

International Bible Lessons Commentary

Mark 16:1-8

English Standard Version

International Bible Lessons

Sunday, March 27, 2016

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The **[International Bible Lesson](#)** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, March 27, 2016**, is from **Mark 16:1-8**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** discusses *Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further* to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the **[International Bible Lessons Commentary](#)** website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. If you are a Bible student or teacher, you can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the **[International Bible Lesson Forum](#)**.

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Mark 16:1-8

(Mark 16:1) When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him.

After Jesus was crucified, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James (the "lesser" or the "little") and Joses (Joseph) saw where they laid the body of Jesus in the tomb that had been cut out of the rock. The Sabbath ended on a Saturday, and on Sunday, the first day of the week (which became Resurrection Day or Easter Sunday), these women and Salome (the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee) went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body. There is no doubt they knew exactly where to find the tomb and they expected to find Jesus' dead body there.

(Mark 16:2) And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb.

They went to the tomb in daylight, early in the morning. They wanted to do what they could for Jesus in His memory and out of their love for Him as early as possible after the Sabbath ended. They had no belief in and did not know about or remember what Jesus had said about His rising from the dead: they never expected Him to die. They fully expected to find Jesus' body with some decay having already taken place and with an odor (as in the case of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead) wrapped in cloth and fully needing to be anointed before there was more decay and odor. However, the Bible foretold the body of Jesus the Messiah would not decay: "because you will not abandon

me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay” (Psalms 16:1,) and “Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay” (Acts 2:31).

(Mark 16:3) And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?”

Their only concern was how they would move the large stone in order to enter the tomb. Obviously, none of the disciples or any other man went with them to move the large stone. Perhaps the disciples were too afraid of being arrested to come out of their hiding places. The stone was so large these women together could not have moved it, else they would not have been concerned about needing help. Notice, the stone would have also been too large for a recently crucified man to move it to escape suffocation in his tomb.

(Mark 16:4) And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large.

The gospels emphasize that the stone was very large. Jesus’ tomb may have been similar to the tomb of Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha that Jesus resuscitated. Unlike resuscitation, Jesus’ body was resurrected and glorified — never to die again. The first thing the women saw was the stone (as it was large) and that it had been rolled away from the entrance to the tomb. Because of the religious leaders intense hatred of Jesus, their thoughts may have included worries about the further desecration of Jesus’ body.

(Mark 16:5) And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed.

These courageous women did not flee in terror at the scene. They entered the tomb, which was large enough for a few people to enter along with a body to be buried and later anointed. In the light of day, and perhaps with the radiance of supernatural light, the women saw a young man in a white robe sitting to the right of where they had laid Jesus’ body which was no longer there. Without Jesus’ body, they were at a total loss and did not know why Jesus’ body was gone and a young man was sitting near the place where they had laid Jesus. What had happened? They would later determine that the young man was an angel sent from God.

(Mark 16:6) And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him.

Angelic appearances are always so unexpected and shocking that they lead people to feel alarmed or to bow down and try to worship the angel. In the Bible, angels from God always tell people not to be afraid and not to worship them. True angels or messengers from God will not accept and will refuse the worship that God alone deserves. The angel said specifically that Jesus the Nazarene (not any other Jesus or person) had been crucified and buried in that very place — they were at the correct tomb. He explained why Jesus’ body was not in the tomb. Jesus had risen — His body had not been stolen or

desecrated. The angel made them look again to confirm for themselves that Jesus was not there, nor was His body.

(Mark 16:7) But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.”

The angel told them to tell the disciples (including Peter specifically by name, since Peter had denied Jesus during His trial) that they should go to Galilee and Jesus would meet them in Galilee, just as Jesus had told them before His crucifixion. The fact that this unknown young man (angel) knew about and reaffirmed for them this private conversation and command of Jesus to His disciples is evidence Jesus sent the angel after He rose from the dead. It is unlikely that these women had been told by the disciples what Jesus had told them about His going ahead of them into Galilee.

Therefore, when they told this statement from the angel to the disciples that should have been additional evidence to the disciples that Jesus indeed had risen from the dead and they had good and sufficient reason to believe the women. After crucifixion and death, only a glorified and resurrected person could have made a journey from Jerusalem to Galilee – and all of this was beyond their comprehension and belief. Jesus had to appear to them in Jerusalem to convince them that He was alive and they should go to Galilee to meet Him there, which they eventually did, where He met them at the Sea of Galilee.

(Mark 16:8) And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

For some unknown reason, Mark’s gospel may have ended at the conclusion of this verse (or he or another follower of Jesus may have written more later that was appended after this verse). Or, the concluding part of Mark’s gospel was torn from the original scroll and subsequently lost. The women were so afraid and confused that for the moment they said nothing to anyone. From the other gospels, we know that they eventually overcame their fears and told the disciples that the tomb was empty and they had experienced angelic appearances. We learn from John that Jesus did speak to Mary Magdalene near the garden tomb. She had stayed behind in grief (John 20:11-18).

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. If you had been one of Jesus’ disciples, would you have left as soon as possible for Galilee to meet Jesus there after He was crucified?
2. Who were the women who went to the tomb to anoint Jesus’ body? Who were some of their children?
3. Do you think the women expected Jesus to rise from the dead? Give a reason for your answer.
4. What did the angel tell the women?

5. Why do you think the angel mentioned Peter by name specifically along with Jesus' disciples?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.
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