

QUIET TIME

Theme: The resurrection of Christ and Christians

- Try to make a specific time every day to meet Jesus Christ through reading and meditating his Word.
- Pray, talk with Jesus Christ and make a few short notes about this Bible passage in your notebook.
- Record what you discover, what speaks to your mind and heart, what you find difficult or what you understand.

Day 1 Mark 8:31-33
Jesus predicts his resurrection

Day 2 Matthew 28:1-10
The resurrection of Jesus

Day 3 Matthew 28:11-15
Bribing the soldiers to lie

Day 4^{BS} 1 Corinthians 15:1-8
The eyewitnesses of his resurrection

Day 5^{BS} 1 Corinthians 15:12-20
If there were no resurrection

Day 6 Philippians 2:9-11
The first result of the resurrection

Day 7 John 2:18-22
The second result of the resurrection

Day 8 Ephesians 1:20-23
The third result of the resurrection

Day 9 Romans 6:4-7
The fourth result of the resurrection

Day 10^{BS} 1 Corinthians 15:42-54
The fifth result of the resurrection

- Think about Hebrews 7:25.
Christ lives forever to intercede for you!
- Pray every day for someone or something specific and wait in expectation for what God is going to do (Psalm 5:3).

STUDY

Theme: The resurrection of Christ and Christians

Read study 18 carefully before the next meeting. If you have questions, write them down and mail them to one of your group leaders. We will seek an answer together.

BIBLE STUDY

Theme: The future resurrection of Christians from the dead

If you like, you may already prepare the Bible Study for the coming meeting by reading through the Bible passage. Make use of the 5-step Bible Study method. The Bible passage is: **1 Corinthians 15:1-58.**

MEMORISATION

1. Motivation

Jesus memorised Bible verses (Luke 4:4-13). Are you doing that?

2. Memorisation

Memorise this verse in the Bible version of your choice.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

2 Corinthians 5:15

And he died for all,
that those who live
should no longer live for themselves
but for him who died for them
and was raised again.

2 Corinthians 5:15 (NIV)

3. Review and back-review

Review the last 5 memorised verses once every day and back-review all other memorised verses once every three weeks.

4. Memorisation of the Bible books

The last 6 letters of Paul:

1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon

18. The resurrection of Christ and Christians

THE EVENTS AROUND THE RESURRECTION

A. The first day - Sunday

Read Mark 16:1-6. How can we reconstruct the events on the day Jesus was resurrected?

The writers of the four Gospels in the Bible each gave their own *summary* of the events around the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The order of the events on that Sunday can be reconstructed without any contradiction in the following way:

According to the Old Testament calendar the seventh day (the Sabbath day) began at sundown on Friday and ended at sundown on Saturday. On Saturday evening the markets opened and the women went to buy spices and oils in order to salve and balsam the body of Jesus. (Mark 16:1). They probably arranged to meet one another early on the next day at to tomb.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ took place on the first day (Sunday) of the Old Testament calendar, which was the third day after the crucifixion on Friday (Mark 10:33-34).

Very early on Sunday morning the women came to the tomb. Mary Magdalene arrived first when it was still dark. The other women came at daybreak (John 20:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1). On the way they had deliberated who would roll the heavy stone away from the opening of the tomb, but when they arrived the stone had already been rolled away (Mark 16:3-4).

The guards had witnessed a violent earthquake and saw an angel descending from heaven. The angel lifted the heavy stone in front of the entrance to the tomb out of its groove, laid it flat on the ground and sat on it. The guards trembled and became paralysed by fear (Matthew 28:2-4).

The women entered the tomb, but did not find the body of Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two angels stood beside them. The angels reminded the women about what Jesus had said, that he would be resurrected from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion (Luke 24:5-8). The angels instructed the women to go and tell the disciples of Jesus and especially Peter that he would meet them in Galilee (Mark 16:7). Trembling and bewildered the women fled from the tomb (Mark 16:8).

Mary Magdalene ran ahead of the other women to Peter and John and told them that the body of Jesus had been taken away. At once Peter and John ran to the tomb (John

20:2-3). The other women hurried to tell the other disciples of Jesus what had happened (Matthew 28:8). But the disciples did not believe the women (Luke 24:9-11).

Before the women had returned to the tomb, John and Peter arrived at the tomb. John looked into the tomb and saw only the strips of linen lying there. Peter entered the tomb and also saw the strips of linen and the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head folded up and lying separate. John entered the tomb and "he saw and believed" that Jesus had been resurrected from the dead. It was then that these disciples understood the prophecies in the Bible about the resurrection of the Messiah. And they went back to their homes (Luke 24:12) (*Read* John 20:3-10).

The first appearance of Jesus after his resurrection was to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9).

