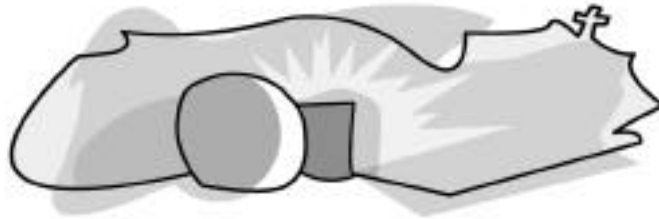


He Is Risen



SABBATH—FEBRUARY 19

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Matthew 28:9; John 11:1-46; John 20:10-18; Romans 6:4-6; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8.

MEMORY VERSE: “ ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? Jesus is not here! He has risen!’ ” (Luke 24:5, 6, Nlrv).

HIS NAME WAS REBBE (RABBI)¹ MENACHEM SCHNEERSON. When he died in 1994, many Jews believed that the 92-year-old Schneerson was the long-awaited Messiah. They said that he claimed to be related to King David. They claimed that his physical sufferings fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah 53. They believed the hospital tubes feeding his body were a fulfillment of the prophecies that the Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced (nailed). These Jews believed that all he had to do was to be brought back to life.

But Rebbe Schneerson is still resting in his grave.

Contrast² this rebbe and his death to another Rebbe (Jesus). Jesus' death took place almost two thousand years ago. It is clear to see which rebbe is the real Messiah.

A LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S LESSON: What special miracles did Jesus do that should have prepared people for His resurrection?³ How much proof does the Bible give of Jesus' resurrection? What happened at the Cross that has opened the way for our resurrection?

Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, February 26.

¹Rabbi—a Jewish religion teacher.

²contrast—show how things are different.

³resurrection—return to life.

SUNDAY—FEBRUARY 20

**EARLIER PROOFS
(John 11:1-46).**

Through His earthly ministry (work), Jesus did many miracles. He healed people who were blind. He fed 5,000 people with two loaves of bread and five fish. He turned water into wine, and He cured people of leprosy. He walked on water, threw out demons, cured handicaps, stilled a storm, and raised people from death. There were so many other miracles Jesus did that the world itself could not hold the books “that should be written” about these miracles (John 21:25).



Jesus did many miracles while He lived on earth.

What miracles did Jesus do in the following verses? How do these miracles fit in with the miracle of His resurrection? (Also read Matthew 11:5.)

Mark 5:35-43 _____

Luke 7:11-17 _____

John 11:1-46 _____

These stories are important, because they proved that Jesus’ power is so great, He can even raise dead people. Many times before the Cross, Jesus talked about His death and His resurrection (Matthew 12:38-40; Matthew 17:22, 23; Matthew 20:19). Normally, one could have some doubt about someone who claims that he or she would be brought back to life after being dead for three days. But Jesus’ situation was not “normal.” By doing what He did in raising dead people, Jesus gave His followers strong proof of God’s power to raise dead people. In this way, He made the promise of His own resurrection easier for people to believe.

Why is what Jesus said in John 11:25 important? Based on the story in John 11, why were Jesus’ words so powerful and so full of hope?

Most household dust is made up of us. Dust is dead skin. Run a finger across a counter, and you will be “looking” at your future. But what is your long-term hope? How is that hope connected with Jesus’ resurrection?

MONDAY—FEBRUARY 21

**THE RESURRECTED (RISEN)
JESUS (Luke 24:33-49).**

Leo Tolstoy, a famous Russian author, wrote the novel *War and Peace*. *War and Peace* is about the families of Russian noblemen during the time of Napoleon's war against Russia in the early 1800s. *War and Peace* is not a true story.

Imagine that Tolstoy claimed his story was true and that the people in his story were real. Imagine, too, that the government told Tolstoy to stop telling people that his characters were real, or the police would throw him in jail or even kill him. If Tolstoy were not insane, he would stop. Why die saying that a story is true, when you know it is a lie?

