dead, appeared there and taught the disciples. This is the passage which deals with Peter's sin and Jesus' recommissioning Peter (John 21).

## His Other Appearances

On other separate occasions, Jesus appeared to Peter, to His half brother James, and to more than 500 people at one time, most who were still alive when Paul wrote his letter to the Corinthians. In Galilee, Jesus again appeared to the eleven, "*and when they saw Him, they worshiped Him*" (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18). Jesus then commissioned them to be His witnesses to all nations. "*And after He said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight*" (Mark 16:10,20; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:3-9). They were gazing intently into the sky as Jesus ascended into the clouds.

This was 40 days after the resurrection of Jesus, and just ten days before the day of Pentecost. The last recorded appearance of the resurrected Christ was when He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus in Acts. 9. Paul saw the Lord in a real resurrected and glorified body.

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A Bonus To This Lesson

### “How Big Is Jesus”

By Scott Hagen

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Imagine standing at the brink of the great Egyptian desert. Somewhat like Moses on the day of his inauguration to exile from Pharaoh's presence. Your toes nestle into the warm sand beneath your feet. Your eyes confront, but fail to comprehend the vastness of the burning bronze ocean that mounds and angles before you. Your eyes strive in vain to absorb the sheer massiveness as they reach for the border of the earth...where the horizon and the grid of creation kiss.

With such an image before you, I offer a simple question. Actually, it is an assignment.

### BLANKETED BY BOOKS

How many books would it take for you to completely cover the Egyptian desert? To map out and mask every

square inch of exposed sand? You are to lay down book after book, side by side, until no desert is showing. You're free to use hardbacks, paperbacks, periodicals, or encyclopedias, but not a single space can remain uncovered. Now, how many books did it take?

Wait, before you give your answer, there's more. After completing the Egyptian project you'll need to move on to the remaining deserts of the world and cover those with books also. From the Sahara to the Mojave. No matter the intensity or insignificance, every inch of sand on planet Earth must be covered...and this includes the beaches. Finished? How many books did it take to complete your assignment?

Wait, there's a bit more. After blanketing the sandy portions of the planet, now go do the same with the jungles and civilizations. Cities, plains, valleys, and peaks - everything gets overlaid with a book. Remember - no space between the books.

Did you forget the Yukon Territory? From Iceland to Cyprus, Seattle to Sri Lanka: books, books, nothing but books. How many books have you used?

Wait, I have one final request. After you have covered the dry portions of the planet, drain all the oceans, seas, rivers, lakes, ponds, streams, and creeks. Dry them all out to the last drop...and cover them with books. There, you're finally done. Every square inch of the globe is packaged in books. How many books did it take?

Do you think I'm the first to pose such an annoying analogy? I'm not. I borrowed the riddle from another source. Let me quote it:

*“Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written” (John 21:25, NIV).*

### **Not Enough World**

The Bible doesn't say, “There's not enough books in the world.” It says, “There's not enough world to hold the books,” if everything about Jesus were committed to parchment. The apostle John's intention wasn't to dazzle you and me with the enormity of planet Earth, but to showcase the glory and girth of Jesus Christ. Isaiah once called the earth a mere “footstool” for the Father. (See Isaiah 66:1). But the earth shrinks even smaller than a footstool when John calls for it to become the vault for Emmanuel's archives. Confining Jesus to a library would be worse than trying to confine the Library of Congress to a matchbox.

Some might accuse the apostle John of hyperbole, but the only real fool is the one who views Jesus as anything Less than inexhaustible. When it comes to Jesus, there are no experts.

### **Huge, Major Huge, And Infinity Major Huge**

In our home we have three ways of measuring life. We use these three measurements for determining the size of presents or the severity of paddlings. My oldest son developed these definitions as a 5-year old. The rest of our household soon adopted them as a part of our ongoing family jargon. They evolved one day when my son had just discovered something marvelous and so spectacular that his limited vocabulary struggled for the tidings to describe it. He finally erupted with, “Dad it was huge.” To my 5-year old son, the grandest thing in the world was huge.

But the following week, he discovered something that outdid huge. After laboring again to express the splendor of his discovery, he blurted out that his new finding was major huge - a major huge being slightly bigger than a huge. Then, a few days following, he made yet another new discovery. And this one was larger than a major huge. After several hours, he came into the family room and announced that his latest treasure was the ultimate. An infinity major huge. In a 5-year old's world, that's as big as it gets.

One day, however, my prayer is that my son will make his final new discovery. A discovery that there are really four - not three - ways to measure life. My son made the first three discoveries on his own. His final discovery will be by an act of revelation grace. The four ways to measure life are huge, major huge, infinity major huge, and Jesus: "And He put all things in subjection under His (Jesus') feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church." (See Hebrews 2:8, Ephesians 1:22)

The next time your well of worship is yielding dust, pause between the notes and reflect upon how many encyclopedias it would take to cover the Sahara desert. Or if you find your thirst for more of Jesus satisfied, ponder again on how many billions of paperbacks it would take to cover the Yukon. The splendor of Jesus is inexhaustible.

In heaven I think we'll need a few millennia at the feet of Jesus just to catch up on the rest of the Story.

Permission Given By Phone: Approximately October, 1996.  
-SCOTT HAGEN is pastor of Harvest Church in Elk Grove, California-

Blessings from Tom and Linda Stephens

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