

Luke 24:1-12

The Eighth Day

1 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. **2** They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, **3** but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. **4** While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. **5** In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? **6** He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: **7** ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ ” **8** Then they remembered his words.

9 When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. **10** It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. **11** But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. **12** Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

It was the first day of a new week and Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Joanna had come to the grave to show their love for the One Who had been their lives for the past 3 years. Last week had started out so amazingly. They had heard people shout out what they knew to be true about this man from Galilee. “Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Psalm 118:26, Matthew 21:9). They knew that He was the One Who comes in the name of the Lord. His mother had known from early on because she had heard the angel say it and then had it confirmed by her cousin Elizabeth (Luke 1:26-45). She was so convinced that she sang about this truth:

“My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. (Luke 1:46-48)

These ladies were similarly convinced that this man was supposed to be the Messiah of God. Mary Magdalene had personally be cleansed from the evil that had been in control of her life (seven demons to be precise - [Luke 8:2](#)) and they had seen and experienced the healing of so many others. Where this man went evil was chased away and sickness was healed. His name means “Yahweh Saves” and wherever Jesus went He lived up to the meaning of His name.

Yet Friday when others were shouting at Him to save Himself and them ([Luke 23:36-39](#)) He did nothing. Like a lamb being led to slaughter He remained silent ([Acts 8:32](#)) while their hopes in Him suffered and died. Friday was the end of their hopes for Him to be the Messiah and on this first day of the week they had come to show what little respect they could to the man who meant so much to them. So on this first day of the new week they brought with them the spices they had prepared earlier so that Jesus may finally be properly buried.

In their faith the first day of the week had a long tradition of wonder. It was the day after the seventh day, a new start to the toil of life. The seventh day, however, is the Sabbath. It is the day of rest. The day where the Lord stopped His creation, saying by His actions that it was, and still is, enough, and telling all those who follow Him to do the same. For millennia the people of God had done just that, they had stopped on the seventh day. Even this past week in the midst of their great pain the women and all the other followers of Jesus had stopped and rested on the Seventh day. They stopped on the Seventh day to remember to trust and rely on Yahweh. Because of what happened on Friday they needed that reminder all the more. We sabbath, we can trust in God. So as fast as they could with what remained of Friday after the worst moment of their lives when Jesus said those strange words “[It is finished](#)” (John 19:30) had breathed His last they prepared the spices to be able to rest on the seventh day.

They rested to remember that one day there would eventually be an “8th” day. A new first day of the week. Because creation began with the 1st day of the week.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. [Genesis 1:1-5](#)

One that first 1st day God spoke and created light to bring about creation to world that was initially formless and void. “Let there be light!” The world wasn’t dark and cold anymore. It had light and light encourages life. The first 1st day was good. They hoped for an 8th day, a 1st day of the New Creation, when the light would finally completely chase away the darkness.

Oh how they had thought He would be the one to bring about the 8th day. They knew that there had been life in Him and His life always seemed to bring light to those around Him. They had been sure that the light in Him would chase the darkness that the world was in. Instead during His crucifixion all of the holy city had literally become dark. The light was gone. This wasn’t the new 1st day, the 8th day. He couldn’t have been the Messiah because He died. The light doesn’t die. The darkness does.

In our own time we joke and make emotional appeals concerning God doing something new and special on the 8th day. Paul Harvey, who many of you are too young to remember, famously said God looked down and thought “I need somebody willing to get up before dawn, milk cows, work all day in the fields, milk cows again, eat supper and then go to town and stay past midnight at a meeting of the school board.” So God made a farmer. According to the United States Marine Corps on the 8th day God created a Marine. Being raised in the South I often

heard that after God rested on the Sabbath God needed something very exciting so on the 8th day He created college football and saw that it was VERY, VERY Good. According to the bumper sticker on one of my neighbors vehicles on the 8th day God created a Jeep. All of these are fun but in Jewish tradition the 8th day had special significance.

