

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Luke 24:1-8

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. This week, we will read Luke chapter 24. Today, we will read verses 1-8.

Last week we read chapter 23, one of the most solemn and sorrowful chapters, describing how Jesus, for the sins of us all, was mocked by men, judged by the Father on the cross, and ultimately died and was placed in a tomb. In contrast, chapter 24 is a chapter filled with joy, for it tells us of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. We must thank God for giving us the four Gospels. Four different authors, from four different perspectives, recorded the earthly ministry of Jesus. Concerning the resurrection of Jesus, each Gospel also emphasizes different aspects.

The Gospel of Matthew particularly focuses on Jesus instructing His disciples to return to the mountain in Galilee where He had appointed them, and there He gave them the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you..."

The Gospel of Mark likewise emphasizes that when the disciples were gathered together, Jesus said to them: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved..." John, having written his Gospel later than the other three authors, supplements many details that were not previously recorded and provides the most extensive account of the Lord's resurrection.

Luke, however, approaches the resurrection from a different angle. He records the events of the day of Jesus' resurrection in chronological order. The day Jesus rose from the dead was a very busy day. Luke records what happened early in the

morning, what happened in the afternoon, and what Jesus said to His disciples when they gathered together in the evening.

Each Gospel writer had a specific purpose and a particular audience in mind. Therefore, while we compare the accounts in the different Gospels, we should also try to enter into Luke's spirit as he wrote. Why did he record these events? What is he speaking to each one of us through these passages today?

Near the end of chapter 23, Luke specifically records: "And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid." Because Jesus breathed His last around three o'clock on Friday afternoon, Joseph likely took His body and placed it in his own tomb. These women followed and saw where He was laid. Before sunset on Friday, they hurried to prepare spices and fragrant oils, because once the sun set, the Sabbath would begin, and throughout the Sabbath they could do no work.

Verse 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 Sabbath had passed, and it was now Sunday morning. According to the Jewish reckoning, God created the world in six days, and on the seventh day—Saturday—He rested. Therefore, the seventh day became the Sabbath. Luke 24 begins with "the first day of the week," seemingly indicating that after Jesus' resurrection, the focus is no longer the Sabbath itself, but the first day after the Sabbath, the first day of the week, the eighth day—the day of resurrection.

"Very early in the morning, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared." Let us consider the attitude of these women. They had followed Jesus, served Him, and stood with Him throughout His earthly ministry. They truly loved Him. Yet they apparently did not understand much of what Jesus had told His disciples. Then they saw the Teacher whom they loved crucified and buried in a

tomb. Still, they retained their faith and their love. That is why they hurried to prepare spices to anoint His body.

We can imagine how heavy their hearts must have been. It seemed as though they had lost all hope. Yet because of their love for Jesus and their desire to serve Him, while the disciples and everyone else were still asleep, they rose before dawn and eagerly carried the spices to anoint His body. What was true of those Galilean women is often true in God's household today. In many churches, sisters especially love the Lord and are eager to serve Him. Their understanding of doctrine may not always be complete, but that does not diminish their love for the Lord or their willingness to serve. Because they loved, they served; and because they served, they became the first witnesses of Jesus' resurrection.

Verse 2: "But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb."

Matthew 28 records that in the early morning: "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..." The tomb was a cave hewn out of rock, with a large circular stone placed in front of the entrance. These women had no strength to move such a stone.

The angels knew the women were coming, so they prepared the way beforehand and rolled the stone away. Thus when the women arrived, they found the stone already removed from the entrance.

Verses 3–4: "Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments."

They could not find Jesus' body. They had come to anoint Him, but now they had no opportunity to do so. Yet because of their love for the Lord and their willingness to serve Him, God sent two angels to bring them good news.

Angels are ministering spirits. Throughout the earthly life of God's Son, angels were continually present to minister and to announce glad tidings. When Jesus was born, a multitude of angels sang and proclaimed good news. Before He began His ministry, after Satan had tempted Him in the wilderness for forty days, angels came and ministered to Him. Near the end of His earthly ministry, in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He prayed to the Father in deep agony and reached the point of physical exhaustion, God sent an angel to strengthen Him.

Now Jesus had died and risen again. As these women came seeking Him, God used angels once more to proclaim the message that He had risen.

Verses 5–6a: “Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, ‘Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!’”

The angels began with a beautiful question: “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” A tomb is a place for the dead. The Lord Jesus whom they sought was no longer there. He had risen. Then the angels reminded them:

Verses 6b–7: “Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’”

Jesus had spoken these words to His disciples many times, yet it seems no one truly understood them. Only Mary of Bethany seized the opportunity during the final week of Jesus' earthly ministry and broke her alabaster flask to anoint Him. Most of the disciples and followers of Jesus had spent a long time with Him and heard Him say such things repeatedly, yet they still did not understand.

Only after the events had occurred—when they came to the tomb and found His body missing—did the angels remind them again: “The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.”

Verse 8: “And they remembered His words.”

This time, when they remembered Jesus’ words, those words were no longer merely objective truths. They became personal and experiential realities. Because they loved the Lord and desired to serve Him, they went seeking Him. They did not find Him, but instead encountered angels. The angels reminded them of what Jesus had previously said, and the circumstances around them confirmed those words. Finally, they understood: Jesus had truly died, and Jesus had truly risen from the dead on the third day.

In many ways, the experience of these women resembles our own. We read the Scriptures. We may have read certain passages many times and become very familiar with them. Yet familiarity does not necessarily mean understanding, nor does it mean experience. But that is all right. As long as we continue reading and storing God’s Word in our hearts, there will come a day when we encounter a particular circumstance, and God, through the Holy Spirit, will remind us of words we have previously read. At that moment, those words become living words. They are worked into our lives and become living experiences to us. Just like these women, who came seeking Jesus and then truly came to know that He had risen.

How can God’s Word become a living experience within us? On the one hand, we need to read God’s Word and store it richly in our hearts. On the other hand, we need to be people who love the Lord and are willing to serve Him. The Lord will then use the events and circumstances He arranges in our lives to bring His Word back to us and prove its reality through experience. Only then can we truly know the value of God’s Word and the life that is contained within it.

Let us pray together: Lord, we thank You. Help us to let Your Word dwell in us richly. Through all the circumstances You arrange in our daily lives, may the Word stored within us speak to us again and again through those circumstances. Enable us to truly understand Your Word, to experience Your Word, and to have Your Word constituted into our lives. Bless my life today with the presence of Your Word. May I draw strength from Your Word and find rest in it. Thank You. We pray in the Holy Name of Jesus Christ.