

The Empty Tomb

It is sown a natural [physical] body; it is raised a spiritual body.—1 Corinthians 15:44

The hopes of the disciples were shattered. They had expected so much of the Lord; they had loved him dearly, and trusted his great wisdom and power. They were ready to follow him right into the kingdom. But now he was dead. Crucifixion! The shame of dying with criminals! They hardly knew what to do next.

The disciples were unable to understand spiritual things until they received the holy spirit. They could not understand that Jesus had been resurrected and was now a spirit being—he was no longer a man, no longer flesh and blood. Jesus had to show himself to his followers so they would know he was alive, though he had a different nature. As a spirit being he had the power to appear to them as a human being. They could see him, and eat and speak with him.

It was the third day after the crucifixion when Mary Magdalene went to the tomb with embalming spices and saw that the stone at the entrance had been moved away. She looked inside the tomb and saw an angel who said, “Do not be afraid ... He is not here: he has risen” (Matthew 28:5,6).

Mary spoke to Jesus but did not recognize him for he appeared to her as a gardener. But when he spoke, she knew his voice. He explained that he had not yet returned to his Father in heaven (John 20:17). He told Mary to tell the others what had happened.

Later that day, Cleopas and another disciple were walking to Emmaus and talking about the sad events of the last few days.

Jesus joined them but they did not recognize him. As he walked with them, he explained many of the prophecies which foretold of his death and resurrection and why it was necessary for him to suffer before being glorified.

They were so interested in what Jesus was saying that they urged him to stay and eat with them. It was then that he made himself known to them and disappeared from their sight. His blessing went deep into their hearts and they said, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” (Luke 24:32).

That evening many of the disciples gathered in the upper room; the doors were locked and bolted for fear of the Jews. They were discussing the amazing events of the day when suddenly Jesus was there with them! He appeared as the man they had known, but they were frightened. He calmed their fears and explained he had the power to materialize (Luke 24:36-43).



On the road to Emmaus Jesus explained how his death was prophesied in the Old Testament.