

Dissecting the Resurrection

9 AM Bible Study, Apr – May 2024

Class Purpose Statement:

This class will examine and help us understand the Gospel accounts, the physical evidence, the spiritual significance, and the eternal promise of Jesus' resurrection!

Week 4: Why did Jesus remain on earth for 40 days?

1. Information

- a. **Clarification** – *how do we know that James referred to in 1 Cor 15:7 (and throughout Acts) was Jesus' brother and not one of the two disciples named James?*

Jesus appeared to 10 disciples (everyone but Thomas) in the upper room (Jn 20:19-23) then to all 11 disciples one week later. Then Paul says Jesus appeared to James in 1 Cor 15:7.

In Galatians 1:19 Paul tells us he met with “James, the Lord’s brother”, when he went to Jerusalem after his three years with Jesus. These special references to James stand in contrast to the ‘lumping’ together of all the disciples in the upper room, so we can readily believe that Jesus appeared to his little brother on the 1st day of his resurrection - before he appeared to the 10 (1 Cor 15:7)

- b. **Correction** – *did the high priest say they should not kill Jesus because if he lived, it would indicate that God was behind the movement?*

I confused two different points when I mentioned this last week.

Caiaphas, the high priest, prophesied that they should kill Jesus because “*it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.*” John 11:50

Later, after Jesus ascended into heaven, the Sanhedrin arrested Peter and John and discussed putting them to death. That’s when Gamaliel, not the high priest, told them not to, saying, “*Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. 39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.*” Acts 5:38-39

2. **Information/Discussion – Acts 1:3** – *After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.*

What things did he do/teach?

3. Understanding – why 40 days?

Discuss (& research) at your tables some other references to '40 days' or '40 days and nights'. Let's see if we can come to some conclusions about this timeframe.

4. Application – does the 40 day period have significance for us today?