

Connect

God does not fully reveal everything about Himself to us, and yet He invites us to put all of our trust in Him. How does this make you feel?

Verses - Matthew 28:1-15 (CSB)

1 After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to view the tomb. 2 There was a violent earthquake, because an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and approached the tomb. He rolled back the stone and was sitting on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. 4 The guards were so shaken by fear of him that they became like dead men.

5 The angel told the women, "Don't be afraid, because I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here. For he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; you will see him there.' Listen, I have told you."

8 So, departing quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, they ran to tell his disciples the news. 9 Just then Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" They came up, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. 10 Then Jesus told them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see me there."

11 As they were on their way, some of the guards came into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. 12 After the priests had assembled with the elders and agreed on a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money 13 and told them, "Say this, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him while we were sleeping.' 14 If this reaches the governor's ears, we will deal with him and keep you out of trouble." 15 They took the money and did as they were instructed, and this story has been spread among Jewish people to this day.

Study

1. Among the four gospels, **only** Matthew explains how and why Jesus' tomb was guarded by soldiers (vv.4, 11-15; also 27:62-66 from last week's lesson.)
    a. Why is this information (about the guards) significant?
    b. Why do you suppose that *only* Matthew provides this information?

2. Also, **only** Matthew describes how a fearsome angel descended from heaven to roll the stone away from in front of Jesus' tomb, causing an earthquake, and scaring the soldiers so badly that they looked like dead men. (vv.2-4)

    Again, why is this information provided *only* by Matthew's gospel?

3. Compared to the soldiers, the two Mary's are evidently less frightened by this angel (vv.5-8). The women departed from the tomb with *both fear and joy*!
    a. Why were they afraid?
    b. Why were they joyful?
    c. Why do you think the soldiers and the women reacted so differently?

4. **SHARE** All four gospels explain how Jesus' body was placed in the tomb, and then the tomb being empty—yet none explain how His body left it.
    a. How would you explain it if someone asked you?
    b. Why did the priests pay the soldiers to say in v.13, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him while we were sleeping.' ?

5. **SHARE** Both the angel and Jesus said to the two Mary's, **"Don't be afraid."** (vv.5-10)
    a. Is this a: rebuke, command, or encouragement Or a combination?
    b. What does it mean for you today?

Prayer

Our Heavenly Father constantly reveals himself to us, through his Son, Jesus, by his Word (the Bible) and the Holy Spirit. Please ask him to help us to understand this revelation more clearly and to believe and apply it more correctly in our lives.

Please pray for one another, the community of believers, and for the world at large as the Spirit moves you.