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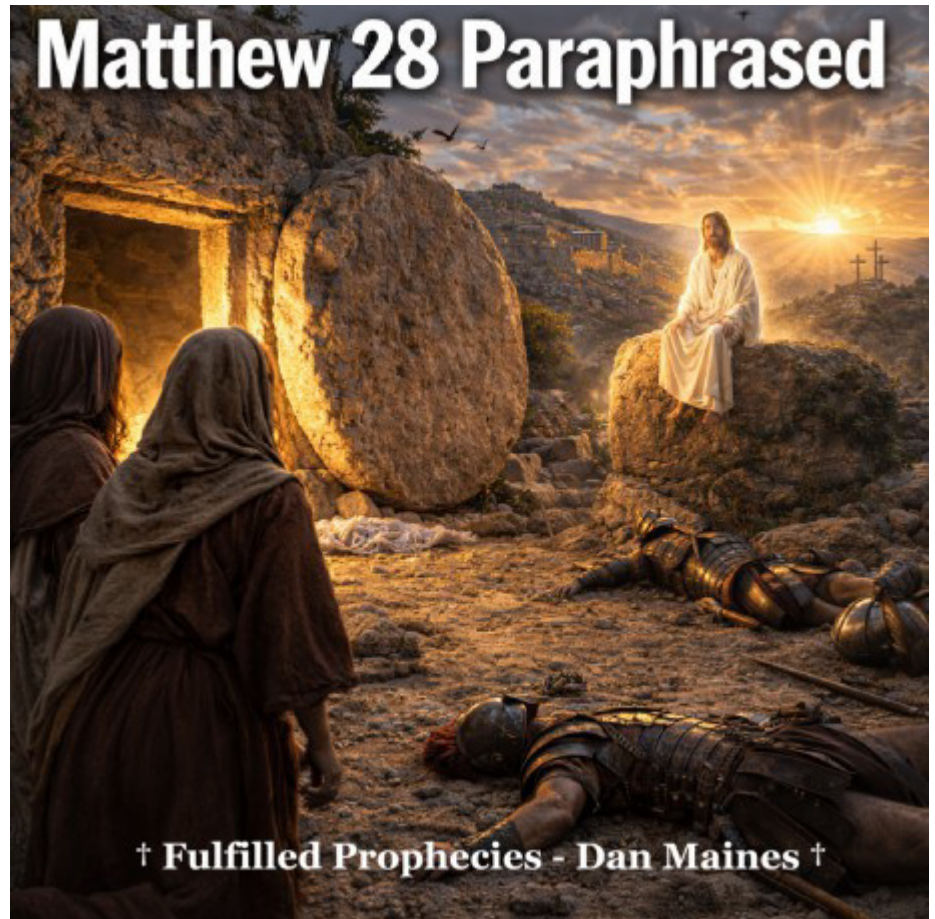
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Matthew 28 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Matthew 28 Paraphrased

Introduction

† Matthew ends his Gospel with the event that proves everything Jesus said was true, the resurrection. The empty tomb shows that death could not hold Him and that God's plan was being fulfilled exactly as foretold (Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:31).

† The resurrection also confirms Jesus as the reigning Messiah. His authority over heaven and earth is now openly declared,

and His disciples are sent to proclaim His rule to the nations (Daniel 7:13-14).

† From the fulfilled perspective, this moment marks the final transition into the kingdom age. The risen Christ now reigns and His gospel would soon spread throughout the world before the judgment of Jerusalem in that generation (Matthew 24:34; Colossians 1:23).

Scripture

Matthew 28:1

After the Sabbath had ended, as the first day of the week was beginning to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

† The women came expecting to mourn, not to witness the resurrection. Their presence shows the honesty of the Gospel accounts, since women were not normally used as legal witnesses in that culture (Luke 24:1-3).

† Their visit also confirms that Jesus truly died and was buried. The location of the tomb was known, which made the empty tomb impossible to deny later (John 19:41-42).

† The first day of the week becomes important because it marks the day Christ rose. Early believers later gathered on that same day to remember the risen Lord (Acts 20:7).

Matthew 28:2

Suddenly there was a great earthquake, because an angel from heaven came down, rolled the stone away from the entrance, and sat on it.

† The stone was not rolled away to let Jesus out, but to let the witnesses see that the tomb was already empty (John 20:6-8).

† Earthquakes in Scripture often accompany divine intervention and judgment, showing that God Himself was acting in this moment (Exodus 19:18).

