

RESURRECTION POWER

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BIBLICAL TEXT(S) + MESSAGE SUMMARY:

MATTHEW 28:1-10, PHILIPPIANS 3:10-11, EPHESIANS 1:18-20; ROMANS 8:11

Happy Easter!! What a powerful and explosive term: Resurrection Power. This was the power God exerted when he raised Jesus from the dead. His death and resurrection are the focal points of Scripture and the most important event in the history of the world. How important is the resurrection to us as believers? Without it, the Apostle Paul said belief in Jesus would be futile.

We'll examine that power in full action at an unused tomb outside of Jerusalem and take a peek at that power on display on the earth. But surprise, surprise, that same power is very much in play today. In fact, it is deposited in his followers. Let's study together.

NOTES + DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

EXPLOSION OF POWER AT THE TOMB

Read together Matthew 28:1-10, which tells the resurrection story from a little different perspective than the other writers.

- As you read, where do you see God's power on display?
- What were the different human responses to God's power?
- As you read the events recorded in verses 9-10, put yourself there. What are you experiencing?

In addition to the resurrection of Jesus, there are nine recorded people in scripture raised from the dead. (See below for additional notes).

- What is the difference between these nine people and the resurrection of Jesus?

NOTES + DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONTINUED:

EXPLOSION OF POWER ON THE EARTH

God's resurrection power was not only displayed with these nine and at the tomb, but I believe on the earth. We'll say upfront that there are various thoughts on where and what Jesus did during the 3 days after his death.

Dan suggested that the clearest indication in Scripture of where Jesus was between His death and resurrection comes in His conversation on the cross with one of the thieves crucified next to him. The believing thief asks to be remembered when Jesus comes into His kingdom (Luke 23:42), and Jesus replies, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Verse 43).

- So, after His death, Jesus went to "Paradise," "Today," Scripture also refers to it as "Abraham's Bosom", and the place of the dead. Read the parable of the "Rich man and Lazarus", in Luke 16:19-31. What do you learn?
- Based on what we know, read the following disputed scriptures, and how do you see them helping us understand this mystery? 1 Peter 3:18-20, 1 Peter 4:6, Ephesians 4:8-10
- The early church fathers, in writing the "Apostles Creed" (still used today) felt it was proper and necessary to add to the list of beliefs "Jesus descended into Hell." Thoughts?
- Lastly, please read Revelation 1:17-18. As Jesus spoke to the Apostle John, he identified something important that he had taken possession of. What was it, and what are your thoughts?

KNOWING JESUS

- Paul in Philippians 3:10-11 says he wants to know Christ. In what ways does he want to know him, and what does it mean to you?
- In Ephesians 1:18-30, Paul prays that "the eyes of your heart" be opened (enlightened). What does he want us to see and know?
- What do you feel when you read 1 Corinthians 6:14?
- Thoughts on Romans 8:11?

Dan asked: why do we need our eyes opened? He then suggested it was because we don't see the miracles, the power of God happening in things around us.

- What miracles are we not seeing? An easy beginning is with your salvation. You were dead and were made alive. Can you think of a more miraculous thing?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

9 ACCOUNTS OF BIBLICAL RESURRECTIONS

- Elijah in 1 Kings 17:17-24 - The widow of Zarephath's son.
- Elijah in 2 Kings 4:18-37 - The Shunammite woman's son.
- Elisha in 2 Kings 13:20-21 - Ironically, Elisha was dead and in his grave when a corpse was thrown on his body. The Scripture records that "when the body touched Elisha's bones, the man came to life and stood up on his feet."
- Luke 7:11-17 - The first person Jesus raised from the dead. It was the widow of Nain's son in a funeral procession.
- Luke 8:40-56 - The story of Jairus' daughter. He was the synagogue leader.
- John 11 - We're told about the third person that Jesus raised from the dead. It was his friend Lazarus, who had been dead for four days.
- Matthew 27:50-53 - The incredible account of various saints in Jerusalem at the very moment when Jesus cries out, "it is finished." A powerful moment: "the earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open." Talk about the Power of God. Apparently, those open tombs remained open until the third day. At that time, "the bodies of many holy people... were raised to life. They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people."
- Acts 9:36-43 - Tabitha, whose Greek name was Dorcas, was raised to life by the Apostle Peter.
- Acts 20:7-12 - The young man Eutychus (Eu-ty-cus), who fell asleep during one of Paul's long sermons and fell out of a third-story window, was raised from the dead.