

THE WITNESS BORN BY THE EMPTY TOMB (2)

BY KEITH GREER

Open tomb. *“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. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.” {Luke 24:1-3}* The tomb was empty; there was no body. The guards lacked the courage to tell the truth about what they had witnessed. The officials bribed them to say the Lord’s disciples came by night and stole the body {*Matthew 28:11-15*}. Failure to secure the tomb and sleeping while on guard should have resulted in the death penalty, but they were granted immunity by those who bribed them. The Lord’s enemies cling to this fabricated story, but it is a lie. Peter told the truth of the matter in the first gospel sermon on Pentecost, *“Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.” {Acts 2:24}*

Discarded clothes. *“And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself.” {John 20:5-7}* Do you remember when the Lord raised Lazarus and the instruction He gave following that resurrection? *“Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come forth!’ And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Loose him, and let him go.’” {John 11:43,44}* When Jesus arose, He did not hastily discard the grave clothes; He folded them neatly. If His disciples had stolen the body, they would have left in haste and scattered the grave clothes, or they might have taken the body with the clothes remaining on it.

His appearances. *“Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to Him, ‘Rabboni!’ (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’ Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.” {John 20:16-18}* Jesus appeared to His disciples many times, He met the women as they returned to the tomb {*Matthew 28:9*}, the two men on the road to Emmaus {*Luke 24:13-31*}, the assembled disciples {*Luke 24:36-38*}; and He last appeared to Paul {*1 Corinthians 15:8*}. Even Paul said 500 people saw Him at once. Did

they all lie? The apostles gave eye-witness testimony in their preaching—they died with this truth on their lips.

Witness of Lord's Supper. "*But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.*" {*Matthew 26:29*} The blood Christ shed provided remission for our sins and sealed His covenant. He offered that blood to the Father, and the Father accepted it. Therefore, His resurrection is a must for our Lord to offer His blood as the ransom price for man's sins! {*Hebrews 9:24-28*}

Witness of Baptism. "*Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?*" {*1 Corinthians 15:29*} Consider this point. Baptism is the means of contacting Christ's blood {*Romans 6:3,4; Colossians 2:11,12*}. How can one contact the blood if Jesus was not resurrected and therefore could not present it to His Father as the ransom price for sin? Baptism cleanses us from sin because in it, we contact Christ's blood. Baptism is also a powerful witness to the truth of Christ's resurrection!

Overwhelming evidence that cannot be denied is supported by eye-witness testimony that has never been refuted. Please go and read *1 Corinthians 15* and see where all men would be if the resurrection of Christ were a hoax. Praise be to God—**HE AROSE!!!!****