

# Open Bible Stories

## God Raises Jesus from the Dead

### Introduction

#### Key Idea

The story of God raising Jesus from the dead teaches us Jesus defeated death by coming back to life and promises resurrection life to all who believe in Jesus.

#### Creedal Verse

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” 1 Peter 1:3

#### Metanarrative Summary

The eternal God created all things in six days. He made a good and perfect world. He made humans in his image to fill the earth and rule over creation. But humans rebelled against God and ruined God’s creation. God set to restore his world through his promise. God made a covenant with Abraham. He promised to bless all nations through Abraham. God kept his promises across the generations. God provided Abraham with a promised child, Isaac. God gave Isaac a wife and she bore twins, Jacob and Esau. God blessed Jacob and his sons, and the blessing continued to the next generation. God rescued Joseph, one of Jacob’s sons, and used him to rescue his family. God caused his people, the Israelites, to multiply in the land of Egypt; eventually, they became slaves. But, God raised up a deliverer, Moses, to deliver his people from their slavery. God judged the Egyptians with harsh plagues; in the final judgment, he passed over his people who covered their doorposts with the blood of a sacrificed lamb. Then, God delivered the Israelites by bringing them out of Egypt and crossing the Red Sea on dry land. God made a covenant with the Israelites and made them his people. God tested Israel in a series of wilderness wanderings and eventually brought his people into the promised land of Canaan. God raised up deliverers to lead Israel and rescue them from their enemies. God formed Israel into a kingdom. He made a covenant with King David and promised to send a

king that would rule his people forever. Many of Israel's kings were evil and the kingdom of Israel divided into two kingdoms. God sent prophets to warn his people of God's judgment and call them to repent. When Israel did not repent, God sent his people into exile. After many years, he brought them back to the land. Throughout the Old Testament, God promised to send his Messiah to deliver his people from their sin. After many years, the prophet John was born. He would prepare people for the coming Messiah. At the perfect time, God sent his Son, Jesus, to be born of a virgin Mary. When John and Jesus grew up, John baptized Jesus as a sign that Jesus was God's beloved Son. Jesus endured all manner of temptation without ever sinning. When he was thirty years old, he launched a public ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing. He taught his disciples about the life of compassion, sacrifice, and forgiveness. He performed many miracles: he fed a crowd of five thousand, he walked on water, he healed the sick, and he cast out demons. He proclaimed to people the nature of real faith, God's kingdom, and the how fallen humans can be restored in relationship with God. Toward the end of his ministry, Jesus revealed his power and glory to his disciples and raised a dead man to life. Jesus was betrayed by one of his disciples and put on trial before a Roman governor. Jesus was sentenced to death and crucified on a cross. Three days later, Jesus rose again from the dead.

## **Open Bible Story: God Raises Jesus from the Dead**

41-01

[[image473.jpeg]]

After the soldiers crucified Jesus, the Jewish leaders said to Pilate, "That liar, Jesus, said he would rise from the dead after three days. Someone must guard the tomb to make sure that his disciples do not steal the body. If they do, they will say he has risen from the dead."

41-02

[[image474.jpeg]]

Pilate said, "Take some soldiers and guard the tomb as well as you can." So they placed a seal on the stone at the entrance of the tomb. They also put soldiers there to make sure no one could steal the body.

41-03

[[image475.jpeg]]

The day after Jesus died was a Sabbath day. No one could work on the Sabbath day, so no friends of Jesus went to his tomb. But on the day after the Sabbath, very early in the morning, several women got ready to go to Jesus' tomb. They wanted to put more spices on his body.

41-04

[[image476.jpeg]]

Before the women arrived, there was a great earthquake at the tomb. An angel came from heaven. He rolled away the stone that was covering the entrance to the tomb and sat on it. This angel was shining as brightly as lightning. The soldiers at the tomb saw him. They were so terrified that they fell to the ground like dead men.

41-05

[[image477.jpeg]]

When the women arrived at the tomb, the angel told them, “Do not be afraid. Jesus is not here. He has risen from the dead, just like he said he would! Look in the tomb and see.” The women looked into the tomb and saw where Jesus’ body had been laid. His body was not there!

41-06

[[image478.jpeg]]

Then the angel told the women, “Go and tell the disciples, ‘Jesus has risen from the dead and he will go to Galilee ahead of you.’”

41-07

[[image479.jpeg]]

The women were amazed and very joyful. They ran to tell the disciples the good news.

41-08

[[image480.jpeg]]

As the women were on their way to tell the disciples the good news, Jesus appeared to them. They bowed down at his feet. Then Jesus said, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my disciples to go to Galilee. They will see me there.”

