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Resurrection of Jesus Christ!

Matthew 28:1-7

Matthew 28:1-10, *Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.² And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.³ His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.⁴ And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.*

⁵But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."

⁸So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

The Women Worship the Risen Lord

⁹And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid.

Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.”

Matthew gives His look at the greatest event in the history of the world, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead.

Resurrection is the great cornerstone of the Christian faith.

Everything that we are and have and ever hope to be, all that we believe in is predicated on the reality of the resurrection.

There would be no Christianity if there were no resurrection.

There is little question in our own culture that we believe that Jesus rose from the dead. But there are many possible reactions to the resurrection.

Reactions to the Resurrection.

a) Rationalism.

This is a humanistic viewpoint that rejects the resurrection because it cannot be explained by human reason. It operates on the premise that the human mind is ultimate. Therefore, if a miracle cannot be perceived or explained logically, it simply did not happen.

b) Unbelief.

Unlike rationalism, which tries to reason the event away, unbelief is a flat refusal to accept the truth despite the evidence. It denies the resurrection even though the event is supported by eyewitness testimony and historical facts.

c) Doubt.

This reaction involves questioning the validity of the resurrection. It can manifest in two ways:

- a. **Honest Doubt:** A sincere seeker looking for resolution to their questions.
- b. **Hypocritical Doubt:** Continuing to question the event even after clear evidence has been provided.

d) Indifference.

In this response, the individual may concede that the resurrection is true but feels it has no relevance to their life. It is not a priority, it is not on their agenda, and they ultimately do not care whether it happened or not.

e) Ignorance.

This reaction stems from a lack of familiarity with the facts. These individuals may have never heard of the resurrection, or

they may only have a vague, whimsical understanding of it without any real knowledge of the supporting evidence.

f) Hostility.

This is an active, angry, and vocal effort to discredit the resurrection. It goes beyond mere rejection or doubt. It is a "vociferous" opposition where individuals feel it is their role in history to write or speak against the event.

The Proper Response

- **Faith and Affirmation**

The only correct response is one of **faith, belief, and application**. This involves affirming the reality of the resurrection and allowing that truth to transform one's life.

Now as we come to the gospels, we confess at the very start that we are going to be dealing with the response of faith – for **Matthew, Mark, Luke and John** all believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Not because they were against their wills forced to believe, but because they who were close to the reality of it were overwhelmed with its evidence.

Matthew 28:1-10, we are going to join those who see the resurrection through the eyes of faith.

Later in this chapter we will hear from the rejectors.

Every book in the Bible starts somewhere and ends somewhere. What we see in chapter 28 is not just the end of a long study, it's the climax of everything.

It is the point of everything and the purpose of everything.

This then is not a time to diminish our attention.

This is a time then to call on all our memory of everything we have to this point learned and pour it into our minds that we may understand the fullness of meaning that bursts on us in chapter 28.

We come to the glory of the resurrection – this greatest of all events.

The first sermon ever preached in the church the day the church was born was preached by Peter in **Acts 2**, and it's a sermon on the resurrection.

As a result of that and the reality of the resurrection, it became the theme of all apostolic preaching.

Peter preached again on the resurrection in **Acts 4** and again on the resurrection in **Acts 10**.

Stephen preached the resurrection in **Acts 7**.

Philip preached the resurrection in **Acts 8**.

Paul preached the resurrection in **Acts 9, then from 13-28**.

As we come to the epistles and the theme of the epistles is the resurrection.

In **Romans** it says Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father.

1 Corinthians it says He rose again the third day according to the Scripture.

2 Corinthians, He who raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise us up also.

Galatians says by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead.

Ephesians God wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.

Philippians, Paul says that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection.

Colossians, God who raised Him from the dead.

1 Thessalonians, His Son whom He raised from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3, begotten us to a living hope by the resurrection of Christ.

Even when you come to the book of **Revelation** it begins by saying that Christ has the right to take the earth because it is He who was dead and is alive forever more.

The whole theme of the New Testament is the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Not only are we there but we are here because of the resurrection.

This is Sunday – this is the first day of the week – this is resurrection day.