† The angel sitting on the stone symbolizes complete victory over death and the grave.

Matthew 28:3

His appearance shone like lightning, and his clothing was bright and white like snow.

† The description reflects heavenly glory. Angels often appear with radiant brightness when delivering messages from God (Luke 24:4).

† This dramatic appearance emphasizes that the resurrection was a divine act, not something done secretly by men.

† The brightness also parallels the glory revealed at the transfiguration of Christ (Matthew 17:2).

Matthew 28:4

The guards trembled with fear at the sight of him and fell down like dead men.

† Roman soldiers were trained warriors, yet even they collapsed in fear when confronted with the power of heaven.

† Their reaction proves the reality of what happened. These guards later reported the event to the authorities (Matthew 28:11).

† The scene also fulfills the pattern seen throughout Scripture where humans fall in fear when confronted with heavenly beings (Daniel 10:7-9).

Matthew 28:5

But the angel said to the women, Do not be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.

† The angel reassures them because they came in faith and devotion.

† The phrase Jesus who was crucified reminds us that the same one who died on the cross is the one who has now been raised.

† The resurrection proves that the crucifixion was not defeat but victory (Acts 2:23-24).

Matthew 28:6

He is not here, because He has risen just as He said. Come and see the place where He was lying.

† The empty tomb confirms that Jesus kept His own prophecy about rising again (Matthew 16:21).

† The angel invites them to examine the evidence themselves.

† Christianity is built on a historical event, the resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:14).

Matthew 28:7

Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead. He is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see Him there. Now I have told you.

† The women become the first messengers of the resurrection.

† Jesus had already told His disciples that He would meet them again in Galilee (Matthew 26:32).

† This command begins the chain of eyewitness testimony that spread the gospel throughout the world.

Matthew 28:8

They left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to report it to His disciples.

† Their fear came from witnessing a powerful supernatural event.

† Their joy came from realizing that Jesus had truly risen.

† This mixture of fear and joy often appears when people encounter the power of God (Luke 24:41).

Matthew 28:9

And suddenly Jesus met them and greeted them. They came up, took hold of His feet, and worshiped Him.

† The women physically touched Jesus, proving the resurrection was not symbolic or imaginary.

† Their act of worship confirms that Jesus is worthy of divine honor (Hebrews 1:6).

† This moment shows that the risen Christ was truly alive in bodily form.

Matthew 28:10

Then Jesus said to them, Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.

† Jesus calls the disciples His brothers, showing restored fellowship even after their earlier failures.

† This also demonstrates the grace of Christ toward those who had abandoned Him during the crucifixion.

† The meeting in Galilee had been planned beforehand, confirming Jesus' foreknowledge.

Matthew 28:11

While they were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported everything that had happened to the chief priests.

† The guards themselves confirmed the resurrection events.

† This testimony created a serious problem for the religious leaders who had opposed Jesus.

† Instead of accepting the truth, the leaders began planning how to cover it up.

Matthew 28:12

After meeting with the elders and discussing the situation, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers.

† The leaders attempted to suppress the truth through bribery.

† This reaction shows that they knew the tomb was empty.

† Rather than deny the resurrection directly, they tried to create an alternate explanation.

Matthew 28:13

They instructed the soldiers to say that the disciples came at night and stole the body while they were asleep.

† This explanation was logically impossible. If the guards were asleep, they could not know who stole the body.

† Roman guards sleeping on duty would have faced severe punishment, making the story unlikely.

† The false explanation itself confirms that the tomb was empty.

Matthew 28:14

If the governor hears about this, we will persuade him and keep you out of trouble.

† The leaders promised to protect the soldiers from Roman discipline.

† This shows the depth of the conspiracy to hide the truth.

† Even hostile sources indirectly confirm the resurrection by admitting the tomb was empty.

Matthew 28:15

The soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. This story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

† Matthew records that this false rumor continued circulating for years.

† Early Christian writers later addressed this same accusation.

† The persistence of the rumor actually proves how widely the resurrection claim was known.

Matthew 28:16

But the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.

† The disciples obeyed the instructions given by Jesus through the women.

† Their gathering shows that the movement continued even after the crucifixion.

† This meeting prepared them for the mission ahead.

Matthew 28:17

When they saw Him, they worshiped Him, but some were doubtful.

† The honesty of the Gospel includes the fact that some struggled to believe at first.

† Even so, the overwhelming evidence convinced them.

