

ISRAEL  
PROGRAM 11 (#911171)  
WEEK 3 (#911335)  
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**SERIES: Israel**

**TITLE: Program 11 – An Empty Tomb, An Open Door –  
Significance Of The Resurrection**

**MONDAY**

**OPEN**

I'm standing in front of the garden tomb in Jerusalem, the place where many believe that Jesus Christ was buried after he was crucified, the place that they believe that He was raised from the dead. Week after week, in some way we are faced with the death of others. We are faced with tragedies, with the announcement that someone has cancer, that a loved one has little time to live. I want to ask you a question: Are you afraid to die? Then you need to understand what this place is all about. Because this garden tomb, is not about death. It's about resurrection. It's about life. It's about eternal life. It's about life after death.

**PART ONE**

At the beginning of the program I asked if you are afraid to die. And I believe, Precious One, that if you are, it's because you really don't understand the full significance of where I'm standing. I'm in Jerusalem. I'm

in the land of the Book. I'm in the land of Jesus Christ. I'm standing at the Garden Tomb, in front of an empty tomb, in front of an open door. And it's here that many believe that Jesus Christ was laid, buried, after He died. It's here, as I said, that they believe that He was raised from the dead. I asked you if you knew and if you understood the good news. The good news is another word, another way of saying the gospel. And what I want to do is I want to take you verse by verse through 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, because 1 Corinthians, chapter 15 can take away the sting of death. It can take away the fear of death. And it can show you that death is not the end of it all. It's simply the beginning, the beginning of a new life, the beginning of no more sorrow and no more tears and no more pain and most importantly, no more death. You see, because God loved us, because God sent His Son to this world, to die for you, to die for me, because of that good news, precious one, death is no longer an enemy to those who understand who Jesus Christ is and who accept Him as their Lord, as their God, as their Master, as their Savior. In 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, Paul is writing to a church in Greece, church in Corinth. And he says to them, "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, [and] in which also you stand..." And then listen to verse 2. "...by which also you are saved..." (1 Corinthians 15:1-2a) What does he mean when he says, "You're saved by this gospel."? Well this gospel is good news. And we're going to see the elements of that good news in just a minute. But what I want you to understand is, that once you understand this gospel, once you believe what God says, once you act on it, And you say, "Well, saved from what?" Well you're saved from death. You're saved from hell. You're saved from the lake of fire. You are saved so that you do not abide in eternal death but you abide in eternal life. And you say, "But I don't believe any of that." Well, just be patient with me for a minute, will you? Because it's no accident that God had you turn on this program, because God has good news for you. God has the gospel for you. He wants you to understand it because He really doesn't want you to perish. He really wants you to become His child. And he says, "...by which...you are saved, if you hold fast the word

which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.”(15:2) In other words, what he’s saying, and this is important for us to understand, that this is not a truth to embrace for awhile and then throw away. This is a truth to embrace for life. This is a truth that once you really grasp it, you’ll continue in it. And because you continue in it and you continue to believe that and you continue to live in the light of that, it’s a sign that you’ve truly been born again. It’s not about death, but it’s about life. And what is that life and how is it attained? He says, “[Because] I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures...”(15:3) If you and I were to walk through this garden and we were to go to a little group of steps, we would look out on a bus station, right here in Jerusalem, almost opposite the Damascus Gate, and there we would see Golgotha, the place of the skull, the place where Jesus, not on a hill far away, but the place where Jesus was crucified along the road. Jesus died for our sins. This is part of the good news. And that’s good news because the Bible says, that “...without [holiness], no one will see the Lord.”(Hebrews 12:14b) In other words, what God has to do is God has to take care of your sins and God has to take care of my sins. And He does that by having Jesus, who knew no sin, who was born without sin, being made sin for you on a cross, God taking all your sins and all my sins and all the sins of the whole world and placing them upon Jesus Christ. So this is the first part of the good news. You’re a sinner, but God can transform you. God can take away your sin and He does it through the death of Jesus Christ. And then it says, “...and that he was buried...”(1 Corinthians 15:4a) Now what does burial prove? Well when you look back here at this tomb, that’s where they put dead bodies. That’s not where living people go. So Jesus died. He was taken from the cross. He was brought to a rich man’s tomb that was not far away and there He was buried. He was wrapped up in a shroud and He was laid in a tomb. He died. He was buried. But that’s not the end of it all. And so many times we think that’s the end. No, it’s not the end. If that’s the end then there’s no hope for you and me because death ends it all. But it does not end it all because of what Jesus Christ did. And it says, “...and...He was raised

