



# **WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE**

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## **Mark 16**

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Mark 16.

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### Topics.

- The Sabbath is past and the women go to the tomb.
- Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene.
- Jesus appears to two men walking in the country.
- Jesus appears to the eleven apostles.
- The Great Commission.
- These signs will accompany those who believe.
- They will take up serpents.

**The previous chapter:** in the previous chapter the chief priests, scribes' elders, and the whole council delivered Jesus to Pilate. Pilate released Barabbas and Jesus was cruelly tortured, mocked and crucified. Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus beaten and bloody body off the cross and laid it in a tomb while Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James and Joses were watching.

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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### MARK 16:1-8

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#### The Sabbath is past and the Women go to the Tomb.

- **Mark 16:1-8:** When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. <sup>2</sup>And very early on the first day of the week (Sunday) when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. <sup>3</sup>And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" <sup>4</sup>And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back— it was very large. <sup>5</sup>And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup>And he said to them "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. <sup>7</sup>But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." <sup>8</sup>And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

The phrase "the Sabbath is past" refers to the Jewish Saturday Sabbath and the first day of the seven Day Feast of Unleavened Bread which was also a Sabbath Day, so this Sabbath was called a High Sabbath because it was a double Sabbath. Jesus body was in the tomb Friday evening and Friday morning, all day Saturday and now he has risen sometime early Sunday morning, thus he rose the third day as he told his apostles he would and was in the tomb three days and three nights fulfilling Scripture.

**NOTE:** the phrase three days and three nights is a Jewish idiom which means the third day. For further information see the title:

- Three Days and Three Nights in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

**Mary Magdalene:** was the woman Jesus delivered of devils, she was present at the crucifixion and at the sepulchre and recognised Jesus after the resurrection.

**Mary wife of Cleophas and mother of James and Joses:** Mary was the mother of James and Joses she assisted in preparing the body of Jesus for burial and was a witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Salome:** Salome probably lived in the vicinity of Bethsaida she was the wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John. Salome was one of the women who accompanied Jesus in Galilee to minister to him she was present at the crucifixion of Jesus.

**Sunday morning:** (the First Day of the Week) on Sunday morning after the sun had risen the women go to the tomb Mary Magdalene is the first to arrive (v9) the women enter the tomb and they see a man (angel) sitting in the tomb, the angel tells the women to go and tell Peter and the other disciples Jesus has risen.

**The faith of Jesus:** in verse seven the angel told the women that Jesus is going before them to Galilee as he said he would. In the book of Matthew and Mark Jesus, prior to the crucifixion said to the apostles, "after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." (Matt. 26:32) (Mark 14:28). This shows us the faith Jesus had in the Father and that he had absolutely no doubt that God would raise him up.

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## MARK 16:9-11

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### Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene.

- **Mark 16:9-11:** Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. <sup>10</sup>She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. <sup>11</sup>But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her they would not believe it.

Some of the earliest manuscripts do not include (Mark 16:9-20) nevertheless Matthew, Luke and John record most of the verses in their Gospels (Matt 28:5-10) (Luke 24:10) (John 20:1:18). Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary, the mother of James and Salome (the other women) went to the tomb, but Mary Magdalene is the first person that Jesus appears to. Imagine Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary (mother of James and Joses) and Salome enormous excitement as they race to tell the eleven apostles (v14) especially since they find them in deep sorrow, but their joy is quickly shattered because they do not believe the women (Luke 24:10-15 is a parallel passage).

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## MARK 16:12-13

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### Jesus Appears to Two Men Walking in the Country.

- **Mark 16:12-13:** After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. <sup>13</sup>And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them

Luke in his letter tells us that on Sunday (the first day of the week) and the third day since Jesus crucifixion (Luke 24:21) that these two men were travelling to a village named Emmaus about seven miles from Jerusalem (Luke 24:13). One of the two men was named Cleopas (Luke 24:18) the other man was named Simon (Luke 24:34). While they were talking Jesus came alongside them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him (Luke 24:15-16).