We gather together on the first rather than the seventh day of the week, because redemption is even a greater work than creation and more worthy of commemoration, and because the rest which followed creation is far outdone by the rest which ensues upon the completion of redemption. Like the Apostles, we meet on the first day of the week and hope that Jesus may stand in our midst and say, 'Peace be unto you.' Our Lord has lifted the Sabbath from the old and rusty hinges where on the law had placed it long before and set it on the new golden hinges which His love has fashioned. He has placed our rest day not at the end of a week of toil but at the beginning of the rest which remaineth for the people of God. Every first day of the week we should meditate upon the rising of our Lord and seek to enter into the fellowship with Him in His risen life. C.H. Spurgeon.

Here is the foundation of all our hope.

John 11:25, *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.*

John 14:19, *“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.*

The resurrection is the core of all that we believe.

We come with great excitement then to this record of our Lord’s resurrection.

Each of the four gospel writers presents the resurrection and each of them presents it in a unique way. Picking out certain elements of the event of the resurrection to enforce certain spiritual truth from the mind of the Spirit to the heart of the reader.

As we go through Matthew’s picture of the resurrection, we are going to draw from **Mark, Luke, and John** to enrich and fill out the wholeness of the scene that we may appreciate all of its great truth.

Matthew approaches it so interestingly. He approaches the resurrection through the emotions of a group of women.

Mark, Luke and John approaches it differently.

They all use the same historical truth.

There is no contradiction, but perfect harmony.

Each is selective as to the elements of the resurrection on which they focus for the purpose the Spirit of God gave to each writer. For Matthew, he focuses on the resurrection as seen through the emotions of a group of women.

In Matthew's account we are not going to look at it historically, analytically, even evidentially, that is as a forensic view, trying to prove it. We are going to look at it emotionally.

We are going to look at it through the heart and soul of some loving women who are sensitized to the event itself in marvellous and thrilling ways.

We will experience the resurrection in the next couple of weeks as we share in the emotion of these women who first encountered the reality of the risen Christ.

V 1, *Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.*

The idea that a certain interval of time has occurred since the Sabbath. Now the Sabbath ended Saturday at sundown.

This is a long time after the end of the Sabbath.

How long?

"At the dawning toward the first day of the week"

Now the reason that is done is because the Jews did not name the days.

They did not say Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, or anything like that. They simply named the days numerically with reference to the Sabbath.

It was day one after the Sabbath.

It was day two after the Sabbath.

It was day three after the Sabbath, and so on through the week.

It is Sunday morning.

Sabbath ended Saturday night.

Now maybe ten hours have passed. It's nearing dawning early on Sunday morning. This is the third day the Lord has been in the grave.

He was there on **Thursday, Friday, all the Sabbath** and so many hours already on the Sunday until it began to dawn on the morning of that first day with reference to Sabbath.

It is then the third day since the Lord was placed in the grave.

Mark 16:2, *Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.*

Luke 24:1, *Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.*

The very dawning began when it was still dark. The stage is set then because it is the third day for a great event to happen.

Jesus had said He would rise from the grave on the third day. He had said it many times:

Matthew 12:40; Matthew 16:21; Matthew 17:23; Matthew 20:19; Matthew 27:64. Mark 9:31; Mark 10:34; Luke 9:22; Luke 18:33, and Luke 24:7,21, & 26.

It was repeated all through the Lord's ministry through the latter time that He would rise on the third day. So, this is a very important time note as we begin chapter 28. It is resurrection day, and it is a Sunday after the Sabbath.

We could even use that phrase "after the Sabbath".

For the Sabbath had been the special day of rest for centuries, literally since the creation.

But the Sabbath that Jesus was in the grave was the last authorized Sabbath.

It was not only the end of the **Sabbath chronologically**, but it was also the end of the **Sabbath covenant**.

The Sabbath was not only over as a day, but it was also over as an entity.

It was the dawning not only of a new day but of a new covenant and a new celebration of that new covenant which would no longer be at the end of a week of work but at the beginning of a new era.

This is the reason why we meet on Sunday, not on the Sabbath, Saturday.

