

**Introduction:** I admit today's Gospel and Psalm have challenged me to try to remember the last time I was greatly alarmed by God's Presence. When was the last time I was quaking when I prayed? When did I have an 'out of body' experience interceding for a loved one who had a great need? When was I seized with fear because The Holy Spirit convicted me of a sin because I was embarrassed to confess it and I now realized I still needed God's forgiveness? These are somewhat negative ways to experience the 'fear of The Lord'. \*\*\* But, what about the 'flip side'? The first sermon I preached in this building in July, 2001 had all the amazing details of the miraculous 'parting of the sea' before over a million Israelites. We tried to imagine walking a half mile through water piled up over one hundred feet on either side of us in the middle of the night with a strong wind blowing! \*\*\* Using the strongest words possible, Mark was inspired to finish his Gospel describing the reaction of the first three people to witness the empty tomb just after sunrise on the first day of the week after Passover. This was an exciting fear! Did they dare to believe that Jesus was alive again?! If He was, then He IS truly The Savior of all who believe in Him. And, He was now The Head of the corner previously rejected by the builders. The Covenant God has made Him Savior and it is truly wonderful, marvelous. This last word was only used for God – both His character and His mighty miracles. \*\*\* Let's now dig into our texts with hearts wide open to wonder.

**I. In the morning of the first day of the week, women came to anoint Jesus' body, wondering who would roll away the stone for them, they look and it had been rolled away.** (*Mark 16:1-4*)

A. Very early on the first day of the week, three women came to the tomb to anoint Jesus. (*Mark 16:1-2*)

1. The Sabbath having passed, Mary the Magdalene, Mary the (mother) of James, and Salome had bought sweet spices, that having come, they might anoint Him. (*Verse 1*)

**Three women:** Mary (the tower) had seven demons go out of her (Luke 8:2). Mary was the mother of the 'other' James and was married to Alphaeus (changing, Mark 3:18). Finally, Salome (peace) was the mother of James and John (Matthew 27:56), the wife of Zebedee (Mark 1:19-20).

**To anoint body:** Their intention was to properly anoint the body of Jesus, because He had been buried in haste (Mark 15:42-47).

2. Very early in the first day of the week, they came upon the tomb, the sun having risen. (*Verse 2*)

**Very early:** The Jewish day began at sunset, so by their reckoning of time they were half way through the first day of the week – what we call Sunday.

**Come to tomb:** They got to the tomb just after sunrise.

B. As they wonder who will roll away the stone from the tomb for them, they see the stone had been rolled away. (*Mark 16:3-4*)

1. They were saying to themselves, 'Who will roll away for us the stone from the door of the tomb?' (*Verse 3*)

**Who will roll:** The women did not know if the soldiers guarding the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66) would agree to open the tomb for them by rolling away the stone.

2. Having looked up, they are seeing that had been rolled away the stone, for it was very great. (*Verse 4*)

**Very great:** They get a big surprise! Using the present tense to draw us into the story, Mark relates that the stone, which was also very large, had somehow been rolled away. (There had been a great earthquake and the guards trembled and became like dead men at the appearance of the messenger of The Lord from heaven, Matthew 28:2-4).

**II. They are alarmed at a messenger telling them Jesus has been raised, is going to Galilee and they must tell His disciples; being frightened, they go, perhaps realizing God marvelously raised their Savior.**

(*Mark 16:5-8; Psalm 118:21-24*)

A. They saw a man in a white robe sitting in the tomb and were alarmed; he told them Jesus had been raised and is going to Galilee, go tell His disciples and Peter. (*Mark 16:5-7*)

1. Having entered into the tomb, they saw a young man, sitting on the right side, (who) had been clothed (in a) white robe; and, they were made greatly alarmed. (*Verse 5*)

**See 'young man' in tomb:** The 'young man' is a spirit being, made visible to the women by God to give them a message from Him. Messenger is the English translation of the Greek 'ἄν-γέλ-ος'. He is non-material, or 'super-natural'. Let us all be open to spiritual realities above that which is material.

**Made greatly alarmed:** On encountering such a spiritual being in the empty tomb, the women were all shaken up, made to be greatly alarmed by God!

**The empty tomb produced fearful trembling and disorientation**

2. But, he is saying to them, 'Not you all must be being made greatly alarmed; Jesus you all are seeking, the Nazarene, the one (who) had been crucified; He has been raised up, not He is being here; Behold! the place where they laid Him'. (*Verse 6*)

**Do NOT be greatly alarmed:** This supernatural messenger from God immediately seeks to calm the women.

Then He tells them that he knows they are seeking Jesus who had been crucified. Although Jesus had talked about laying down His life for His friends (John 15:12-15), these women did not yet know this.