In a way, this is the problem the people who do not believe in Jesus' resurrection face. Why would the Bible writers insist that Jesus was raised from the dead when He was not? It is not as if they became wealthy, popular, or successful by telling this story. Instead, they faced social criticism, unpopularity, torture, jail, and, in some cases, death. Why go through all that if Jesus' resurrection was not true?

Below are some stories about Jesus' appearances after His resurrection: Matthew 28:9; Luke 24:33-49; John 20:10-23; John 21:1-14; Acts 1:4-9. What hap-

pened in these stories? What hope did Jesus give to His followers?

Jesus appeared many times to His followers. He clearly wanted them to be strong believers in who He was and what He had done. So they went from a group of depressed and frightened people (Matthew 26:56; Mark 14:50; Luke 24:17; John 20:19) to a spiritually powerful group of men and women. They boldly preached the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah of Israel and the world. Clearly, they believed Jesus had been brought to life.

Most of the world has not seen the resurrected Jesus. But we are asked to believe in Jesus' resurrection anyway. If someone were to ask why you believe in Jesus' resurrection, how would you answer?

TUESDAY—FEBRUARY 22

**WITNESSES⁴ FROM THE GRAVE
(Matthew 27:52, 53).**

Matthew wrote about three things that happened when Jesus died: (1) The veil in the temple was torn (Matthew 27:51); (2) the earth shook and rocks split (Matthew 27:51); and (3) graves were opened

⁴witnesses—people who have seen something happen.

(Matthew 27:52). After Jesus Himself had been resurrected early on the first day of the week, “many bodies of the saints which slept arose” (Matthew 27:52, 53).

Why was it only after Jesus’ resurrection that these saints arose?

Jesus’ resurrection guaranteed the saints’ resurrection. Through the saints’ resurrection, Jesus has given the world more reasons to believe in the power of *His* resurrection.

What did Matthew say that these resurrected saints did after they arose? Matthew 27:53.

The Bible says nothing more about these saints. Who were they? What happened to them? What influence should they have had on people who saw them (Luke 16:30, 31)? Ellen White writes that these saints were martyrs⁵ who had given their lives for the Lord and that they had been “raised to everlasting⁶ life.” (They were not the people Jesus had raised earlier, who would die again.) Ellen White also says that when Jesus went to heaven, He took these saints with Him. “They went to heaven with Jesus as trophies of His victory over death and the grave. Jesus said they are not prisoners of Satan anymore. I have saved them. I have brought

⁵martyrs—people who have died for what they believe.

⁶everlasting—lasting forever; without beginning or end.

⁷events—things that happen.

them from the grave as proof of My power. They are to be with Me where I am, never to see death or experience sorrow again.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 786.

Think about what it means to “never see death or experience sorrow again.” Write a paragraph on what life will be like without death or sorrow. (Read Revelation 21:1-5 for some ideas.)



WEDNESDAY—FEBRUARY 23

PAUL AND JESUS’ RESURRECTION (1 Corinthians 15:3-8).

The apostle Paul writes very little about Jesus’ life. But Paul often mentions Jesus’ death and resurrection. These events⁷ are for him

the foundation (basis) of the whole Christian hope.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. Then answer these questions:

1. What did Paul think was most important?

2. Paul said that Jesus' death and resurrection were "according to the Scriptures [the Bible]" (Acts 17:2, 3). Why is it so important that Jesus' death and resurrection be "according to the Scriptures"? Who else tied these special events to other Scriptures? Luke 24:25-27.

3. In 1 Corinthians 15:5-7, Paul spends a lot of time on one subject. What is that subject? Why do you think he points to it so much?

In the rest of 1 Corinthians 15, Paul makes one strong point: Our hope of resurrection depends on Jesus' resurrection. As humans, we have no natural immortality⁸ (1 Timothy 6:15, 16). Death is an unconscious (unknowing) sleep (John 11:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13). It is not a transfer, or jump, to another kind of life. The Lord is the Lord of life. Death is the enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26). We have no hope of defeating it. If death is victorious, all

our labors, goals, and dreams end in the grave. Paul says that without the Resurrection, our faith is in "vain" (1 Corinthians 15:17). In Greek, the word *vain* means "useless" or "of no purpose."