**Possible reasons they didn't recognise Jesus:** Scripture does not given any detail of the appearance of Jesus resurrected body except that it is immortal, eternal able to ascend between earth and heaven, it has flesh and bones and still had the scars of his crucifixion (v39-43) and we know the apostles not only recognised him, but also touched him and ate with him. Yet when Jesus appeared to Cleopas and Simon on their way to

Emmaus he appeared as a stranger to them since they did not recognise him. Perhaps they may not have previously seen him or known him very well or maybe Jesus never looked at them directly or they had only seen him from amongst a crowd so it would be very unlikely they would recognise him even though they had a certain expectation that he might rise they would certainly not be expecting him to appear alongside of them after his death on a dusty road, but this is only speculation, whatever the reason it appears that it was not Jesus will to reveal himself until the right time, (i.e., when they were having an evening meal and he was able to take the bread and break it).

Jesus stayed in the village of Emmaus and while having a meal with the two men he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them and their eyes were opened, and they recognized him and he vanished from their sight (Luke 24:28-31). It is interesting to notice it wasn't until the Lord prayed and broke the bread that their eyes were opened. I like to think that they saw the nail scars in his hands and when he prayed it was such an intimate prayer of exaltation to his Father and expressed such love and forgiveness for humanity that they were left with no doubt who they were sharing this meal with.

**NOTICE:** the term, breaking bread means having a meal together, today we would simply say, "Come over for lunch or dinner," but breaking bread generally carries the idea that the meal is a meal that is shared with people who have a common bond with each other and a common love.

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## MARK 16:14

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### Jesus Appears to the Eleven Apostles.

- **Mark 16:14:** Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.

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Prior to the crucifixion Jesus had told the eleven that he would be put to death and rise again on the third day so when he appears to the apostles himself he is amazed at their unbelief especially considering Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James and Salome and the two other disciples from Emmaus had told him that the Lord had appeared to them.

(John 20:19) (1 Cor. 15:5) also speak of these events.

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## MARK 16:15-20

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### The Great Commission.

- **Mark 16:15-20:** And he said to them (the eleven) (v14) "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. <sup>16</sup>Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. <sup>17</sup>And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; <sup>18</sup>they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover." <sup>19</sup>So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them (the eleven) was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. <sup>20</sup>And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.

When Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles after his resurrection and just prior to his ascending to the right-hand side of his Father he told the eleven to go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation. Then he tells them, if they believe they will be able to cast out demons, speak in new tongues, pick up serpents, drink any deadly poison without being hurt and heal the sick. The Lord then ascended to the right

hand side of God and the eleven went out and preached everywhere, with the Lord working with them and confirming the message by accompanying signs (i.e., casting out demons, speaking in new tongues, picking up serpents, drinking any deadly poison and not being hurt and healing the sick).

**The great commission in Matthew:** when Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles after his resurrection and prior to his ascending to the right hand side of his Father he told the eleven to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that he has commanded them and know and he will be with them unto the end of the age (Matt. 28:16-20).

**The great commission in Luke:** after Jesus resurrection he appeared to the eleven and they thought they saw a spirit so he shows them his hands and his feet and eats some food to show that he was not a spirit (a spirit does not have hands, feet or eat). Then because they had been witnesses of his death and resurrection he gives them the Great Commission telling them that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem, but before they go they are to wait in Jerusalem until he sends them the promise of the Father and cloths them with power from on high. After Jesus had given the eleven the great Commission, he blesses the eleven and was then carried up to heaven (Luke 24:33-53).

**The great commission in John:** after Jesus resurrection he came and stood among the eleven and showed them his hands and his side and told them as the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you, he then breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit if you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld" (John 20:19-23).

**Those with the eleven apostles:** Mark says, Jesus went to them, Matthew says Jesus spoke to the eleven and Luke says he spoke to the eleven and those who were with them while John says he spoke to the disciples, but he does not say who they are (Mark 16:15) (Matt. 28:16) (Luke 24:33) (John 20:19-23). Those, who were with the eleven when Jesus appeared after his resurrection were most likely Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary (mother of James and Joses) and Salome because it was these women who Jesus, after his resurrection told to go and tell the eleven that he has risen and will shortly appear to them, so it is hardly likely the women would leave the apostles knowing Jesus was going to appear to them (Luke 24:10) (Mark 16:1) (Matt. 28:5-10) (John 20:18).

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### SUMMARY OF THE GREAT COMMISSION IN MATTHEW, MARK LUKE AND JOHN

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The Great Commission is given to the eleven apostles immediately after Jesus resurrection and just prior to his ascension so it is directed to the eleven apostles. It is given to the apostles because they had been witnesses to the events concerning Christ, and his death and resurrection and was to be taken to all nations (Jews and Gentiles).

