Lesson 8: Fulfillment



Introduction

The women came to Jesus' tomb on the Sunday morning after he died, bringing spices to anoint his body. Suddenly there was an earthquake, and an angel came and rolled the stone away from the tomb. As the guards fell in terror, the angel told the women that Jesus had risen from the dead!

Read: Matthew 28:1-15

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?



Where in the Bible?

Jesus' resurrection comes at the end of each Gospel.

The New Testament: Resurrection

On the third day, when Jesus' followers went to the tomb, they found it empty. They were told by an angel that Jesus had risen from the dead. Later, the living Jesus appeared to many of his followers over a period of 40 days before he ascended into heaven.

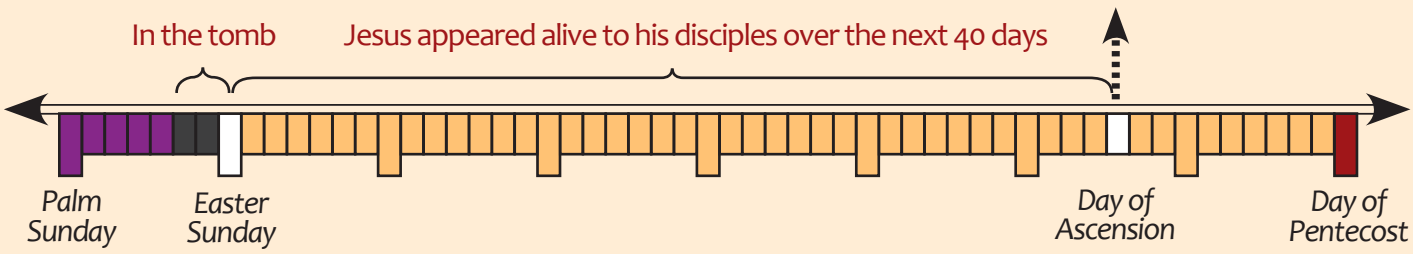
Biblical Background

Each of the Gospel writers tells the story of Jesus' resurrection from a different angle, focusing on the message of the empty tomb and the fulfillment of Jesus' promise that he would rise again.

Matthew's account of Easter morning is the only Gospel that describes the actual rolling away of the stone by the angel, and the effect it had on the soldiers who stood guard. At the sight of the angel, they collapsed in fear. Sadly, even after witnessing this great miracle, the guards were willing to lie about what they saw and deny the miracle of the resurrection.

When in Time?

In Church, following Easter Sunday, we celebrate the Season of Easter. During this season we remember that after he rose from the dead, Jesus appeared many times to his followers — both women and men. He stayed with the disciples for forty days, after which he was lifted up into heaven. We call this event the **Ascension**. It is described in Acts 1:1-11.



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Discuss: Matthew 28:1-15

1. Mary and Mary Magdalene went to Jesus' tomb "after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week." What do we call this day of the week? If the day Jesus died was the first day, what number was this day?

2. What happened when the women arrived at Jesus' burial site? How did they move the stone away from the entrance to tomb?

3. Describe the angel. How was he dressed? What did he look like? How did the guards respond to the sight of him?

4. How did the angel greet the women? How did they react to him?

5. What task did the angel tell the women to do? What promise did the angel give?

6. About how much time passed before the women saw Jesus? What things did Jesus say that were the same as what the angel had said?

7. What emotions do you imagine the guards were feeling after all this took place? What did the chief priests tell them to do?

8. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-11. Here, the Apostle Paul recounts what happened after Jesus' death. Was it only the women that Jesus appeared to? Who else saw the risen Jesus? Why did Paul think it was so important to let us know this (v. 11)?

Where in the World?

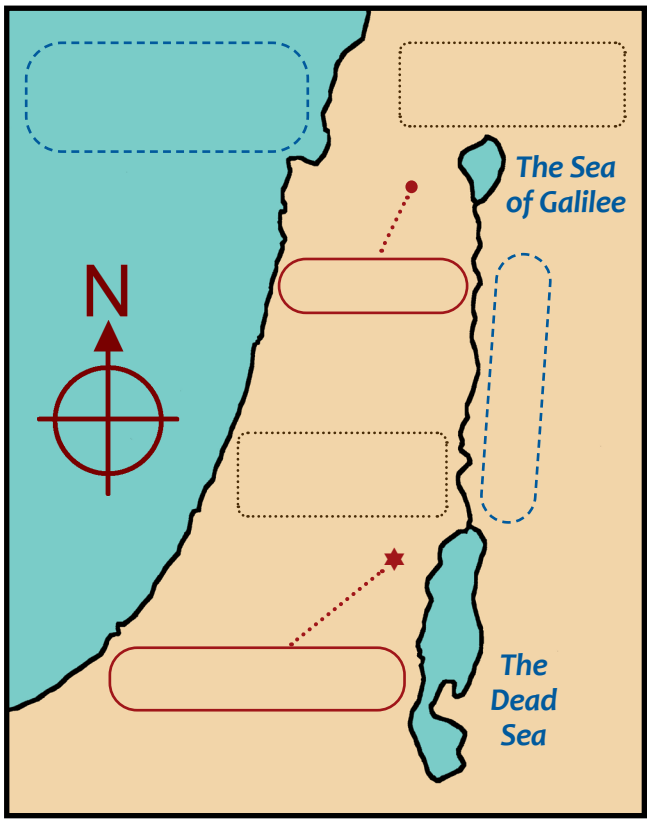
Jesus died and rose again in Jerusalem. He appeared there to Mary and the women at the tomb (John 20:14), as well as to the other disciples in the Upper Room (John 20:19).

He told them he was going to Galilee where they would see him again (Matthew 28:10). He met them on the shores of the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1) and again on a nearby mountain (Matthew 28:16-17) where he gave them the Great Commission.

The map to the right shows the Holy Land. See whether you can remember from previous lessons some of the major locations. On the map, label:

The Great Sea	The Jordan River
The Region of Judea	The Region of Galilee
The City of Jerusalem	The City of Nazareth

When the day came for Jesus to ascend into heaven, he gathered his disciples at the Mount of Olives. This was a place he had often met with them on their visits to the City of Jerusalem.



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