But Jesus was raised from death. He conquered death. We can, by faith, share Jesus' victory over death. Jesus paid the penalty for our sins. The penalty is death. Because Jesus paid that penalty, we do not have to face it ourselves. Instead, because Jesus was raised, we will be raised, too, and given eternal⁹ life. All we face now is a temporary¹⁰ sleep. The final punishment is the eternal punishment Jesus experienced for us on the cross. Saved people, either awake or asleep, are simply waiting for the final end of what Jesus has done for them. Our resurrection to eternal life is that final end.



⁸immortality—the ability to live forever.

⁹eternal—forever; without beginning or end.

¹⁰temporary—not lasting forever.

THURSDAY—FEBRUARY 24

RESURRECTION, NOW AND THEN (John 5:24, 25).

Jesus seems to be talking about two “types” of eternal life in John 5:24, 25. What are they? How are they tied together?

The Bible talks about a “resurrection” that believers can experience before death. The person who believes in Jesus now has passed from death to life. A passage (transfer) from death to life is a resurrection. People who believe in Jesus go through a great change. They are not brought from the grave, but they are born again. Jesus becomes the focus of their life. Being born again is such a great life-changing experience that Jesus Himself connects it with something as great as dead people being raised to life at the end of time.

What is Paul saying in Romans 6:4-6 that follows Jesus’ words in John 5:24, 25? Why does Paul use the symbol of Jesus’ resurrection?

For Paul, Jesus’ death and resurrection were not just historical events. Jesus’ death and resurrection are living symbols of what we must experience in our own lives now as followers of Jesus.

Paul is saying that we must spir-

itually go through what Jesus went through. This is not death in a real sense, but a death of self, a death to sin, a death to living for the flesh. The same power that brought Jesus from the grave can bring us into the “newness of life.” This is a life where we are no longer under the control of sin and of the flesh. This is a very important part of the whole Christian experience.



Baptism is a symbol of dying to self in Jesus and being raised to a new life in Him.

If someone asked you, “Have you gone through what Jesus and Paul talked about in the above verses?” how would you answer? If you answered Yes, and that person then asked, “What was that experience like?” what would you say? Is Paul talking about a one-time experience, or is it an experi-

ence that must go on continually?
Explain your answer.

FRIDAY—FEBRUARY 25

ADDITIONAL STUDY: “During the days Jesus spent with His disciples, they gained a new experience. Jesus taught them how the Hebrew Bible showed His death and resurrection. Then their faith in Him was fully established. They reached the place where they could say, ‘I know the One [Jesus] I have believed’ (2 Timothy 1:12, NIV). They began to understand the work they were to do. They were to preach to the world the truths given to them. They were to tell the world about the events of Jesus’ life, His death and resurrection, and the prophecies pointing to His death and resurrection. They were to tell the world about the plan of salvation and the power of Jesus to forgive sins. They also were to testify to the world all they had seen. They were to preach the gospel of peace and salvation through repentance¹¹ and the power of the Savior.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*,¹² p. 27.

“Jesus raised Lazarus from the grave. This miracle would represent

the resurrection of all righteous (holy) dead people. By His word and His works, Jesus declared Himself the Author of the resurrection. Jesus, who Himself was soon to die upon the cross, stood with the keys of death. As a conqueror of the grave, Jesus claimed His right and power to give eternal life.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 530.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Jesus not show Himself quickly to Cleopas and his friend as they walked to their home in Emmaus? Why did He first give them a Bible study about His death, burial, and resurrection (Luke 24:13-32)?
2. Think about what a big difference it made in the lives of the apostles that they served a risen Savior instead of a martyred Savior. What difference does it make to you personally that you serve a risen Savior?
3. How do you understand the idea that people who believe in Jesus have eternal life now? How would you explain it at the funeral of a Christian?

¹¹repentance—being sorry for your sins, wanting to stop sinning, and turning away from your sins.

¹²apostles—Jesus’ twelve disciples were called apostles after Jesus returned to heaven.