

Law & Order, VI

A Young Man in White

April 8, 2016

Welcome to where we're learning to truly see by fixing our eyes ... *on the unseen*. Today, instead of *application*, we're focusing on *affirmation*, the *assurance* of our faith and the *very signature* of God! **After saying that prophecy will find itself *unemployed***, Paul writes:

Now these three remain: faith, hope and love. – 1 Corinthians 13:13a NIV

What's the difference between *faith* and *hope*? We often confuse the two, and miss-define faith as just *strong hope*. But, scripture presents them as radically dissimilar as the difference between *waiting* for a verdict and a *conviction*.



Now **faith** [*pistis: conviction*] is **being sure** [*hypostasis: the substance*] of what we **hope** [*elpizō: wait*] for and **certain** [*elegchos: the evidence; proof; that by which a thing is proved or tested*] of what we **do not see**. – Hebrews 11:1 NIV

This isn't about the *invisible*, which can't be tested or proved, but the *hidden* and *concealed*, which can be sought and found.



[Jesus said] "For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open. Therefore consider carefully how you listen [*perceive, or read His Word*]." – Luke 8:17-18 NIV

[Therefore] We **fix our eyes** [*skopeō: observe; contemplate; mark*] **not on what is seen**, but **on what is unseen**. – 2 Corinthians 4:18a NIV

Seeking it out, line upon line, here a little, there a little. (Is 28:10) **For the seeker, the revealed will always point to the concealed. The OT is the NT concealed; and, the NT is the OT revealed.**

My purpose is that **they** [*those who've not met Paul*] ... may have the **full riches of complete understanding**, in order that they may know **the mystery of God**, namely, **Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**. – Colossians 2:2-3 NIV

So, if we want to fix our eyes on the *unseen* ...

Let us **fix our eyes on Jesus** the *author* and *perfecter* of our faith ... – Hebrews 12:2a NIV

The affirming power and assurance of our faith is found in seeing the handiwork of God in His Word and this world. Dan Barker calls it the outrageous proof; I call it the signature of God. **Do you want to see the unseen?** Do you want the *proof* of the things hoped for? **That answer is found in our actions.**

An Easter Challenge For Christians
Posted on April 18, 2014 by Dan Barker
 By Dan Barker, Freedom From Religion Foundation



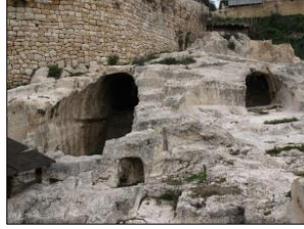
I HAVE AN EASTER challenge for Christians. My challenge is simple: tell me what happened on Easter. I am not asking for good. My straightforward request is merely that Christians tell me exactly what happened on the day that their most important doctrine was born.

Believers should eagerly take up this challenge, since without the resurrection, there is no Christianity.

Paul wrote, "and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. You, and we are false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." (1 Corinthians 15:14-15)

The conditions of the challenge are simple and reasonable. In each of the four Gospels, begin at Easter morning and read to the end of the book: Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, and John 20-21. Also read Acts 1:2-12 and Paul's tiny version of the story in 1 Corinthians 15:1-8. These 167 verses can be read in a few moments. Then, without consulting a single detail from these separate accounts, write a simple, chronological narrative of the events between the resurrection and the ascension: what happened first, second, and so on; who said what, where, and where these things happened.

Since the gospels do not always give precise times of day, it is permissible to make educated guesses. The narrative does not have to pretend to present a perfect picture—it only needs to give at least one plausible account of all of the facts. Additional explanation of the narrative may be set apart in parentheses. The important condition to the challenge, however, is that not one single biblical detail be omitted. Fair enough?



Who went first to the tomb, first, alone, in the dark? Mary Magdalene.

Who'd she run get? A beloved disciple and Peter. They left. She stayed. How many angels appeared? Two. Where were they? Inside, on either side. Then who'd she see? Jesus.

And, who'd she go get next? Jesus' mom.

... an **angel** of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that **they shook and became like dead men**. but when **they** [Mary Magdalene and Mother Mary] looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. The angel said to the women, **"Do not be afraid,** [That's what Gabriel said when He came to Mary 33 years earlier. I like to think of Gabriel as returning now to finish what they started] for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. **Then** ["after you've gone inside"] go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." As they entered the tomb, they saw a **young man** [as opposed to an angel] dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" – Matthew 28:2b-7; Mark 16:4-7 NIV

Who do you suppose this young man could be?

[Matthew reports elsewhere that] The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and **after** [meta: with; after] **Jesus' resurrection** they went into the holy city and **appeared to many people**. – Matthew 27:51b-53 NIV

So, at the very least, **this young man, and the two men who appear to the group of women, are three prime examples.** There's a short list of candidates. **Most of the tombs of the OT "big names" (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, etc.) weren't in Jerusalem ... with one notable exception: King David.** Ever noticed the odd emphasis Peter places on David's tomb, in his first public declaration, on the Day of Pentecost?

"Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth ... was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge ... But **God raised him from the dead ... David** said about him: [in Psalm 16:8-11] **'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand,** [Hey, when the young man points out where Jesus' had been, it would've been at the young man's right hand (since *as they entered*, he was *on their right*). David also says: "Look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me. ... I cry to you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my refuge ... in the land of the living.'" (Ps 142:4-5); "For he stands at the right hand of the needy one." (Ps 109:31);

And then, “*The Lord said to my Lord, sit at My right hand.*” (Ps 110:1); if Jesus ascends to sit at God’s right hand, there’s only one place and one time, after the resurrection, when He’d be at *David’s* right hand] **I will not be shaken.** [Unlike those guards who shook and became like dead men; meanwhile, the actual dead guy, guarding the tomb from the inside, doesn’t shake, and *becomes like the living!*] ... **you will not abandon me [David] to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One [Jesus’] see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.**’ Brothers, [Peter continues] I can tell you confidently that the patriarch **David died** and **was buried**, and **his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet** and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. **Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he [David] was not abandoned to the grave,** [to continue decaying] **nor did his [Jesus’] body see decay.** God has raised **this Jesus** to life, [as opposed to which other Jesus?] and **we are all [including David] witnesses of the fact.**” – Acts 2:29-32 NIV

Who could that young man be? **He’s first to witness the Son of David,** (Mat 1:1) **born in the Town of David,** (Luke 2:11) **from the royal Line of David,** (Mat 1) **who died in the City of David,** (2 Kings 14:20) **and rose as the Branch of David,** (Jer 23:5) **to restore the House of David.** (Amos 9:11) Hmm ... we are *going to figure this out!* **It was a given, with the Jews, that David would be a witness,** as Peter proclaims, because **Isaiah had prophesied it, 200 years after David’s death.**

See, **I have made him a witness** to the peoples, a **leader** [the first to witness] and **commander** of the peoples. [The young man issues commands for the disciples] Surely you will summon nations you know not ... [Because of] the **Holy One of Israel,** [who is “*clothed with splendor*” and, “*wraps himself in light as with a garment*” (Psalm 104:1-2)] for **he has endowed you with splendor.**” – Isaiah 55:3-5 NIV

Any idea what that young man in the tomb was wearing?

... they saw a **young man** [neaniskos: under 40] **dressed** [periballō: wrapped] in a **white** [leukos: light; brightness; brilliance] **robe** [stole: a loose outer garment extending to the feet; worn by kings, priests, and persons of rank; of the three men who appear at the tomb, he’s the only one to wear this; it’s the *same type* of robe (*meh`iyil*) worn by David when he danced before the Ark of the Covenant (a gold chest containing the stone tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments) when it returned to Jerusalem (1 Chron 15:27) when he was *almost 40* (c. 1000^{BC})] **sitting** [kathēmai: seated] on the **right side** [dexios: right hand; signifying a place of honor and authority]

“... I will **raise up to David a righteous Branch** ... – Jeremiah 23:5b NIV

“Listen, O high priest **Joshua** [Jesus, in Hebrew; this is the “other Jesus” I mentioned earlier] and **your associates seated before you,** who are men **symbolic of things to come:** [like the two angels and the young man seated in the tomb] I am going to bring **my servant,** the **Branch.** ... make a crown, and set it on the head of the high priest, **Joshua [Jesus]** ... the Lord Almighty says: **‘Here is the man whose name [Jesus] is the Branch,** and he will branch out from his place and **build** [banah: rebuild; establish] the **temple** [heykal: sanctuary] of the Lord. – Zechariah 3:8, 6:11-12 NIV

Isaiah tells us something incredible about what the Lord builds.

Cast your shadow **like night at high noon** [like at the crucifixion] ... For the extortioner has come to an end ... **A throne will even be established** ... and a judge will sit on it in faithfulness **in the tent** ['ohel: tabernacle; sacred tent] **of David** ... – Isaiah 16:3b-5 NAS



David's tent was replaced by Solomon's Temple, which was destroyed, and the Ark of God was lost, never to return. In Acts, (15:16) James, quotes a prophecy of Amos.

"In that day **I will restore David's fallen tent.** [cukkah: lit. temporary shelter] I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and **build it as it used to be,**" – Amos 9:11 NIV

With its most important piece: the atonement cover, the seat of God's mercy, over the testimony (Ex 30:6) with two angels overlooking where the blood is brought to cover the sins of God's people. **This was God's illustration with the tomb: the Tabernacle 2.0**

[David brought up] ... the **ark of God**, which is **called by the Name, the name of the Lord Almighty**, who is **enthroned between the cherubim** that are on the ark. – 2 Samuel 6:2 NIV

... he made **two cherubim** out of hammered gold **at the ends** of the [atonement] cover. He made **one cherub on one end and the second cherub on the other; at the two ends he made them** of one piece with the [atonement] cover. – Exodus 37:7-8 NIV

When Mary saw two angels in David's temporary shelter, they were seated where Jesus had been, one at the head, the other at the foot; and, His head cover was folded and laid aside. (John 20:7, 12) Because, **the old cover is obsolete. We have an eternal Covering!**

Just before Stephen was stoned for his faith, he said ...

"Our forefathers had the **tabernacle** [skēnē: tent made of green bough branches] **of the Testimony** ... It had been **made as God directed** ... It remained in the land **until the time of David** who enjoyed God's favor and asked that he might provide a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. But it was Solomon who built the house for him. However, **the Most High does not live in houses made by men.** As the prophet says: 'Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. **What kind of house will you build for me?** says the Lord. Or **where will my resting place be? Has not my hand made all these things?**'" – Acts 7:44-50 NIV

Seems odd God would go to all the trouble of restoring David's tent/tabernacle/temporary shelter, just to let someone else *host* the event. Psalm 30 is David's dedication to his restored house.

I will exalt you, O Lord, for **you lifted me out of the depths ... you brought me up from the grave;** you spared me from going down into the pit. ... weeping may remain for a night, but **rejoicing comes in the morning.** When I felt secure, I said, "**I will never be shaken.**" [Unlike the guards who became like dead men] ... **You turned my wailing into dancing; ["Someone get me my dancin' robe!"] you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy** ... – Psalm 30 NIV

These three remain: faith, hope, and love. **Don't settle for hope; fix your eyes on Jesus and go for a confident conviction. In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**