

Easter Timeline

When the Sabbath was over . . .

[] Mark 16

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices with which to anoint Jesus.

Before dawn, the first day of the week . . .

[] John 20, 21

Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and found the stone had been removed. She went to Simon Peter and the disciple Jesus loved and told them that Jesus' body had been stolen. The two disciples ran to the tomb; the beloved disciple got there first. He did not enter, but he saw the linen wrappings in the tomb. Simon Peter did go into the tomb, saw the linen wrappings, and also saw in another part of the tomb the cloth that had been on Jesus' head. Then the beloved disciple entered the tomb also. Neither of them understood what was really happening as they returned home, leaving Mary weeping outside the tomb.

Mary looked inside the tomb and saw two angels in white, one sitting where Jesus' head had been, the other at his feet. The angels asked why she was crying, and she explained that it was because someone had taken Jesus' body, and she didn't know where he had been taken. She then turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't recognize him. Jesus also asked why she was crying and who she was looking for. She, assuming he was the gardener, told him that if he was the one who had taken the body he should let her know where he had taken him, and she would take the body away.

Jesus called her name, and she recognized him, calling him in Hebrew "Teacher". He cautioned her not to hold him because he had not yet ascended, and he directed Mary to tell the disciples that his ascension was imminent. She went to the disciples and told them that she had seen Jesus and what he had said.

Early dawn, the first day of the week . . .

[] Luke 24

At early dawn on the first day of the week, they (the women who had accompanied Joseph from Galilee) took the spices they had prepared to the tomb. They found the stone already rolled away from the tomb, and they were perplexed to find no body inside. They suddenly saw two men in dazzling clothes standing beside them. The terrified women bowed their faces to the ground. The men said, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again."

[] Mark 16

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome had been discussing who they might ask for assistance in rolling the stone away from the tomb. But when they looked up, they saw that that mission had already been accomplished. Entering the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side. The three women were afraid.

[] Matthew 28

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb at dawn, the first day of the week. There was a great earthquake; an angel descended from heaven and rolled back the stone and sat on it. The angel's appearance was like lightning, with clothing white as snow. The guards were so afraid of the angel that they seemed to die.

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him'. This is my message for you."

[] Mark 16

The young man in the tomb said to the three women, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." The three women fled from the tomb in fear and amazement; they didn't tell anyone what had happened.

[] Luke 24

The women (including Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James) then remembered the words of Jesus, and they went to the disciples and told everyone what had happened. But the apostles did not believe the women. Peter went to the tomb to see for himself, and he found only the linen clothes inside. He went home, amazed at what had happened.

[] Matthew 28

The two Marys left the tomb quickly with fear and joy, and ran to tell the disciples. Jesus met the two Marys and said, "Greetings!" The two Marys approached Jesus, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Jesus said to the two Marys, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me".

[] Mark 16

Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene (from whom he had cast out seven demons). She told of these events to the disciples, who were weeping and mourning. When they heard Mary's story, they couldn't believe it.

Jesus appeared in another form to two disciples as they walked into the country. They went back to Jerusalem and told the rest of the disciples, but they didn't believe the two.

Probably sometime during Easter day . . .

[] Matthew 28

Some of the guard went into the city (Jerusalem) and told the chief priests everything that had happened. The priests and elders met and devised a plan in which the guards would be bribed to say that they had fallen asleep, allowing the disciples to steal Jesus' body during the night. The priests and elders would smooth things over with the governor, if necessary. The guards accepted the bribe, and the false story was widely believed.

Easter day and evening . . .

[] Luke 24

On the same day (Easter) two men were on their way to Emmaus, a village about 7 miles from Jerusalem, talking as they walked about the events of the day. Jesus approached them, but they didn't recognize him. Jesus asked them what they were talking about. They stopped, looking sad, and one of them, named Cleopas told the stranger that he must be the only guy in or around Jerusalem who was unaware of the amazing events of the last few days. What things, the stranger (Jesus) wanted to know?

"What things?" they replied. The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him."

The stranger (they still did not recognize Jesus) scolded them for being so slow to understand and accept what was going on. Then he reviewed for them the prophecies of the scriptures, beginning with Moses.

As they approached Emmaus, Jesus continued walking as though he was not intending to stop at that village, but the two men invited him to stay with them, pointing out that it was almost evening. He accepted their invitation, and later, at the table, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and handed it to them. Suddenly, the two recognized the stranger as Jesus, but then

he vanished, leaving the two to express how strongly they had felt while they had walked and talked together.

The two men returned to Jerusalem immediately, and found the 11 disciples and their companions, who were proclaiming that Jesus had indeed risen and had appeared to Simon. The two men told the disciples of their experience with Jesus that afternoon, and how they had not recognized him until he broke bread.

