



# *The Meaning of the Resurrection*

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## Outline



- The Empty Tomb
- Jesus and The Hebrew Imagination
- The Road to Emmaus
- New Life, Ascension, and the Church



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Presence and Absence

## **THE EMPTY TOMB**



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### Mary's First Loss



“When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. . . .Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene” (John 19: 23, 25)

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### Mary's Second Loss



“They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him” (John 20:13)

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### Mary's Third Loss



“‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni!’ (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father’” (John 20:16-17)

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Misunderstanding the Resurrection:  
Three Common Mistakes



- The Risen Life as:
  1. ghostly presence
    - magic, apparition, subjective experience
  2. resuscitation, next step of life after a brief death
    - continuity, a caterpillar turning into a butterfly
  3. a glorified, royal presence
    - vindication of a mighty ruler




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The Meaning of the Resurrection



- The resurrection is something that happened to Jesus, but something that profoundly changes us...
- *How does that work?*




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The Logic of Reversal

**JESUS AND THE HEBREW  
IMAGINATION**




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## Hebrew Imagination



- Monotheism + Election =
  - Eschatology
- Exodus as foundational narrative of Israel
  - Themes of *exile* and *return* dominate Jewish eschatology
    - Cf. "Speech of the Wicked" (Wisdom 1:16-2:24, 4:7-5:7)




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## Jesus, Mission and Message



"He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19; Isa 61:1-2).

- *Eschatology is at the heart of Jesus' mission and message*




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## Jesus of Nazareth, Mission and Message



- a first century Palestinian Jew
- who announced the Kingdom of God,
- believed that his presence and work marked the inauguration of the Kingdom,
- and summoned other Jews to abandon their Kingdom visions and join him in his
- *What does it mean to be Israel at this critical juncture in its history?*




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Jesus of Nazareth,  
Mission and Message



- *What does it mean to be Israel at this critical juncture in its history?*
  - Responding to Jesus = Partaking in the Logic of Reversal
- Turn the other cheek/ Walk the second mile
- The Good Samaritan
- Fellowship with sinners and tax collectors
- Re-interpreting the Temple

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Logic of Reversal



- The pattern of humiliation and exaltation
  - acts of (re-)creation (exodus), bringing order and harmony out of chaos
- The God who creates the world also creates genuine human community
  - Right relations with one another and with God

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The Meaning of Resurrection

**THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**




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### Resurrection



- Different meanings of “resurrection” for first century Jews: a strict sense and a wide sense, always taken together

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### Resurrection



- The NT declares that God’s future has arrived
- Resurrection and New Creation

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### Resurrection



- Mutually Interpretive Interplay between Scriptures and the Paschal Mystery (Road to Emmaus)
- *God’s characteristic exaltation of the lowest becomes a pattern that God personally undergoes, suffers*

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## Resurrection

- In the NT, God's gracious love, which is central to the identity of the God of Israel, takes the radically new form of a human life in which the divine self-giving happens

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## Apostolic Experience of the Risen Lord, The NT Account



1. "We Saw Him"
2. "Our Eyes Were Opened"
3. "My Lord and My God"
4. "The Scriptures are Open to Us"
5. "Go out to the whole world"

❖ *Gratuity, Forgiveness, Mission*




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## Apostolic Experience, The Lived Meaning of Resurrection



- Experiencing the forgiving victim =
  - a new way of seeing and being with others
    - *The joy of being wrong*
  - A new beginning, a new context, a new way of forming community, a new understanding of God, self, others




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The Expanding Event of the Incarnation  
**NEW LIFE, ASCENSION, AND  
CHURCH**



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Ascension,  
Presence and Absence



- The ascension of Christ is the giving back of his whole life, death, and resurrection to us in God's universal, eschatological act of transforming the world



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Ascension,  
Presence and Absence



- Christ's new mode of presence includes his absence, where the absence is not Christ's deficiency in the present, but our tendency not to recognize and embrace him:
- Rev. Prof. Anthony Kelly, CSsR says:
  - *“it is not Christ who has become disembodied, but we human beings are not yet fully embodied in him as we are destined to be.”*



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# The End



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