*A Bible story from: Matthew 27:62-28:15; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18*

## **Biblical Interpretation: Observing the Details of the Story**

After reading the crafted biblical story, answer the following questions to familiarize yourself with the details of the story.

### **Observation Questions**

Answer the following observation questions to gain a basic understanding of the the story. Read the story as a community and answer these questions as a group.

#### **41-01**

What did Jesus say would happen three days after his death?  
He would rise from the dead.

Did the Jewish leaders believe that Jesus would rise again?  
No, they thought he was lying.

What instructions did the Jewish leaders give?  
The Jewish leaders told Pilate that someone must guard the tomb.

What were the Jewish leaders afraid that the disciples would do?  
They thought the disciples would steal the body and say that Jesus had risen from the dead.

#### **41-02**

What did the Jewish leaders do to secure Jesus' tomb?  
They put soldiers to guard the tomb and placed a seal on the stone at the entrance of the tomb.

#### **41-03**

What special day was the day after Jesus' crucifixion?  
The day after Jesus' crucifixion was the Sabbath day.

Why did no one visit Jesus on the day after his crucifixion?  
No one visited Jesus on the day after his crucifixion because this was the Sabbath day and Jews were not allowed to work on the Sabbath.

When did the women go to Jesus' tomb?  
They went there very early on the morning after the Sabbath day.

Why did the women go to Jesus' tomb?  
The women wanted to put more spices on Jesus' body.

#### **41-04**

What miraculous events happened at the tomb before the women arrived there?  
There was an earthquake and an angel appeared, rolled away the stone, and sat on it.

What did the angel look like?  
The angel was shining as brightly as lightning.

What did the soldiers do when they saw that angel?  
They were terrified and fell to the ground like dead men.

#### 41-05

What did the angel say to the women when they arrived at the tomb?

The angel told them not to be afraid, for Jesus had risen from the dead. The angel told them to look in the tomb and see.

What did the women see when they looked in the tomb?

The women looked in the tomb where Jesus' body was laid his body was not there.

#### 41-06

What did the angel tell the women to say to the disciples?

He told them to tell the disciples that Jesus has risen from the dead, and that he would go to Galilee ahead of them.

#### 41-07

How did the women respond to the angel's message?

The women were amazed and very joyful.

What did the women do?

The women ran to tell the disciples the good news that Jesus rose from the dead.

#### 41-08

Who appeared to the women as they were on their way to speak to the disciples?  
Jesus appeared to them.

What did the women do when they saw Jesus?

They bowed down at his feet.

What did Jesus say to them?

Jesus told them not to be afraid, to go tell the disciples to go Galilee, and to inform them that they would see Jesus there.

### Translation Questions

Use the following translation questions to understand specific details of the passage. Discuss how you might translate these specific elements of the story.

#### 41-01

**After the soldiers crucified Jesus, the Jewish leaders said to Pilate**  
The soldiers crucified Jesus. Then, the Jewish leaders spoke to Pilate to ask him to guard the tomb. How would you express **After the soldiers crucified Jesus, the Jewish leaders said to Pilate** to mean the Jewish leaders spoke to Pilate after he had had Jesus crucified?

**That liar Jesus, said,** The Jewish leaders called Jesus a liar. Jesus was telling the truth but the Jewish leaders did not believe him. They refused to believe that Jesus told the truth about being the Son of God. How would you express **That liar Jesus, said,** to mean that man, Jesus, lied and said?

**rise from the dead** Jesus predicted that he would come back to life again after he had died. His resurrection from the dead is a miracle. How would you express **rise from the dead** to mean come back to life or become alive again?

**If they do, they will say he has risen from the dead** The Jewish leaders were concerned that the disciples would steal Jesus' body from the tomb to make it seem like Jesus rose from the dead. How would you express **If they do, they will say he has risen from the dead** to mean the Jewish leaders thought that the disciples would only be able to say Jesus had risen from the dead if they were able to steal his body?

#### 41-02

**Take some soldiers and guard the tomb as well as you can** Pilate instructed them to instruct some soldiers to watch over the tomb. He told them that these soldiers should guard the tomb as effectively as they were able to in order to prevent anyone from stealing Jesus' body. How would you express **Take some soldiers and guard the tomb as well as you can** to mean order some soldiers to watch over the tomb and do their best to prevent anyone from stealing Jesus' body?