The 8th day was often the sign of something new, it is a new 1st day. On the 8th day a baby boy is circumcised, brought into the community of God with the very sign of the covenant carved into his body, and given his Jewish name ([Leviticus 12:3](#)). On the 8th day the first priests, Aaron and his sons began their service of sacrificing on behalf of the people of God. ([Leviticus 9:1](#)) Jewish tradition teaches in the [Midrash](#) that it was on that 8th day that God finally made His dwelling with humanity in consecrating the Tabernacle as His Tent of Meeting with the Israelites ([Leviticus 9:24](#)). On the 8th day the Temple was consecrated and thus began the period where Israel had a stationary place of worship ([2 Chronicles 7:9](#)). In Jewish tradition some sects still see the day after the week long festival of the Passover, the 8th day, as a day dedicated to remembering that God will provide a [Messiah or Moshiach](#). The 8th day is the day of new beginnings because it holds the possibility of being a new 1st day. Miraculous things happen on the 8th day.

This significance has continued within Christian thought. The quote on the front of the bulletin is from Augustine of Hippo who saw special significance in the 8th day.

[Christ] suffered voluntarily, and so could choose His own time for suffering and for resurrection, He brought it about that His body rested from all its works on Sabbath in the tomb, and that His resurrection on the third day, which we call the Lord's day, the day after the Sabbath, and therefore the eighth, proved the circumcision of the eighth day to be also prophetic of Him¹.

¹ *Reply to Faustus the Manichean* 16.29

He wasn't the only great Christian thinker to see significance within the 8th day. John Calvin wrote the following:

"It is probable and consonant with reason, that the number seven designated the course of the present life. Therefore, the eighth day might seem to be fixed upon by the Lord, to prefigure the beginning of a new life."²

As you can see the 8th day has continued in both Jewish and Christian thought to point toward the New Creation.

But Mary Magdalene, Mary the Mother of James, and Joanna didn't realize this 1st day of the week was **the 8th Day**, the one that had been hoped for, the one that was the 1st day of the New Creation. They just thought it was another normal 1st day of the week after the Sabbath. Another ordinary day of pain and suffering that they had desperately tried to rest from on the Sabbath the previous day.

They didn't realize that this 1st day of the week, this 8th day, was the day that all the Sabbaths throughout their lives had pointed to again and again. Days 1 through 6 you worked and dealt with the events of normal life. They were used to this. Days 1 through 6 you dealt with the heartache and suffering that were a part of being occupied by Rome, having an oppressive power that controlled your life direct you in what you can do and not do. They understood this. During days 1 through 6 it could feel like the evil in the world was leading us back to a world that was formless and void. Devolving back to chaos. They lived with this. But the 7th day reminded them to trust because even in the midst of evil and pain God was still in control and one day an 8th day would occur and He would finally and fully defeat and remove evil from His creation.

² John Calvin, *Commentaries of the First Book of Moses called Genesis*, p. 196.

The 7th day called for us to trust that He would *reCreate* His creation and there would be a new 1st day ... an 8th day.

It can still feel like this. You go to work throughout the week and wonder where God is in the midst of all the hurt you see and experience. You struggle through school and know that the world hasn't been fully redeemed yet. We go through week after week of Days 1 through 6 just hoping to survive.³ We have our Sundays as a day of remembrance now but even though can feel rushed and full of everything but holiness. We long for

So on the 7th day after the worst 6th day of their lives they rested and desperately tried to trust. Like we often do. They sabbath. Like we need to do. They remembered that one day there would be an 8th day. Like we hope to do.

Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me. I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail, looking for my God. [Psalm 69:1-3](#)

Then on this new 1st day of the week they moved out to face their pain and the normal and extraordinary hurts of the week again. They gathered their spices and went to the body of the one they loved to face the first struggle of their week - How would they move the stone away from the burial cave. You see in the ancient near eastern Jewish burial practice usually involved a family cave with two small rooms (that is if one could afford it). The outer room was where the body was taken and covered in mounds of spices (sometimes up to 50 pounds) or with spices wrapped into the wrappings around the body. The bodies would be stay in this outroom for around a year and then loved ones would return, gathered and placed into an ossuary (a small box), which was then moved into the second/inner room with the bones of all the others who had been buried in that family cave. Large stones were placed in front of the caves to keep out

³ I know technically the 1st day is Sunday but I'm working with a theme here.

animals and intruders. So as they brought the spices with them to make sure that the One they thought was the messiah the women considered how they were going to move a stone large enough to keep such people and things out of the cave. It was a large obstacle, literally a gigantic barrier to their goal, but on this 1st day of the week they were surprised that the stone was rolled away and two figures that shone like lightning stood before them. For you see what these ladies, what the whole world, didn't know was that this was no ordinary 1st day of the week. This was the beginning of the 8th day, the 1st day of the new age.

The 1st day of creation God began by overcoming darkness with light, the 1st day of the new creation God overcame death with life.

Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He is risen! (Luke 24:5)

These are the words of the 8th day.

Now we live in this odd time of the beginning of the 8th day. The beginning of the end. Jesus has been raised, He has defeated death. While He has given us life we also still live in the midst of death. We have seen Him defeat evil many times but yet the finalization of that defeat hasn't happened yet. Look around us there are examples of God defeating evil and evil still functioning all around us. The theologians often call it the "Already/Not Yet" because there are parts of the 8th that we already experience and others parts that we are still waiting on. God dwells with us in our lives through the Holy Spirit in our midst and thus that part of the 8th has been fulfilled, but we for now we still see His presence only as "a reflection in a mirror" and not "face to face" as we one day will ([1 Corinthians 13:12](#)). Now we know that we have an Advocate & Comforter that is with us in the midst of our trials (John 15:26), but we have not reached the point where God is wiping away every tear and has completely chased away death (Revelation 21:4). We want to be able to say "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your

sting?” ([1 Corinthians 15:55](#)) but the perishable has not been “clothed with the imperishable” ([1 Corinthians 15:53](#)) yet and we still feel its sting, though it has been muted significantly. We have tasted the hope of the 8th day but we still live with the reality of the pains of the 1st six days.

So what do we do?

We remember.

The angels who gleamed like lightning told the women to remember.

“Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’” ([Luke 24:6b-7](#))

It makes sense that these messengers from God (angelos) would bring this message.

“Remember”. It is not only one of the most significant themes of the Old Testament :

Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

But it was one of the themes of the Sabbath. We are to “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy” ([Exodus 20:8](#)), and by doing so such trust in God will help us to remember how He has taken care of us in the past and enable us to trust more in Him. We rest and trust that we may remember that God is trustworthy and thereby not to trust in ourselves. The Sabbath is a day of memory.

The 8th day isn’t just the 1st day of the new creation but it is the eternal Sabbath. Which is why the writer of the letter to the Hebrews, only God knows who it may be, so often refer to the finalization of the kingdom as entering God’s rest ([Hebrews 3:11](#).and [4:1-11](#)). Though we are

just at the beginning of the 8th day, the new 1st day of the New Creation, we remember and by remembering we live out part of the New Creation now.

We look to our ebenezers, a stone or something else, that reminds us that “thus far has the Lord brought us” ([1 Samuel 7:12](#)) and we remember that while we may walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death ([Psalm 23:4](#)) right now we do not have to fear evil because on that 1st day when Mary Magdalen, Jesus’s mother, Joanna took spices to show their last respects to the One they thought was the Messiah the grave was empty. The One Who has brought us thus far is the One Who defeated death and He will not forget us. The 8th day has begun and we must remember that until it is finalized and we stand in the presence of the One Who was not to be found among the dead.

Others may think we are crazy, they may believe our words to be nonsense, that is until they see evidence of the “empty strip of linen” ([Luke 24:12](#)). Then they will wonder to themselves what has happened.