† Their later willingness to suffer and die for this testimony shows the strength of their conviction.

Matthew 28:18

Jesus came to them and said that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to Him.

† This statement fulfills the prophecy of the Son of Man receiving dominion from God (Daniel 7:13-14).

† Christ's authority extends over all nations and powers.

† The resurrection publicly confirms His kingship.

Matthew 28:19

Therefore they were to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

† The gospel was no longer limited to Israel alone but was going to the entire world.

† This command began the global mission of the church.

† The message of Christ would soon spread throughout the Roman world (Colossians 1:23).

Matthew 28:20

They were to teach people to obey everything He had commanded, and He promised that He would be with them always, even to the end of the age.

† The phrase end of the age refers to the end of the old covenant age that Jesus had spoken about earlier (Matthew 24:3).

† Christ's presence with His followers continues through the power of the Spirit.

† His kingdom continues advancing throughout the world.

Historical References

† Ignatius of Antioch wrote that Jesus truly suffered and truly rose again, affirming the historical resurrection.

† Justin Martyr explained that the Jewish leaders spread the stolen body story, confirming Matthew's record.

† Eusebius recorded that the resurrection message quickly spread throughout the Roman Empire.

How It Applies To Us Today

† The resurrection reminds us that Christ truly reigns. Our faith is grounded in a real historical event, not a myth (1 Corinthians 15:17).

† Because Jesus has all authority, believers today live under His kingdom rule.

† The mission given to the disciples continues as the gospel is shared throughout the world.

Q & A Appendix

Q Did the resurrection really happen in history?

A Yes. The empty tomb, eyewitness testimony, and the rapid growth of the early church all confirm it (1 Corinthians 15:3-8).

Q Why did the leaders spread the stolen body story?

A Because they could not deny that the tomb was empty, so they attempted to create an alternate explanation (Matthew 28:11-15).

Q What does Jesus mean by the end of the age?

A It refers to the end of the old covenant age that culminated with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 (Matthew 24:3; Hebrews 8:13).

Q Did Jesus really rise physically from the dead?

A Yes. The Gospels show that the disciples touched Him and spoke with Him after the resurrection. The tomb was empty and His followers became eyewitnesses of the event (Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8).

Q Why were women the first witnesses to the resurrection?

A In the first century women were not considered primary legal witnesses. The fact that the Gospels record women discovering the empty tomb shows the writers were reporting what actually happened, not inventing a story (Luke 24:1-11).

Q Could the disciples have stolen the body?

A The tomb was guarded by Roman soldiers and sealed by the authorities. The guards themselves reported the supernatural event. The story about the body being stolen was created by the leaders to hide the truth (Matthew 27:65-66; Matthew 28:11-15).

Q Why is the resurrection so central to the gospel?

A The resurrection proves that Jesus conquered death and confirms everything He taught. Without it, the message of the gospel would collapse (1 Corinthians 15:14-17).

Q What does Jesus mean when He says all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him?

A This fulfills the prophecy of the Son of Man receiving dominion from God. The risen Christ now rules as King over all nations (Daniel 7:13-14; Ephesians 1:20-22).

Q What does the phrase end of the age mean in Matthew 28:20?

A Jesus was referring to the end of the old covenant age that He had spoken about earlier when the temple system would pass away. That judgment came within that generation with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 (Matthew 24:3, 34; Hebrews 8:13).

Q Why did Jesus send His disciples to all nations?

A The gospel was never meant to remain limited to Israel. Through Christ the promise to Abraham was now reaching the nations of the world (Genesis 22:18; Matthew 28:19).

Q How do we know the resurrection message spread quickly?

A The book of Acts and early Christian writings show that the message of the risen Christ spread rapidly throughout the Roman world within a few decades (Acts 17:6; Colossians 1:23).

Q Why did the Jewish leaders try to suppress the resurrection story?

A Because accepting the resurrection would mean acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah they had rejected. Instead they attempted to silence the truth through bribery and false reports (Matthew 28:12-15).

Q What does the resurrection mean for believers today?

A It assures us that Christ reigns, that death is defeated, and that His kingdom continues advancing in the world (1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Hebrews 12:28).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Matthew 24:3, 34; Matthew 26:32; Matthew 28:1-20; Luke 24:1-4; John 19:41-42; John 20:6-8; Acts 2:23-24; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 14, 17; Colossians 1:23; Daniel 7:13-14; Psalm 16:10

† Ignatius of Antioch, Letter to the Smyrnaeans; Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

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