**they placed a seal on the stone** The religious leaders and the soldiers placed a mark on the stone that covered the entrance of the tomb. They put a soft material like clay or wax between the stone and the tomb and marked it with an official seal. If anyone moved the stone, the material would break and show that someone had entered the tomb. How would you express **they placed a seal on the stone** to mean a mark on the stone in front of the tomb to forbid people from moving the stone?

#### 41-03

**No one could work on the Sabbath day** The Sabbath day rules did not permit a Jew to walk very far or to do any other kind of work. How would you express **No one could work on the Sabbath day** to mean, according to Jewish law, Jews were not permitted to work on the Sabbath day, which included prohibiting Jews from walking a far distance?

**put more spices on his body** These spices refer to sweet-smelling herbs that were placed on a dead body to cover the bad smell. It was the custom of the Jews to wash the body and then wrap it with strong, pleasant smelling spices to prevent the dead body from smelling bad so quickly. This was also a sign of honor and devotion. How would you express **put more spices on his body**

to mean the women wanted to put sweet-smelling herbs or oils on Jesus body to keep the body from smelling bad?

#### 41-04

**Before the women arrived, there was a great earthquake at the tomb**

First there was the earthquake and appearance of the angel, and then the women arrived at the tomb. An earthquake causes the ground to shake violently. How would you express **Before the women arrived, there was a great earthquake at the tomb** to mean a strong earthquake caused the ground to forcefully shake prior to the women arriving at the tomb?

**was shining as brightly as lightning** The angel was giving off bright light like lightning. How would you express **was shining as brightly as lightning** to mean the angel gleamed (gave off light) with strong light like lightning?

**fell to the ground like dead men** The soldiers fell down and did not move. They looked just like dead men who do not move. They probably had fainted from fright. How would you express **fell to the ground like dead men** to mean the soldiers suddenly collapsed to the ground and did not move like dead people who are motionless?

#### 41-05

**When the women arrived at the tomb, the angel told them** These two events happened at the same time. The women arrived at the tomb and the angel spoke to them at the same moment. How would you express **When the women arrived at the tomb, the angel told them** to mean the angel spoke to the women at the time they arrived at the tomb?

**Do not be afraid** The angel instructed the women to not fear. An angel shining like lightning was a frightening sight, so that angel was trying to calm the women from being terrified. How would you express **Do not be afraid** as a command to stop being scared?

**He has risen from the dead** The angel told the women that Jesus had resurrected from the dead. How would you express **He has risen from the dead** to mean Jesus has come back to life?

**His body was not there!** The women did not find Jesus' body in the tomb. This was a great surprise. How would you express **His body was not there!** as a strong statement that emphasizes how surprised they were that the body of Jesus was no longer in the tomb?

#### 41-06

**Go and tell the disciples** The angel instructed the women to leave the tomb area and report to the disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead. How would

you express **Go and tell the disciples** as a command to depart from the tomb and inform the disciples that Jesus had come back to life?

**Jesus has risen from the dead** The angel instructed the women to tell the disciples that Jesus had come back to life. Jesus was among those who died and were no longer alive, but God's power caused Jesus to come to life again. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again. How would you express **Jesus has risen from the dead** to mean Jesus came back to life from among all those who have died?

**he will go to Galilee ahead of you** The angel said that Jesus would arrive in Galilee before the apostles and other disciples. Jesus would meet the apostles and disciples in Galilee when they arrived. How would you express **he will go to Galilee ahead of you** to mean Jesus will meet the apostles and other disciples in Galilee when they arrive there?

#### 41-07

**the good news** The women went to tell the disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead. This was very good news to report to the disciples and would bring great joy. How would you express **the good news** to mean the exciting message that Jesus was no longer dead but came back to life?

#### 41-08

**bowed down at his feet** The women fell down on the ground in front of Jesus. They did this symbolic action to honor Jesus as they would expect to do in the presence of a king. How would you express **bowed down at his feet** to mean the women lowered their body on the ground in front of Jesus as an act of honor and respect.

**will see me** At this point, the disciples knew that Jesus died. Jesus told the women that the disciples would see Jesus in Galilee. This would help the disciples believe that Jesus really did come back to life. How would you express **will see me** to mean the disciples would meet with Jesus in person and see that he had come back to life?

## Theological Dialogue: Discussing the Meaning of the Story

Take time to explore the meaning of this story together as a community. Use the following discussions as a way to grasp what truth the story teaches.



## Discourse Questions

Use the following discourse questions to understand the meaning of the story. Pay attention to how the story itself addresses each question or theme.