on the third day according to the Scriptures.”(15:4b) Do you realize that if you and I were go back to the Old Testament, over and over in picture form and shadow form, in prophetic form, we would see the death of Jesus Christ. But we would also see the prophesies about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. For instance, in Psalm 16, he says, “You will not leave My soul in [Hades]....”(Psalm 16:10, NKJV) [“You will not leave Me there in the grave in the nether world.”](16:10, PARAPHRASE) He was raised from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures. “But how do we really know that?” Well what do you need to know that something really happened? Hopefully, we don’t try someone and put them to death on circumstantial evidence. We want witnesses. Well listen to the eyewitnesses. It says, “...and [then] He appeared to Cephas, [that’s another name for Peter, and] then to the twelve. [And] after that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren...one time...” (1Corinthians 15:5-6a) Now listen, you don’t take five hundred people and cast a delusion over them. These are five hundred individuals in addition to twelve, in addition to one Peter. And Peter was the one who so believed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ that he was willing to die, that he was crucified upside down because he knew and he understood this glorious gospel. He understood the message of the empty tomb. Jesus was raised from the dead. He was raised from the dead, because God’s holiness, God’s righteousness was propitiated. They understood in that day, that you and I normally use. But propitiated means satisfied. In other words, Jesus paid your debt and my debt in full. And because our debt was paid in full, Beloved, then God’s holiness was satisfied and He could legitimately, in His holiness, in His justice, in His righteousness, raise Jesus Christ from the dead. He could empty the tomb. And so it goes on to say, “...He appeared to five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now....”(15:6b) In other words, when Paul penned this letter to the Corinthians, if that was wrong, witnesses that could rise up and say, “That was wrong.” Or there were five hundred witnesses that could stand up and say, “That was right,” because it says, “...most of them remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then He appeared to James, [and] then to all the

apostles; and last of all, to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.”(15:6c-8) He appeared to Paul, the one that wrote this. Now listen. When did He appear to Paul? He appeared to Paul after He had died, after He had been raised from the dead, after He ascended to the Father. When Paul was saved, he was saved on the road to Damascus, when Jesus spoke to him and said to him, “...‘Saul, Saul...,’” was his name before he got saved. “...‘why are you persecuting Me?’”(Acts 9:4b) The fact that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead was such good news, that it was preached and proclaimed everywhere. This was the message that all of the apostles would die for, except John. And John was not martyred, but John was dipped in a hot boiling oil and then exiled to the Isle of Patmos. Why? Because they firmly believed this awesome message, the awesome message that when it was delivered, brought a wind like this, a mighty rushing wind. It was the wind of the coming of the Holy Spirit, the fulfillment of the promise of the New Covenant that God had made in Ezekiel 36, [“that when we believe then God will give us, and God will seal us with His Spirit, until the day of our redemption, until the day when this mortal shall put on immortality, until the day when this corruptible shall put on incorruptibility.”](PARAPHRASE Ezekiel 36:26-38) This was the message on the Day of Pentecost. How important is this place? And how important is the significance of what happened here? And what does it mean to you? We’ll discuss it more when I come back.

## **PART TWO**

Listen to what Peter said. And understand how vital it is that you I believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Acts, chapter 2, verse 22. He says, “Men of Israel, listen to these words...,” And what is God saying? God is saying to you today, Precious One, “...listen, [listen] to these words...” Don’t miss them, because they’re words of life. “...Jesus the Nazarene... a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know....”(Acts 2:22) In