It is the dawning of the third day, the day of resurrection.

With that time reference, we now join the sisters.

This morning, we are going to look at their attitudes and their emotions to begin with as they are confronted with the fact that Jesus, whom they expect to be dead in the grave, is gone and alive.

Their first emotion is the emotion of sympathy.

We can identify with that.

These women love the Lord Jesus Christ more than they love anyone. Women have a tremendous capacity to love.

I can only imagine how it would be when women could love as fully as women are able to love and loved one who was perfection. These women loved uniquely.

- They had ministered with Jesus in Galilee.
- They had attended to His needs.
- They had provided food and hospitality and even money and resources for Him and His traveling disciples as they carried on the Galilean ministry.
- They had descended the journey to Jerusalem for Passover with Jesus and His group.
- They had been there at the cross.
- They were there when He was buried.

We saw them in **Matthew 27:56** gathered at the cross.

We saw them in **Matthew 27:61** sitting opposite the tomb.

Now they are back again the morning of the third day.

They are loyal.

They are devoted.

They are loving and they are sympathetic.

V 1, *Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.*

Mary the mother of James and Joses. Mary who was the wife of Cleophas or Alphaeus.

The two of them come to the grave.

Now they are not alone. Matthew just focuses on those two.

Mark 16:1, *Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.*

Luke 24:10, *It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.*

Joanna was the wife of Chuza who was a steward of Herod. John only mentions Mary Magdalene but uses the plural pronoun 'we' in John 20:2.

We see a group of women.

Mary Magdalene.

Mary the mother of James and Joseph.

Salome.

Joana.

Group of women comes to the tomb early. They leave when it was dark only to arrive at the grave just at the breaking of the dawn.

They loved the Lord.

They came out of sympathy.

Did they come to see the resurrection?

No!

They didn't come to see the resurrection. As many times as Jesus had talked about the resurrection, He had promised the resurrection, their faith could not handle that.

They couldn't accept it.

They couldn't understand it.

They didn't believe it.

Why are they there?

They came to see the grave, not to see the risen Lord.

What is the point of coming to see a grave?

Mark 16:1, *Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.*

No doubt they got the spices just after the annual Sabbath of unleavened bread over. The very next day was Friday the shops were open.

They bought all the spices and prepared to embalm the body.

Their purpose was not to see a resurrection.

Their purpose was to anoint a corpse.

Jesus already been anointed. Indeed, He had in excess of 70 pounds of anointing substance had been put on His body, and

He had had that wrapped in the linen with which Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus along with these women had so carefully anointed Him.

They didn't embalm and the body decayed very fast.

In fact, the Jews had a tradition which comes into play in John 11, and that tradition was that at the fourth day the spirit left the body permanently because the body was so decayed and corrupted that the spirit could no longer recognize it.

That tradition comes into play.

John 11:39, *Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."*

It is too late to do anything, the spirit is gone, the body is corrupt. It may be that these dear sisters came on the third day realizing that had they come a day later there would be no way to minister to His already decayed and corrupted body.

So before it came to that, one last time they wanted to reach out in devoted love and sympathy to the one they adored. Even though He was dead, they wanted to show Him their love and respect and preserve His body if only for a few more hours.

More than that it demonstrates their deep love.

It was an act of compassion.

It was an act of sympathy.

The thing that was in their hearts toward the crucified Christ was loving sympathy and compassion.

- They didn't have faith.
- They didn't have confidence in the resurrection.

They just had devotion, love, and sympathy and compassion.

Mark 16:3, *And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?"*

They were discussing how they were going to get the stone out of the way so they could do what they had come to do. They had no idea it was being guarded by Romans.

They didn't know that it was sealed and couldn't be opened. They were anticipating coming into the empty garden and they would need some man or men to help them move that huge, massive stone that had been rolled in front of the door.

They were discussing that they would have to face that large stone. Their emotion was sympathy.

What they lacked in faith they made up for in compassion.

What they lacked in understanding they made up for in courage to identify themselves so continually with Christ.

Before we think too little of the women who came without faith, we must ask ourselves where the disciples are?

