

THE RESSURECTION OF THE MESSIAH

TEXT: JOHN 20:1-9

THEME: CHRISTOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The Gospel of John (John 20:7) tells us that the napkin, which was placed over the face of Jesus, was not just thrown aside like the grave clothes. The Bible takes an entire verse to tell us that the napkin was neatly folded, and was placed at the head of that stony coffin. Early Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. She ran and found Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. She said, 'They have taken the Lord's body out of the tomb, and I don't know where they have put him!' Peter and the other disciple ran to the tomb to see. The other disciple out ran Peter and got there first. He stopped and looked in and saw the linen cloth lying there, but he didn't go in. Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, while the cloth that had covered Jesus' head was folded up and lying to the side. Was that important? Absolutely! Is it really significant? Yes!

In order to understand the significance of the folded napkin, you have to understand a little bit about Hebrew tradition of that day. The folded napkin had to do with the Master and Servant, and every Jewish boy knew this tradition. When the servant set the dinner table for the master, he made sure that it was exactly the way the master wanted it. The table was furnished perfectly, and then the servant would wait, just out of sight, until the master had finished eating, and the servant would not dare touch that table, until the master was finished..

Now if the master were done eating, he would rise from the table, wipe his fingers, his mouth, and clean his beard, and would wad up that napkin and toss it onto the table. The servant would then know to clear the table. For in those days, the wadded napkin meant, "I'm finished.."

But if the master got up from the table, and folded his napkin, and laid it beside his plate, the servant would not dare touch the table, because.....The folded napkin meant, "**I'm coming back!**"

OLD TESTAMENT EVIDENCE

- Ps 16:10 because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy one see decay.
- Ps 30:3 O LORD, you brought me up from the grave; you spared me from going down into the pit.

- Ps 71:20 Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, **you will restore my life again**; from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up.
- Ps 86:13 For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths of the grave.
- Jonah 2:2 He said: "In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry.

JESUS PREDICTED HIS OWN RESURRECTION

- Matthew 16:21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.
- Mark 9:9-10 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. 10 They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what "rising from the dead" meant.
- John 2:18-22 Then the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" 21 But the temple he had spoken of was his body. 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

RELEVANCE OF THE RESURRECTION TODAY

1. It serves as the guarantee that Jesus' teachings are true
 - Acts 2:22-24
 - 1 Corinthians 15:12-20
2. It serves as the center of the gospel itself
 - Romans 4:24-25
 - Romans 10:9
 - 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
3. Its serves as the impetus for evangelism
 - Matt. 28:18-20
 - Acts 10:39-43
4. It serves as the key indication of the believer's daily power to live the Christian life
 - Rom. 6:4-14
 - Romans 8:9-11
 - Phil. 3:10)
5. It serves as the reason for the total commitment of our lives
 - Rom. 7:4
 - 1 Cor. 15:57-58
6. It serves as the prescription against the fear of death
 - John 11:25
 - 1 Cor. 15:54-58
7. It serves as the evidence of the second coming of Jesus
 - Acts 1:11

- Revelation 1:7
- 8. It serves as the model of the Christian's resurrection from the dead
 - Acts 4:2
 - 1 Cor. 6:14
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- 9. It serves as a foretaste of heaven for the believer
 - Philippians 3:20-21
 - 1 Peter 1:3-5

CONCLUSION

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, the Christian faith is a foolish fantasy. However, if the resurrection of Christ did occur, it confirms His life, message, and atoning work. It is the basis of our hope of life beyond the grave. Christ is alive, and the evidence is overwhelming. Praise the Lord!