**What did the Jewish leaders and Pilate think about Jesus raising from the dead? (41-01, 41-02)** Jewish Leaders Asking Pilate: The Jewish leaders did not believe that Jesus would raise from the dead. They feared that Jesus' disciples would steal the body to make it seem like Jesus rose from the dead. They asked Pilate to help prevent this from happening. (41-01)

Soldiers, Stone, and Seal: Pilate ordered soldiers to guard the tomb. A large stone was rolled in front of the tomb. Pilate instructed his soldiers to place a seal on at the entrance of the tomb. He did these things to make sure no one would steal Jesus' body. (41-01, 41-02)

**What did the women experience when they arrived at the tomb? (41-03, 41-04, 41-05)** Anticipation: Several women arrived at the tomb on the day after the Sabbath day. They came to put more spices on Jesus' body. They came to honor Jesus. They had to wait a whole day before they could visit him again. (41-03)

God's Power: The ground shook violently at the tomb because of an earthquake. An angel came from heaven, rolled away the tomb, and sat on it. This angel was very bright like lightning. The soldiers saw the angel and fell to the ground like men who had died. All these events show the power of God and emphasized that God rose Jesus from the dead in his power. (41-04)

Message of Peace: The angel told the women to not be afraid. The soldiers were afraid and became like dead people. The women were not supposed to be afraid because Jesus came back from the dead. (41-05)

Empty Tomb: The women looked inside the tomb and saw that it was empty. They witnessed with their own eyes that Jesus was no longer in the tomb where they had buried him. (41-05)

**What did the angel and Jesus tell the women to do? (41-05, 41-06, 41-07, 41-08)** No Be Afraid: The angel and Jesus told the women to no be afraid. The women were amazed and experienced great joy. (41-05, 41-07, 41-08)

Announce the Good News: The angel instructed the women to report to the disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead. This was good news. It was a message of great rejoicing because Jesus came back to life. The women were so amazed and joyful that they ran to tell the disciples this news. The women were given the task of announcing the good news of Jesus' resurrection to others. (41-06, 41-07, 41-08)

Meet Jesus in Galilee: The angel told the women to tell the disciples and apostles to go to Galilee and Jesus would meet them there. When the women saw Jesus, Jesus also told them to tell the disciples to go to Galilee and they would see Jesus there. The promise that the disciples would see Jesus in Galilee would give them proof/evidence that Jesus really did rise from the dead. (41-08)

**How did various people and situations change in the story of Jesus' resurrection? (41-01, 41-02, 41-03, 41-04, 41-05, 41-06, 41-07, 41-08)**

Human Power to Divine Power: Pilate showed his power by putting soldiers at the tomb and a seal at the opening to keep people from stealing Jesus' body. God showed his power with an earthquake and an angel. (41-01, 41-02, 41-04)

Sadness to Joy: The women came to the tomb thinking they would put more spices on Jesus dead body. They left the tomb amazed and joyful that Jesus was alive. (41-03, 41-07)

Death to Life: The soldiers fell down as dead men. Jesus was dead but was now alive from the dead. (41-04, 41-05, 41-06)

Doubt to Faith: The Jewish leaders did not believe that Jesus would rise from the dead. Jesus instructed his disciples to meet him in Galilee to prove to them that he rose from the dead. (41-01, 41-08)

Fear to No Fear: The soldiers who were set to guard the tomb became terrified at the sight of the angel. The angel and Jesus told the women to not be afraid. (41-04, 41-05, 41-08).

## **Theological Questions**

Answer the following theology questions as a community. Discuss what truths this story teaches.

1. What confidence can we have in Jesus' resurrection from the dead? How does this story give confidence that Jesus really did raise from the dead?
2. How important in Jesus' resurrection? What transformation and change does Jesus' resurrection bring in the world and the lives of his people? How does this story show how Jesus' resurrection brings about change/transformation/reversal in people and world situations?
3. How does Jesus' resurrection move God's people to mission and evangelism? What are the various ways the women are told to be witnesses of Jesus' resurrection?

[[movement\_2\_drafting]]

## **Personal Reflection: Following the Teaching of the Story**

Take a moment to allow this story to evaluate your own life and to consider how God would have you respond. After this reflection, use the quality checking questions to check your translation draft among the translation team.

### **Journal Reflection**

Prayerfully think about the following personal reflection questions. Write/Record your answers and/or discuss them as a group.

1. How has your confidence in Jesus' resurrection grown as a result of this story?
2. In what ways has Jesus brought a transformation in your life?
3. Who are people that Jesus wants you to announce the good news of Jesus' resurrection?
4. How does Jesus' resurrection bring you comfort, joy, and amazement?

[[movement\_3\_checking]]

[[movement\_4]]

[[movement\_5]]

[[conclusion]]