At least the women were there, whatever the motive. It is one final act of love.

But no sooner do they approach the grave than the emotion of sympathy is transformed into the emotion of terror.

The emotion of terror.

V 2, And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

“And behold” a word to startle us, to shock us, to pull us up short, to make us realize that something dramatic has happened.

“There was a great earthquake.”

Now this is the second earthquake in three days.

There was an earthquake when Christ died that split the rocks wide open and opened graves and dead people came alive among the saints.

This is the second earthquake.

God again is moving and demonstrating in a physiological way His activity. It's not new for God.

When God gave the Ten Commandments there was an earthquake.

Exodus 19:18, *Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.*

1 Kings 19:11, *Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake;*

God came in an earthquake.

Look into the future and read about it in **Joel 2:10** that at the time of the coming of the Lord there will be an earthquake.

Jesus Himself even referred to it in the great Olivet Discourse, **Matthew 24:7**, *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.*

When God begins to move in the world the world shakes.

Here these sisters are approaching. They haven't yet come to the garden. Instantly there is an earthquake. The epicentre of the earthquake is at the tomb.

The seismic radiation waves rumble through the ground beyond the grave and no doubt rock the land on which the women walk. They feel the earthquake not knowing what has happened.

What caused the earthquake?

The resurrection didn't cause the earthquake.

Matthew tells us what caused the earthquake.

V 2, *for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.*

When this angel hit the garden, it created seismic waves. The word for earthquake is the root word *seismos* from which we get seismograph.

When the angel hit the land it sent out an earthquake. And these women not even knowing what was going on felt the movement of the earth as they approached the tomb.

But the earthquake was not caused by the resurrection of Christ, it was caused by the arrival of an angel to open the tomb.

Nothing says that the angel let Jesus out of the tomb.

Have you ever seen a picture of an angel and a stone rolled back and Jesus coming out?

That isn't right.

Jesus did not have the power to raise Himself from the dead and then wait in there until somebody moved the stone so He could get out.

No one saw the resurrection.

The women experienced the seismic ramifications of that event of the angel coming and the phenomena around the resurrection.

The resurrection occurred in an invisible way.

Christ came out of that grave.

The angel did not move the stone to let the Lord out. The angel moved the stone to let the women in so they could see that He was already gone.

How could Jesus get out of there?

John 20:26, *And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"*

The same way He came through the wall into the upper room is the same way He went out of the rock of the grave, which we shouldn't imagine as any problem for one in His glorified form.

No one saw the resurrection.

The angel came not to let the Lord out but to let the women in and to let the apostles in and to let us in and to let the whole world in to see that He wasn't there.

When the women arrived, they went in and they saw.

When Peter and John arrived, they went in and they saw.

There were the linen wrappings undisturbed the way they had been wrapped around His body. The head napkin in a separate place. There was no turmoil, no big hurry to unwrap Him and throw everything on the floor and get out of there. It was just the way it had been when His body was in it only, He was gone.

Then the angel came after He left to move the stone so the world could come in and see that He was gone and sat there as the heavenly witness to what had happened.

Can you imagine the Jewish leaders, are just having a great time thinking Jesus is dead and buried and captive to a tomb.

Little do they know that all of their efforts would only increase His influence and only validate His resurrection.

The angel descends from heaven.

V 2, *and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.*

These women who have walked through an earthquake arrive at the garden. They come into the garden, and they see the tomb is open.

The stone is rolled back. Now at this point we must digress to John's gospel to insert what happens, because this is the proper point to harmonize John's special interest in Mary Magdalene.

Mary was to the women what Peter was to the Apostles.
She was impetuous.

When Mary comes in, all she sees with her rather myopic viewpoint is this hole and the stone is gone. She doesn't take note of this angel. Seeing that the stone is moved and the grave is empty is enough for her.

John 20:1-2, *Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and*

saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ²Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

She took off and she went right to the two most prominent apostles.

To Peter and to the other disciple, probably indicates they were in two different homes during this Passover time. We can't be certain. But anyway, she ran to Peter and John to tell them.

What did she tell them?

