

**Peace** be with you. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In our previous lesson, we heard about how **Jesus the Messiah shed His blood** on the cross to which He was nailed, to pay for the sins of the world and **to open for sinners a door of everlasting peace**. Everything happened exactly as God's prophets had foretold it: The Messiah was mocked, scourged and nailed to a cross. Just as the innocent ram died in the place of Abraham's son, Jesus (the sinless Redeemer) died in our place. Before Jesus died, He shouted, *"It is finished!"* Praise be to God, the Lord Jesus had completed God's plan of salvation!

The death of the Messiah on the cross is the most important news in all the Holy Scriptures, because that death is the reason God can forgive us our sins without contradicting His righteousness. However, while the death of the Messiah is **the most important news**, what we are about to study is **the most wonderful news**, because we are going to hear how **God raised Jesus from the dead**.

As we already read, after Jesus died on the cross, a soldier took a spear and stabbed it into Jesus' side, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water which proved that He was dead. We saw also that a rich man took the body of Jesus and placed it in a new tomb that he had chiseled out of the rock for himself. A huge round stone was rolled over the tomb's entrance. Everything happened exactly as God's prophets had foretold it.

Thus, in the Gospel, it is written:

*The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said,*

*'After three days I will rise again.'* So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first." "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

After the Sabbath, at dawn **on the first day of the week**, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for **an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it**. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

Thus when the women arrived at the cemetery, they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, **"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!** Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" Then they remembered his words. When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. [For the disciples still did not understand the Writings of the Prophets which said that Jesus had to rise from the dead.] Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

*Now **that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus**, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, **Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him.***

*He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." He said to them, "**How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?**" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning **himself.***

*As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going further. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road*

*and opened the Scriptures to us?" They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem.*

*There they found the [disciples] assembled together and saying, "**It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon!**" Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.*

*While they were still talking about this, **Jesus himself stood among them** and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? **Look at my hands and my feet.** It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence.*

*He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: **Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.**" Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "**This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.**"*

*Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here;*

*see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

What a thrilling story! **Jesus rose from the dead!** He conquered one of man's greatest enemies: death. The grave could not hold Him. On the third day, Jesus came right out of His grave clothes, like a butterfly leaving his chrysalis shell. Only the grave clothes remained where the body of Jesus had been lying. The Lord Jesus Christ arose in a glorious body like the body which everyone who believes in Him will one day receive! That is the reason the Scripture says:

*"Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the **firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. **For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive!**"*

The resurrection of Jesus proves that He is the One He claimed to be. Do you remember that Jesus said, **"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies!"** Jesus promised to give eternal life to all those who believe in Him, but if He Himself had not conquered death, how could He save others from the power of death and sin and hell?

Perhaps **an illustration** will help. A child is playing in the waves along the seashore. Suddenly a strong current sweeps him out to sea. He desperately tries to get back to shore but cannot. The child will die unless someone rescues him. There is a man on the shore who sees the child and yells to him, "Don't be afraid. I will save you!" So the man

swims out to where the child is, but, alas, the currents are too strong for him. Both he and the child drown. The man intended to rescue the child, but he lacked the power to carry out his intention. The ocean current was too strong for him. Similarly, we hear those who claim to be saviors, telling people, "Follow me, trust me, and you'll get into Paradise." Those who make such promises may have good intentions, but they cannot accomplish what they promise. They cannot even save themselves, because they are utterly unable to overcome the power of sin and death. The power of death is too strong for them, and when they die, they will be buried, their bodies will decay in the grave, and their souls will await the Day of Judgment.

But it was not that way with the Lord Jesus. **He is the One He claimed to be!** Everything took place just as He predicted. Jesus died as a sacrifice to take away sin, was buried, and then on the third day He came out of the grave! Never has there been anyone among the prophets who died, was buried, and then came out of the tomb never to die again! But that is what Jesus the Messiah did! He defeated death and the grave! He overcame sin and Satan and death and hell! And the most wonderful thing in all of this is that **whoever truly believes** this good news about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ will share in His glory forever! That is what the Lord Jesus proclaimed after He had risen from the dead, saying, ***"Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades!"***

God raised Jesus to life, so that you might know for sure that He is the Savior and Judge of the world, whom God appointed. That is what the Scriptures declare, when they say:

***"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved!...[God] has set a day when he will judge the world***

*with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead...If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved!...Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved!"*

Thank you for listening. God willing, in our next program we will continue in the Gospel to see how the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven after He had appeared to His disciples over a forty-day period and showed them many convincing proofs that He was alive....

May God give you insight into all that you have heard today, and may you carefully consider this verse from His holy Word:

*"[God delivered Jesus] over to death for our sins and [raised Him back to life so that He might judge us as righteous]!"*