After Peter and John had left the tomb, Mary Magdalene again arrived first at the tomb. She stood outside the tomb weeping, bent forward to look into the tomb and saw two angels sitting inside the tomb. The angels asked why she was weeping and she answered that the body of Jesus had been taken away and that she (and the other women) did not know where they had put him. When she turned around she saw someone standing. She assumed it was the gardener, but it was Jesus himself. He asked her what she was seeking and she asked him where he had put the body of Jesus. Then Jesus said: "Mary". She recognized him and took hold of his feet, but Jesus said that she would not be able to keep him from leaving. Jesus instructed her to go and tell his disciples that Jesus would ascend "to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (*Read* John 20:11-17).

The second appearance of Jesus after his resurrection was to the other women.

The other women also returned to the tomb. Jesus met them on the way. Also they took hold of his feet and worshipped him. Jesus instructed them also to go to his disciples and tell them that he would meet them in Galilee (Matthew 28:9-10).

In the meantime some of the soldiers who had guarded the tomb went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened (the truth). The Jewish Council (Sanhedrin) was hurriedly called together to decide what to do with this news. So the religious leaders of the Jews bribed the soldiers with a large amount of money to spread the lie that the disciples of Jesus had come at night and had stolen the body of Jesus while they were asleep (*Read* Matthew 28:11-15).

When Mary Magdalene arrived at the other disciples, she told them that Jesus lived and that she had seen him. She related what he had said to her. But they did not believe her words (John 20:18; Mark 16:10-11). Shortly afterwards the other women also arrived at the disciples and

told them that they had seen Jesus and that he would go ahead of them to Galilee. There they would all see him (Matthew 28:10).

The third appearance of Jesus after his resurrection was to Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5).

The fourth appearance of Jesus after his resurrection was to two of his followers who were on their way to Emmaus. Their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus when he ate with them. Jesus immediately disappeared from their sight, and they returned to Jerusalem to tell this to the Eleven (disciples) (Read Luke 24:13-35).

The fifth appearance of Jesus after his resurrection was to his disciples without Thomas (ten disciples). That Sunday evening they were together behind locked doors. Suddenly Jesus stood among them and he proved to them that he was not a ghost by showing them his (pierced) hands and feet and by eating something. He rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after his resurrection. And he gave them the great commission to proclaim the gospel in the whole world (Mark 16:14-16; Luke 24:36-48; John 20:19-23).

B. The women at the tomb

Read Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:9-10; John 20:1-2. *How many women came to the tomb early on Sunday morning?*

At first glance it may seem that the four Gospels contain contradictions. Matthew only mentions two women at the tomb: Mary Magdalene and Mary (the mother of Jesus). Mark mentions three women: Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of Jesus) and Salome. Luke says that there were more than four women and he mentions three by name: Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of James, the brother of Jesus) (Mark 6:3) and Joanna. John says that there were more than one women at the tomb ('we') (John 20:2) and yet he limits his account to Mary Magdalene. There were therefore more than four women at the tomb, but each writer of a Gospel gave his own summary of the events around the tomb.

C. The soldiers standing guard at the tomb

Read Matthew 27:62 to 28:15. *In what way do the soldiers strengthen the reality of the resurrection of Jesus?*

The religious leaders of the Jews bought them with a great sum of money to spread the lie that the disciples of Jesus had stolen the body of Jesus while they were sleeping! But sleeping soldiers *cannot see* thieves! Moreover, it is very unlikely that disciplined Roman soldiers would sleep while they were commanded to guard the tomb! This false report was spread for many years by the religious Jews.

D. The stone blocking the entrance to the tomb

Read Mark 15:46 to 16:4; Matthew 28:2. *Who moved the stone from the entrance to the tomb?*

The tomb was closed by rolling a very heavy round and flat stone downwards in a groove before the entrance of the tomb (Matthew 27:60). The stone was heavy, because normally four men were needed to push the stone upwards in the groove in order to enter the tomb. The disciples were not present and could not help. The soldiers would never allow it because the tomb had been sealed. The women were not strong enough to roll it away.

Matthew relates that there was an earthquake and that an angel descended from heaven. This angel removed the stone by picking it up out of its groove. He laid it flat on the ground and then sat on it (Matteüs 28:2). The angel did not move the stone to let Jesus *out* of the tomb, but to let people *into* the tomb! The removal of the stone was a sign that Jesus Christ had conquered death!

E. The angels at the tomb

Read Matthew 28:2-3; Mark 16:5; Luke 24:4; John 20:11-12. *How many angels were there at the tomb?*

Matthew speaks of one angel, who sat on the flat round stone. His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. Mark wrote his Gospel according to the testimony of Peter and he also speaks of one angel looking like a young man dressed in a white robe who was sitting inside the tomb. Luke wrote his Gospel according to the testimony of many people, including the women and Paul, and he speaks of two angels who looked like men in clothes that gleamed like lightning and they were standing beside the women inside the tomb. John says that Mary Magdalene saw two angels in white seated where Jesus' body had been. Nevertheless the four Gospels contain no contradictions, because Matthew and Mark do not assert that they only saw one angel. There were at least two angels present at the tomb and they moved about.