We now know that by His crucifixion Jesus paid the price for all the sins of all people.

**He has been raised:** But, now he gives them good news: Jesus has been raised up, a synonym for resurrection! He commands them to look where His body was laid. He exclaims Jesus is not there. Conclusion: Jesus is no longer dead!

3. 'But you all must be going away; you all must tell to His disciples, and Peter, that He is going ahead of you all into Galilee; there, Him you all will see, as He said to you all'. (*Verse 7*)

**Two commands, a statement and a promise:** First, they must be going away from the tomb; then, they must be telling His disciples AND Peter! Peter felt so horrible after denying three times that he knew Jesus that he broke down and wept (Mark 14:66-72)! They are told Jesus is going to Galilee, ninety miles to the north and a three day walk.

They will get there on Wednesday. Finally, they are promised they will see Him there, just as He said.

B. They flee, having astonishment and being frightened; they may be realizing The One rejected by men has been marvelously raised by Yahweh to be The Savior. (*Mark 16:8; Psalm 118:21-24*)

1. Having gone out, they fled from the tomb, for they were having themselves trembling and astonished displacement; and, to no one, nothing they said, because they were being frightened. (*Mark 16:8*)

**Trembling and beside themselves:** The two nouns for what they were experiencing are literally: quaking and standing outside (beside) oneself.

**Not talked:** They said nothing to no one because their disorientation made them very frightened.

#### ***The empty tomb produced fearful trembling and disorientation***

2. I will give thanks (to) Thee for Thou have answered me / then Thou became to me salvation. (*Psalm 118:21*)

**Thanksgiving:** The psalmist gives thanks to God for answering his prayer.

**Became my salvation:** And with God's answer, God became salvation to him. Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome that because they were baptized into (Jesus) Christ by faith they may walk (live) in newness of life. Jesus' resurrection after He died for our sins, guarantees that we may be forgiven by God through faith in His resurrection (Romans 6:5-10).

3. The stone they rejected, the builders / it has become 'Head of the corner'. (*Psalm 118:22*)

**Rejected:** The council of seventy Jewish elders, who were supposed to build up the faith of God's people, had conspired to reject Jesus as Messiah by Jesus' crucifixion.

**Chief cornerstone:** But because the empty tomb signified Jesus' resurrection, there is a new reality by which both Jews and people from every nation, may become one body of saved people reconciled to God – with the prophets and the apostles as the foundation and Jesus Himself as the Chief Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:19-20).

#### ***The rejected stone became our salvation***

4. From Yahweh it has come, this / it has become marvelous in our eyes. (*Psalm 118:23*)

**Marvelous:** This salvation has become marvelous (wonderful – a term used only of God) because of the fulfillment of salvation is IN Jesus sent by His Father in the power of The Holy Spirit.

**Sing around throne:** The word is used in the last book of the Bible to describe the sign of all who were being victorious over the beast singing a praise song about God's great and marvelous works; they ask who would not fear and worship before God (Revelation 15:1-4). They are experiencing the same out of body reaction to the salvation guaranteed by Jesus' resurrection as the three women did at the empty tomb on the first Resurrection Sunday.

#### ***The empty tomb produced fearful trembling and disorientation***

5. This (is) the day He has made, Yahweh / we will rejoice and we will be glad in it. (*Psalm 118:24*)

**Joy and gladness:** The trembling and disorientation initially experienced at the reverential fear over God's amazing power demonstrated in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, will eventually result in joy and gladness over this amazing truth. Let us all give thanks to The Covenant God for His wonderful plan, fully carried out by Jesus, to follow Him in fear and trembling, and rejoicing every day.

**Short ending:** Mark's Gospel ends with the women trembling and beside themselves in fear over the awesome miracle of Jesus being raised from the dead. It is the best ending for a Gospel written for Roman citizens. They were known for their strong and courageous soldiers. They were people of powerful action. Two points of Mark's account are designed to 'rock' the Roman world. First, the amazing power that could raise a crucified man back to life again to be the absolute King over all creation would impress Romans. Second, the initial and primary witnesses were three women! Women had no legal standing in Rome and could not testify in a court of law. But, three women were sent to eleven men!

**Conclusion:** At sunrise on the first day of the week, three women came to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body. While they wondered who would roll away the very great stone, they were seeing it had been rolled away. They are alarmed when they see a messenger just inside the tomb; but, he tells them not to be alarmed: Jesus who had been crucified has been raised and is not here now. They must go and tell His disciples to meet Him in Galilee. They fled the tomb trembling and astonished because they were being frightened: Is Jesus, though rejected by the Jewish council, now The Head of the corner, God's Savior, marvelously made so by God?!

#### ***The empty tomb produced fearful trembling and disorientation***