"They have taken away the Lord out of the grave, and we know not where they have laid Him."

John 20:3-4, *Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. ⁴So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first.*

John outran Peter and arrived first.

Mary Magdalene is apparently gone.

She ran to tell Peter and John that the body had been stolen. The other ladies stayed, and they have the wonderful experience of an encounter with an angel.

V 3, His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

Like lightning flashing, brilliant, blazing.

No doubt, to transmit the effulgence or the essence, the deity, the brilliance of the character of God.

This is the glow of God. This is the Shekinah somehow transmitted from God to that angel, as it was on one occasion from God to Moses and shown on his face.

Do you remember that in the book of Exodus?

This angel, this one representative of God, this messenger from God possessed the very character of deity.

It emanated from his glowing face.

his clothing as white as snow.

This is emblematic of purity, of holiness, of virtue.

A holy angel sent from God, bearing the very imprimatur of the character of God.

An angel representative of deity, a created being who represents the uncreated cause of all beings, God Himself, this holy angel.

This to distinguish him from some man.

This to distinguish him from some demon.

This to identify him as the agent of God.

This beautiful, glorious, glowing, pure, holy being sitting on the stone as living witness to the risen Christ God's own assigned witness.

V 4, And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

The earth quaked and then it stopped and the guards are still experiencing a personal earthquake. They were there to make sure nothing happened, but something happened they couldn't have anticipated.

Not only did they quake, but they became as dead.

They went into temporary coma.

They were knocked literally unconscious out of terror.

Fear will do that. Fear will cause people to be paralyzed to the point where they go unconscious.

They were knocked cold out of fear.

They were victims of divine power.

They had seen something they had never seen or thought of or ever been able to comprehend.

Were the women afraid?

Yes, the women were afraid, but they were sustained by the angel himself.

He gave no ministry to the unbelieving guard.

He reached out as the agent of God to minister to these women.

V 5, *But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.”*

Some things need explaining even though someone isn't asking. **Where is Christ and what are you doing here?**

The angel explained to the women, and this is what he said, “Stop being terrorized.” Stop being afraid.

There is no reason to be afraid.

Remember, Mary Magdalene is gone but the rest are there. She is right now on her way running, trying to find Peter and John. Meanwhile the angel calms the fears of these ladies.

The soldiers had reason to fear when Christ arose. But those who loved Him had no reason to fear.

“For I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.”

I know why you are here.

Wasn't that a comforting word?

He knows us what we are coming here to do.

You seek Jesus.

They came to find a corpse, not to see a resurrection.
They came out of devotion to anoint a dead body, to put spices.

We would have said, “you unbelieving women. You of little faith,” and maybe a rebuke against their feeble minds and weak faith seem more in order.

But God is so gracious.

Their faith was weak.

Their understanding was feeble, but God is ever gracious.

They loved the Lord Jesus Christ and even in the moments of their doubt and despair God recognized that love and responded in grace.

“I know you seek Jesus who was crucified.”

Be comforted in this.

V 6, *He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.*

“He was raised.” He is not here. He was raised.

The word is a word to indicate resurrection from the dead.

There is no question that He was dead.

That is why the soldiers who were experts at death didn't break His legs. He was already dead. They thrust a spear into His side penetrating the sac around the heart and out came the blood from His heart and the water from the pericardium. He was dead.

Lying in that tomb for this the third day no question He was dead.

But now He was raised.

The Bible emphasizes that He was raised by the power of the Father.

Repeatedly says that in Scripture.

Romans 6:4, Galatians 1:1, 1 Peter 1:3,

Jesus was raised by the power of the Father.

John 10:18, *No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."*

Romans 8:11, *But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.*

The whole Trinity is involved in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The angel gives this incredible announcement, "He is not here. He was raised."

"He was raised as He said."

This is exactly what He said He would do!

Luke 24:8, *And they remembered His words.*

V 6, *"Come, see the place where He lay."*

Luke 24:4, *And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.*

First angel was joined by a second angel, one at the head of where the body lay and one at the feet of where the body lay. Beautiful picture.