F. The linen strips in the tomb

Read John 19:38 to 20:9; Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42 – 16:1; Luke 24:12. *How do the linen strips lying in the place where the body of Jesus lay strengthen the proof of Jesus' resurrection?*

Peter and John saw the linen strips lying where the body of Jesus had lain. They also saw the burial cloth or face-cloth that had covered Jesus' head lying folded up by itself. The verb in the perfect tense can mean 'folded up' or 'wrapped up' as used of wrapping up (embalming) a dead body (Matthew 27:59). This gives the impression that the linen strips were lying where Jesus had lain in the form of an empty cocoon and that these did not prevent

Jesus from rising from the dead! Nevertheless the linen strips were lying there *without the body* of Jesus and that proves that his body had not been taken away by anybody! This proof was enough for Peter and John to believe that Jesus Christ had been resurrected from the dead! They saw the things inside the tomb arranged in such a way that caused them to believe. They now understood that the prophecies about the resurrection of Jesus in the Bible were true and that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was part of God's eternal plan (Psalm 16:10; Luke 9:22,44-45; 18:31-34; 22:37; 24:44-45)!

G. The eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Jesus

Read Acts 1:3; Mark 16:9-14; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8. In what way do the appearances of Jesus after his resurrection strengthen the reality of his resurrection?

The resurrection of Jesus did not happen in a hidden corner! There were hundreds of eyewitnesses! The science of history is based on trustworthy witnesses. The more eyewitnesses there are, the more reliable the truth concerning the historical facts. Thus, the resurrection of Jesus Christ cannot be denied as a historical fact, even though natural science cannot prove this miracle! After his resurrection from the dead Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, to the other women, to his apostles and other disciples, to more than 500 believers at one time, to his brother James and finally to the apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 15:5-8) (*Read John 20:24-29; John 21:1-14; Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:3-6*).

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION

H. The five results of the resurrection of Jesus

No other prophet that ever lived in history has been resurrected from the dead! All other prophets and religious leaders in the history of the world are still lying in their graves. Jesus Christ is the only One who has conquered death by his resurrection and who lives forever (1 Corinthians 15:20)! *This fact proves that Jesus Christ is not only the Greatest Prophet that ever lived, but also much more than merely a human prophet!*

The first result of the resurrection of Jesus

Read Philippians 2:5-11.

The first result of the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ to the highest position in the universe is that it proves that God the Father had accepted his work of salvation for our sins and that all his words are the truth. After his resurrection, the human nature of Jesus Christ is a lordship and sovereign reign in the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 1:2-4)!

Explanation: Romans 1:3 describes what Jesus Christ became at his birth and Romans 1:4 describes what Jesus

Christ became after his resurrection from the dead. By his resurrection he discarded his perishable, lowly, weak physical body due to sin and death in this world. His human body was completely transformed into an imperishable, glorious, strong and spiritual body (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:40-42; Philippians 3:21). Since his resurrection from the dead his body is characterised by such an endowment of the Holy Spirit that he is completely identified with the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17)!

The second result of the resurrection of Jesus

Read John 2:18-22; Mark 14:57-58.

The second result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is that Jesus Christ erected a new temple and a new system of worship for his people. He established the Christian Church and instituted worship in spirit and truth instead of worship in a stone temple with religious duties (the ceremonial law).

Explanation: The statement of Jesus: "Destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days" is a figurative prophecy and illustration of his death and resurrection.

Jesus made this very significant prophecy more than three years before his death and resurrection!

The word 'temple' refers to the temple building in Jerusalem made of stone, but also to the temple of Jesus' human body (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:19). The illustration had a double meaning:

First, "Although you Jews will destroy the temple of my body by crucifying me, I will nevertheless rise from the dead within three days!"

Secondly: "Although by destroying me you Jews are also destroying your own temple building together with its religious ceremonies (cf. Matthew 27:51), I will nevertheless establish a new temple and a new system of worship, namely, the Body of Christ (the Church) (Ephesians 2:19-22) together with its worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24)."

The third result of the resurrection of Jesus

Read Ephesians 1:20-23; 1 Peter 3:21-22.

The third result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is that Jesus Christ now reigns over the whole world in the interest of his Church (cf. the establishment of the kingdom of God in the place of the kingdoms of the world in the book of Daniel, *lesson 15*).

The fourth result of the resurrection of Jesus

Read Romans 6:4-7.

The fourth result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is that Jesus Christ gives to Christians in every generation a new and sanctified life within this world.

The fifth result of the resurrection of Jesus

Read Philippians 3:20-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:42-54.

The fifth result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is that Jesus Christ guarantees the future resurrection of the bodies of believers.