

## LESSON 13

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### JESUS' RESURRECTION, APPEARANCES, AND ASCENSION, PART 2

#### FORTY DAYS

(MT. 28:9–20; MK. 16:9–19;

LK. 24:13–53; JN. 20:11—21:24; SEE ACTS 1:3)

In Luke's introduction to Acts, he wrote of "the apostles whom [Christ] had chosen" (Acts 1:2). He then said that "to these [Jesus] also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). The feast of Passover was fifty days before the feast of Pentecost. Jesus was with His disciples for forty days after the Passover and then ascended; the apostles had to wait ten more days before Pentecost. [See *Life of Christ*, 2, pp. 600–636.]

1. Why did the Lord remain with His disciples for forty days after His resurrection?

When Mary Magdalene finally returned to the tomb, she probably expected the women to be there, along with Peter and John—but everyone was gone. She stood "outside the tomb weeping" (Jn. 20:11a), weeping for the loss of her Friend and weeping because someone had removed His body before she had an opportunity to anoint it. (See Mk. 16:9–11; Jn. 20:11–18; see Lk. 24:10.)

2. Why did Mary not immediately recognize Jesus?
3. What did Jesus mean by His words in Jn. 20:17a?

Christ's second appearance was to the other women (Mt. 28:11). The women had left the tomb with great joy and had run to report the angel's words to Jesus' disciples (Mt. 28:8; see Lk. 24:9, 10, 22, 23). About the time Christ appeared to the women, "some of the guard [who had been at the tomb] came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened" (Mt. 28:11b). In spite of their best efforts to make the tomb as secure as they could (Mt. 27:65), it was now empty. (See Mt. 28:5–15.)

4. When did Jesus meet the women?

5. What is absurd about the rumor that the chief priests started to explain the disappearance of Jesus' body?

Jesus probably appeared next to Peter (Lk. 24:34)—who would still have been marveling about what he had seen in the tomb (Lk. 24:12). When Paul listed Christ's resurrection appearances, he first mentioned that "He appeared to Cephas" (1 Cor. 15:5a). We have no details regarding this appearance.

At least one more resurrection appearance occurred on the day Jesus arose from the dead. He appeared to two disciples "going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem" (Lk. 24:13; see Lk. 24:13–35; Mk. 16:12, 13).

6. Who were the two disciples whom Jesus met on the road?

7. What did the disciple mean when he used the phrase "the third day" in Lk. 24:21?

Jesus had proceeded, step by step, to prove to His apostles that He had risen from the dead. First, word had come to them that angels had announced His resurrection. Then others told them of seeing the risen Lord. Nevertheless, the apostles still struggled to believe. The time had come for Christ to appear personally to them to remove all doubts. (See Mk. 16:14; Lk. 24:36–43; Jn. 20:19–25.)

8. What effect does John's Roman reckoning of time have on the placing of Jesus' first appearance to the eleven?

A week went by. The apostles had been told to go to Galilee (Mt. 28:10), but they delayed their departure. As long as Thomas did not believe, they were not ready to go—because their hearts were not yet united in faith. (See Jn. 20:26–31; see 1 Cor. 15:5.)

9. How did Thomas' response make up for his initial doubt?

10. Who were included among those who had believed that Jesus was raised from the dead without having seen Him?

The scene shifts from Judea to Galilee. Jesus had told His disciples that He would meet them there (Mt. 26:32; 28:7). (See Jn. 21:1–24.)

11. Who were among the disciples gathered at Galilee to meet Jesus?
12. To what did Jesus refer when He asked Peter if he loved Him more than “these” (Jn. 21:15b)?
13. How does uninspired tradition say that Peter and John died?

During Jesus’ final discourse before His death, He had told His apostles, “. . . after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee” (Mt. 26:32). Following Jesus’ resurrection, the angels instructed the women, “Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee . . .” (Mt. 28:7). A little later, Jesus Himself told the women, “Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me” (Mt. 28:10). When the disciples reached the appointed place, Jesus was already there. His primary purpose in bringing them together was to give what we call the Great Commission. (See Mt. 28:16–20; Mk. 16:15–18; Lk. 24:46–48; see 1 Cor. 15:6.)

14. Who were the “some” that were doubtful in Mt. 28:17?
15. How can the four “alls” in Matthew 28:16–20 be used as an outline to organize the details given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke?
16. How does the Great Commission spell out the proper response to the gospel, both before and after baptism?

When Paul listed Christ’s resurrection appearances, after mentioning the appearance to the five hundred, he said, “then He appeared to James” (1 Cor. 15:7a). This was probably Jesus’ half-brother James, who became a respected leader in the church in Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 1:19; 2:9).

Shortly before His ascension, Jesus made His final appearance (or appearances) “to all the apostles” (Lk. 24:44–49; see 1 Cor. 15:7b). He spoke to them of “the things concerning the kingdom of God.”

17. How did Jesus open the apostles’ “minds to understand the Scriptures” (Lk. 24:45)?

18. What brought the apostles from their state of confusion about the kingdom in Acts 1:3 to the ability to institute it?

Jesus' final words were spoken on or near the Mount of Olives ("Olivet"; Acts 1:12), where His ascension took place. (See Mk. 16:19; Lk. 24:50–53; see Acts 1:9–12.)

19. What happened to Jesus at the time of the ascension, according to these verses, combined with Eph. 1:20–23?

20. How did the words of the two angels who appeared after Jesus' ascension affect believers?