other words, how did they know that this was a man that was sent from God? How did they know that this was the Son of God? Well if you read John, chapter 3, you read about a rabbi, a rabbi that comes to Jesus at night. And he says, ["I know, I know that You have to be the Son of God. I know that You have to be sent from God because no man could do what You do unless God was with him."] (PARAPHRASE John 3:2) He came because he was hungry, the Law didn't satisfy. There had to be more than the Law because all the Law could do was show you your sin. But the Law could never make you righteous. They needed that blessed promise of the Holy Spirit. And so he says, "...this Man, [Jesus the Nazarene] delivered [up]...", Now listen carefully. "...by [a] predetermined plan..." (Acts 2:23a) In other words, when Jesus Christ came to this earth, it was by God's predetermined plan. God had a plan. And it says in Galatians, "[In] the fullness of time...God sent forth His Son, born of a ...." (Galatians 4:4) virgin, the fullness of time had come. So this Man, "...delivered [up to a cross] by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross..." (Acts 2:23b) He says, "...[And] God raised Him up again..." (Acts 2:23c-24a) That's the message of this empty tomb. God raised Him up again. And you're going to see it later. Because God raised Him up again, you and I can be raised again. You and I don't have to be afraid of death because death is just for us a step into eternity and it's the beginning of a brand new life and a brand new body. You don't have to be afraid to die when you receive Him as your Lord and Savior, when you believe this message that I'm sharing with you from the Word of God. So it says, "[And] God raised Him up again..." Now listen very carefully. "...putting an end to the agony of death..." (2:24b) Listen, there is an agony connected with death. And so it says, "...God raised Him...again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible..." Listen, "...it was impossible for [Jesus] to be held in [death's] power." (2:24) Why? Because He was without sin, because He became sin for us, because he paid for our sins in full, and God's holiness was satisfied and He raised Him from the dead. The tomb is empty! You can go in for yourself and see that it is empty. He says,

“...David [was always saying] of Him....”(2:25a) Now listen, he’s taking us back now, because Jesus died and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures. So Peter is showing you that this was prophesied by God. David, the king, when he was a psalmist, sat down and this is what he wrote under the inspiration of God. “...David says of Him, ‘I [was always beholding] the Lord...in my presence...He is at my right hand...that I [may] not be shaken. Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; moreover my flesh...will [abide] in hope.’”(2:25-26) You don’t have to be afraid to die, Beloved. “...[your] flesh...[can abide] in hope; because [Thou] will not abandon my soul to Hades....”(2:26b-27a) Now what I want you to understand is he’s saying, “...[Thou] will not abandon my soul to Hades....”(2:27a) He’s not saying “to hell”. There’s a difference between Hades and hell. Hades is the nether world. It’s where people went until the death of Jesus Christ. It’s where, now, those go that are refusing to believe this good message. It’s where they go. But that’s not the end. Because Hades is going to be delivered up and Hades is going to be cast into the lake of fire. And that’s another word for hell or gehenna. So now watch. As this psalm is written, it’s a prophetic psalm. And it’s speaking of Jesus. “...[Thou] will not abandon My soul to Hades, nor allow [Thy] Holy One[Jesus] to undergo decay.”(2:27) In other words, when they put Him in that tomb, His body, His flesh did not rot. He says, “[Thou has] made known to me the ways of life....”(2:28a) You see, if you and I understand the significance and the message of the place where I am, the death, the burial, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, this is the way of life. This is the way of eternal life. He says, “...[Thou] will make me full of gladness...,” Now watch. “...with [Thy] presence.”(2:28b) How would you like to know that the minute that you died, that the minute your heart stopped, that the minute you stop breathing, that you are absent from the body and present with the Lord? You can know that, Beloved. It is a surety. It is a fact. Did you hear that? It is a fact, because God has said it and God has ordained it. And it doesn’t matter what man says. It doesn’t matter whether man believes it or not. He says, “And so, because He was a prophet, [because David was speaking prophetically]

and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath [a covenant oath] to seat one of his descendants [upon the] throne, he looked ahead, [David looked ahead] and [he] spoke of the resurrection of the Christ....”(2:30-31a) He spoke of the resurrection. Another word for Christ is Messiah. Messiah. So he was speaking that someday the Christ would die. Someday, the Christ, the Promised One, the Anointed One, would be buried. But someday, the Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah would be raised from the dead. He says, “...he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of...Christ, that He, [Jesus] was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. This Jesus, God raised [from the dead], to which we [all] are...witnesses.”(2:31-32) Peter is delivering the good news. Peter is delivering the gospel. Listen to what he says. “This Jesus God raised up again, to [whom] we are all witnesses.”(2:32) There’s more than adequate evidence that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and you, Precious One, do not have to be afraid to die, because everything that is necessary to raise you right out of the grave, to give you eternal life, to give you the promise of someday having a brand new body, of someday seeing your loved ones who have believed in Jesus Christ, that message is for you today. It’s a message of hope. It’s a message of life. It’s a message, Precious One, that you must believe. Because if you do not believe it, if you do not receive Jesus Christ, then you will perish in your sins because you refuse to believe in Jesus Christ who is the resurrection and the life.