While they were all talking, Jesus stood among them and said, "Peace be with you". That startled and terrified the disciples and the group around them, as though they were seeing a ghost. Jesus asked them why they were so frightened and skeptical. To prove that he was indeed Jesus, he invited the crowd to observe his hands and feet, to touch him and see for themselves that he was flesh and bone. While they were still trying to wrap their minds around what was happening, Jesus asked for something to eat. They gave him a piece of broiled fish, which he ate in their presence.

Then Jesus 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, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled. . . Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

[] Mark 16

Jesus appeared to the 11 disciples as they sat at a table; he scolded them for their stubborn incredulity, even after the testimony of eyewitnesses.

[] Matthew 28

The 11 disciples went to the mountain at Galilee, as directed by Jesus. There they met Jesus and worshiped him, although some of the disciples doubted.

Jesus said to the disciples, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

[] Mark 16

Jesus said to the 11 disciples, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: by using my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands;

and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

[] Luke 24

Jesus led the disciples and others to Bethany, where he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While doing so, he was carried up into heaven. The disciples and others then worshiped him, joyfully returning to Jerusalem, where they continually blessed God in the temple.

[] Mark 16

Jesus was taken up into heaven and he sat down at the right hand of God.

The disciples went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that he had described.

Easter evening . . .

[] John 20, 21

On the evening of the first day of the week, Jesus went and stood among the disciples, saying, "Peace be with you". (The doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews.) Jesus showed the disciples his hands and side, and they rejoiced. Jesus said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you". Jesus breathed on them and continued, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained".

Thomas (aka the Twin) had not been with the disciples when Jesus talked with them, so the other disciples told him about it. But Thomas would not believe them until he saw Jesus himself, and touched his hands where the nails had pierced him.

One week later . . .

A week later, as the disciples were together in the house, Jesus greeted them, even though the doors had been shut. He invited Thomas to touch his hands and side. Thomas then believed, and Jesus said, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe".

Sometime later . . .

This was the third time Jesus had appeared to the disciples since his resurrection.

Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together at the Sea of Tiberias, when Simon Peter decided to go fishing. The others thought that sounded like a pretty good idea, so they all got into the boat. Just after

daybreak, Jesus was standing on the beach and called out to the disciples, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They replied that they indeed had caught no fish, not recognizing that it was Jesus, who then advised them to cast their net on the right side of the boat. They took his advice and found more fish than they could handle. The beloved disciple recognized the man on the beach and told Simon Peter that it was Jesus. Simon Peter put on some clothes and jumped into the sea; they were only about 100 yards from shore. The others took the boat ashore, along with the net full of fish.

Jesus already had fish and bread on the fire, and he invited the disciples to put some of their fresh catch on the charcoal. Simon Peter returned to the boat and got the net, which contained some 153 large fish; it was amazing that the net had not been torn with such a large catch. Jesus invited them to join him for breakfast. The disciples had a pretty good idea that it was Jesus; no one dared ask him to make sure. Jesus gave them bread and fish.

After breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" Simon answered in the affirmative. Jesus said, "Feed my lambs". Jesus asked again, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Simon Peter answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you". Jesus said, "Tend my sheep". Then he asked the same question, for the third time, and it was now beginning to hurt Simon's feelings. "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you". Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (Jesus was alluding to the kind of death which would glorify God.) Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Follow me".

As they were walking, Simon Peter turned and saw the beloved disciple following them. (This was the same disciple who had reclined next to Jesus at the Last Supper; he is the one who had asked, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?") Simon Peter asked, "Lord, what about him?" Jesus answered, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me." That sparked a rumor in the community that the beloved disciple would never die. But that is not what Jesus said.

The beloved disciple is the one who is testifying about these events and who has written them down. We know that what he says is true. But there are a lot of other things that Jesus did -- so many in fact that all the books in the world wouldn't be enough to tell everything.

During the 40 days following Jesus' resurrection . . .

[] Acts 1:3-14

During the 40 days following Easter, Jesus stayed with the disciples, proving that he was indeed alive, and speaking to them about the Kingdom of God. He instructed them to stay in Jerusalem and "wait there for the promise of the Father". He said, "This is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

They asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But

you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

At that point, Jesus was lifted up and disappeared into a cloud. As the disciples were gazing up into the sky, two men in white robes suddenly appeared beside them. The two men asked, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

They then returned to Jerusalem from mount Olivet, which was a day's journey away. When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room where they were staying. There was Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All of them, as well as Jesus' brothers, his mother, and certain other women, were constantly devoting themselves to prayer.

Paul's brief version of events . . .

[] 1 Corinthians 15:3-7

. . . he was buried and he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than 500 brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive. Then he appeared to James, then to all the disciples.