Do you remember the Ark of the Covenant in the Old Testament on the top had the Mercy Seat where atonement was made for sin?

On both sides it had angels!

Here with an angel on one side and an angel on the other side and Christ in the middle is the true Mercy Seat, where Christ is offered, the satisfaction for the sins of the world.

John 20:12, *And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.*

V 7, *And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."*

This is not a time to be wasted at the tomb.
Fascination must give way to proclamation.

"Go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead."

- They were vacillating.
- They were weak.
- They were witless.
- They fled.
- They denied.
- They abandoned the Saviour.

Yet he says, "I don't want them to know a moment's anguish or a moment's misery or a moment's grief. I want you to go as fast as you can and tell them Christ is alive."

Grace!

What grace that is. Tell His disciples He was raised from the dead.

Conclusion:

Why were the women the first to experience the angel?

Why were the women first to see the risen Christ?

One writer said, "Because God chooses the weak to confound the strong." We don't want to go any further with that point.

Another writer said, "God rewards the faithful, and they had served the Lord in the past, and so they were to be specially rewarded."

Another writer said, "Death came by a woman in the garden, so life comes to a woman in the garden." A good sentiment.

Someone else said, "The deepest sorrow deserves the greatest joy."

Another said, "Supreme love deserves supreme privilege."

Do you want to know the truth?

Because they were there.

The Reluctant "Nobody" in the Rubble

In **September 1985**, a massive 8.0 magnitude earthquake struck **Mexico City**, reducing entire neighbourhoods to piles of

jagged concrete and twisted steel. While the government struggled to coordinate a response, a motley crew of locals—most of them common labourers with no formal training—began digging through the debris with their bare hands. They became known as the *Topos* (The Moles).

Among them was a man **named Marcos**. Marcos wasn't a hero, a politician, or a high-ranking official. In fact, he was a quiet, grieving man who had lost his own home. He had no special equipment, no PhD in engineering, and honestly, very little hope that anyone was still alive.

But every single morning, while others were at the government briefings or waiting for the "experts" to arrive with heavy machinery, **Marcos was there**.

He was at the site of a collapsed hospital before the sun came up, simply because he felt he couldn't be anywhere else. He stayed through the heat of the day and into the freezing nights, covered in dust and weeping for his city.

The Moment of the Miracle

On the seventh day, the "experts" were ready to give up. They said the window of survival had closed. They were packing up their gear, citing statistics and biological limits. But Marcos and a few other tired volunteers were still there, kneeling in the dirt, refusing to leave the pile of rubble.

In the sudden silence of the site, Marcos pressed his ear to a concrete slab. He didn't have a sonar device; he just had a heart that wouldn't let him walk away. **He heard a faint, rhythmic scratching.**

Because he was *there*—not in a meeting, not waiting for a report, not watching from a distance—he was the first to realize that sixteen newborn babies were still alive in the ruins of that hospital nursery. He was the one who pulled the first infant out into the light.

The Lesson of the Story

Marcos didn't save those babies because he was the strongest man in Mexico City. He didn't save them because he was a scholar of rescue tactics. He saved them because, while everyone else was busy being "reasonable" or "important" elsewhere, he was **present**.

He experienced the miracle of life coming out of death, not because he was special, but because he was **there**.

If you are not there, you are not going to see it.

They were there and so they saw it.

If anybody else would have been there, they would have seen it.

If you are there when the Lord does wonderful things. There's a great spiritual truth in that somewhere and that is that the closer you stay to the Lord and what He's doing, the more you're going to enjoy what it is He's doing.

I had rather be there and experience it than hear it from somebody else.

I praise God for people who are there.

They are there when the Lord is working.

They are there when His people gather.

They are there when His Word is taught.

They are there when it's time to come to your knees before Him.

They are there when it's time to call on His power in ministry.

They are the ones that experience firsthand the moving of the power of God.

They saw it because they were there.

I trust that you will be the kind of person like those women.

What you may lack in faith, you make up for in devotion.

What you may lack in understanding, you make up for in loyalty.

God will confirm your weakness and turn it into strength, because you are faithful and loyal enough to be where He is, moving and working.