



© Standard Publishing

# JESUS: GOD'S POWER IN ACTION

## Jesus Dies and Lives Again

Bible School Lesson for April 20\*

By Robert M. Daniels

In November, a Washington, D.C., woman thought to have suffered a deadly heart attack was taken to the morgue by city medical personnel. Although she was placed in a morgue cooler, hours later medical personnel were still detecting her pulse! She was ultimately pronounced “officially” dead four hours after being found in her apartment by maintenance personnel!

When Jesus went to the cross, according to the eyewitness accounts in Scripture, He died! But more mind-boggling than the tragic story out of the nation’s capitol, is that Jesus’ death was temporary! Jesus had no pulse when taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb. The discovery of that empty tomb on the first day of the week is the pivotal event in all human history. Jesus is alive!

### Jesus and Pilate (Mark 15:1-15)

After an illegal trial at night, a deal was struck. The ruling religious elite of Israel agreed to bring Jesus before the Roman governor Pilate and charge Him, not with blasphemy, but treason. Rome could handle many things, including someone claiming to be a spiritual leader, but claiming to be a political or military king was not tolerated! Pilate found no fault in Jesus and washed his hands so he might be seen as guiltless in killing an innocent man (Matthew 27:24). He offered to release a revolutionary murderer, Barabbas. How ironic! Barabbas was known to have been a *taker* of human life, Jesus came to *give* life (John 10:10)!

### Jesus and the Soldiers (Mark 15:16-20)

Jesus was subjected to heinous and humiliating treatment. Roman soldiers, experts in torture, were taught to inflict just enough suffering to keep the accused from dying

prematurely, but to make the accused welcome death when it came. Yet, even the terror that Jesus endured pales in comparison to the public mocking, blood-inducing beating, and eventual crucifixion that Jesus would suffer.

### Jesus and the Cross (Mark 15:21-32)

Jesus was exhausted. Fully human, fully God, His body had been pushed to its limit. Jesus was even carrying the instrument of His own death and falling under its weight! Jesus was nailed to the cross, and the cross was raised and set into place between two thieves. In the Greek, *thief* translates as *revolutionary*. Was Jesus in the company of compatriots of the revolutionary murderer Barabbas, set free by Pilate so that Jesus might die? Jesus’ enemies hurled insults and mocking comments. They urged Him to come down from the cross if He was the Son of God. But as Jesus told Peter in Gethsemane, the angels could save Him if He only asked! (Matthew 26:53)

### Jesus and Death (Mark 15:33-40)

Crucifixion brought death by asphyxiation because of the inability to pull oneself up on the crossbeam to inhale another breath. The strain on the diaphragm would eventually take its toll. Often this could last for days, but in Jesus’ case, His suffering lasted only hours.

The sin of humanity was a burden no one had ever borne, and death came quickly for Jesus. Jesus breathed His last, and the temple curtain was torn, signifying that the new covenant had come!

### Jesus and the Tomb (Mark 15:41-47)

To protect against violating the Sabbath, Jesus’ body was temporarily and hastily laid in the tomb of a

### Home Daily Bible Readings

- April 14.....Mark 15:21-32
- April 15.....Mark 15:33-41
- April 16.....Mark 15:42-47
- April 17.....Mark 16:1-8
- April 18.....Luke 24:13-27
- April 19.....Luke 24:28-35
- April 20.....Luke 24:36-49

wealthy benefactor and disciple of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea. When the Sabbath was over, Jesus' body would be properly prepared for burial. A stone sealed the tomb and no doubt the followers of Jesus were at their lowest point, more disillusioned than ever! To make matters worse, we read in Matthew 27:62-66 that Pilate placed a Roman seal to ensure no one would tamper with the tomb.

### **Jesus Is Alive (Mark 16:1-8)**

The women who came to finish preparing the body of Jesus hit a snag when they raised the question among themselves, "Who among us is going to move the stone?" Instead, upon arrival they found the stone had already been rolled away! They encountered a man, an angel, who told the women three things: (1) "Do not fear," (2) "Jesus is alive," and finally (3) "Go tell." This bore a striking similarity to the message the angels delivered at Jesus' birth to the shepherds, another group of culturally distasteful people: (1) "Do not fear," (2) "Jesus is born," and (3)

"Go find Him" (Luke 2:8-18).

The message and the ministry of Jesus did not end in an agonizing and humiliating death. His resurrection from the dead is the single greatest event ever! Jesus is alive!

## **THE LESSON WRITER**

**Robert M. Daniels** is co-pastor of Castleton Christian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. He and his wife, Ruthie (McCarty), have three children: Josiah, Jonah, and Hannah. Together, they have served with churches in Calgary, Alberta, Canada; Naperville, Illinois; and Carol Stream, Illinois. Both earned B.A. degrees in Christian education from Lincoln (Illinois) Christian College. Rob also is serving on the executive committee of the 2003 North American Christian Convention.



**Lesson text:** Mark 15:1-16:8. **Printed text:** Mark 15:21-25, 33-37; 16:1-8. **Memory text:** Mark 16:6.

\*Lesson based on International Sunday School Lessons, ©2000 by the Lesson Committee.