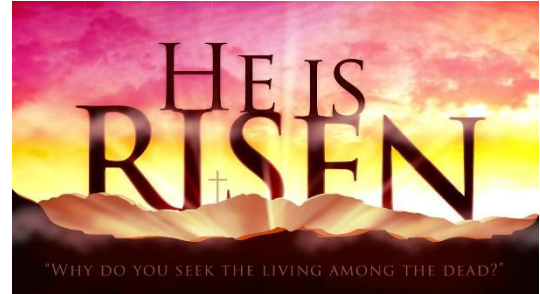


Resurrection Appearances of Christ

Paul G. Humber, 2017

The gospel accounts of the resurrection of Jesus were written that you might trust Jesus for salvation, finding life in Him (John 20:29-30), and not primarily to relate a detailed and sequential account of Jesus' resurrection appearances. It may be that the sequence of events, however (putting everything together), went something like this¹:



APPEARANCES OF JESUS ON THE DAY OF RESURRECTION:

1. Christ arose from the dead on the third day (Luke 24:6-7, 1 Corinthians 15).
2. There was an earthquake, and an angel moved the stone (Mt 28:2, Mk 16:4, Lk 24:2, Jn 20:1).
3. The guards were stunned and fled the scene (Mt 28:4,11).



4. Women, probably in different groups, came to the empty tomb.

4a. The first group may have consisted of Mary Magdalene, Mary (James' mother), and Salome (Mt 28:1, Mk 16:1). As they approached with spices, Mary Magdalene goes on ahead (Jn 20:1) and, finding the stone moved,



leaves the rest to inform Peter and John (Jn 20:2). The other two arrive a little later when the sun had risen (Mk 16:2) and see a "young man" and/or "angel" (Mt 28:5, Mk 16:5), who tells them that Jesus is alive (Mt 28:5-7, Mk 16:6-7). [Could it be that the angel who sat on the stone in one of the accounts is not the same as the "young man" inside (from Mark's account)? Could it be, in other words, that Mark himself, the author of that gospel, entered the tomb after witnessing the departure of the soldiers, seeing the earthquake and the stone moved. If so, then this would not be the first time he referred to himself in the 3rd person, cf. Mark 14:51-52. Mark's home was in Jerusalem, and he may not have been with the disciples, who may have been hiding out of fear in Bethany with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. We are not being dogmatic here, but the text does explicitly say "man."]



4b. A larger group of women (including Joanna) now arrive at the empty tomb and perhaps join the others (Lk 23:55-56, 24:1). They see two angels [the phrase is not "young man"] and are told the good news (Lk 24:5-7).

5. The women apparently left together to inform the rest of the disciples (Mt 28:7-8, Lk 24:9-10, 22-23), but their report was not well received (Lk 24:11).

6. Peter and John, who may have had separate dwelling places from the others (Jn 20:10), receive Mary Magdalene's report (Jn 20:2) and run to the empty tomb (Lk 24:24, Jn 20:3-4). Mary probably followed behind (Jn 20:11).



7. Mary arrives at the tomb after Peter and John had left it, and she cries (Jn 20:11). She is questioned by two angels (Jn 20:12-13) and sees Jesus (Jn 20:14-17). This apparently was the first appearance of Jesus. Now she also goes to report to the disciples (Jn 20:18).

8. Perhaps as a consequence of Mary's report of having seen Jesus alive, the women return to the tomb and on the way they see Jesus (Mt 28:9).



9. Jesus shows that He is alive to Peter (Lk 24:34, 1 Cor 15:5).

10. Jesus appears to the two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35).

11. Jesus appears to the disciples, Thomas being absent (Lk 24:36-43, Jn 20:19-24).

APPEARANCES OF JESUS BETWEEN THE DAY OF RESURRECTION AND HIS ASCENSION:

12. Jesus appears to His disciples including Thomas a week after His resurrection (Jn 20:26-29).

13. Jesus had informed His disciples that they would meet him in Galilee (Mt 28:7,10, Mk 16:7, Lk 24:6) and appears to seven of them by the Sea of Galilee (Jn 21:1-23) and later to the 11 on a mountain in Galilee designated beforehand by Jesus (Mt 28:16-17).

14. Apparently, there are unrecorded appearances of Jesus (Ac 1:3-4). We are told, for example, that He appeared of 500 people on one occasion (1 Cor 15:60).

15. He appeared to James (1 Cor 15:7).

16. Jesus appeared to his disciples at His ascension (Lk 24:50-53, Ac 1:3-12).

APPEARANCES OF JESUS FOLLOWING HIS ASCENSION:

17. Jesus appeared to the Apostle Paul (Ac 9:3-6, 22:17-21, 23:11, 1 Cor 15:8).

18. He appeared to Stephen (Ac 7:55).

19. He appeared to John on the island called Patmos (Rev 1:10-19).

20. He will appear to you and me at the General Resurrection following His return (Mt 25:32).

ⁱ Very helpful in compiling the above was Norval Geldenhuys' commentary on Luke (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968) pages 626-628.