#### **The great commission has the following three parts:**

1. The message of the cross and of the Gospel: this gloriously proclaims that in Christ name there is forgiveness of sin, salvation and eternal life for whoever repents and believes, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.
2. The two baptisms: those who do believe are to be water baptized into the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ and the baptism of the Holy Spirit (meaning the passions of the mind and heart are not only infused by the Spirit of God, but now desire to live a life that honours God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ).

3. Making disciples: this means teaching those who are baptised how to live a life that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Even though the Great Commission primarily applies to the eleven apostles, by extension everyone who belongs to Christ is called to testify of the wonderful message of the Gospel of grace and of God's abounding love.

**These signs will accompany those who believe:** Jesus in the book of Mark says:

- These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover (Mark 16:17-18)

This was spoken to the eleven apostles. When Matthew writes of this same event, he says nothing regarding signs and miracles (Matt. 28:18-20) and Luke simply says, Jesus is sending the promise of his Father upon the apostles and will cloth them with power from on high (Luke 24:49). John in his record of the Great Commission says nothing regarding casting out demons and speaking in new tongues etc. The words:

- These signs will accompany those who believe.

Were, spoken to the eleven apostles after Jesus resurrection and prior to his ascension to the right-hand side of the Father so it is directed to the eleven apostles. The eleven apostles not only had extreme dis-belief when Jesus appeared to them after the resurrection and doubted the women and the two disciples from Emmaus who told them he had risen, but also doubted Jesus himself when he appeared to them. Added to this when Jesus showed them his hands and feet they still disbelieved. To counteract their extreme lack of faith and dis-belief Jesus opened their minds by reminding them that what they are seeing is the fulfilment of what he told them prior to the crucifixion (i.e., that he would suffer and be put to death and rise the third day). It is after these events that Jesus says to them whoever believes (contrasted to their extreme dis-belief) will do signs and wonders. Jesus words, "These signs will accompany those who believe," are traditionally interpreted in the following two ways:

1. These signs will accompany those who believe applies to whoever believes, it is assumed that even though Jesus is speaking to the eleven apostles, he is directing his words to whoever believes in the Gospel, is baptised and believes in the name of Jesus. The problem with this idea is that the only recorded miracles in the New Testament are those done by the eleven apostles and three of the disciples they laid hands on to transfer the gift too, there is no record of multitudes of believers casting out demons or healing the sick.
2. These signs will accompany those who believe only applies to the eleven apostles because the last verse of Mark (v20) says, "they (the eleven apostles v14) went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs (i.e. healing the sick and casting out demons).

**NOTE:** Jesus words, "Nothing will hurt you," (Luke 10:19) do not mean they will not be physically hurt, the apostles and the early church suffered great persecution because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing will hurt them in this context means nothing will hurt the eleven for eternal life and salvation. Jesus is saying to the apostles that it does not matter whether they go to the unclean (Gentiles) or Satan worshippers if they are proclaiming the Lord's name nothing will hurt or damage their salvation contrasted to the Old Testament law that taught if the people of Israel touched any unclean thing it would separate them from God. Jesus is overriding these laws by telling the apostles nothing will separate them from God or harm their salvation if they are proclaiming the name of Jesus.

**They will take up serpents:** to understand the words:

- They will pick up serpents with their hands (Mark 16:18) (take up serpents in the KJV).

It helps to understand the word "take" (airo) literally means to lift up, figuratively it means to take away sin (i.e. expiate sin) which means to put an end to sin, extinguish guilt, to make amends, atone and expiate one's sins by the act of repentance. There is no mention of the eleven apostles actually taking up literal serpents with their hands, but serpents, vipers and adders are mentioned figuratively in the Old Testament: -

- Jacob said, "Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a viper by the path" (Gen. 49:17).
- David wrote, "The wicked have venom like the venom of a serpent, like the deaf adder that stops its ear" (Psalm 58:4).
- Psalm ninety-one says, "Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent and trample them underfoot (Psalm 91:1, 13).

In this Psalm the lion, adder and the serpent are symbols of power, authority and the cunning of the wicked and the following verses show that the religious leaders of Israel the chief priest, scribes and elders are also referred to as vipers and serpents.

**When Jesus saw many of the religious rulers the Pharisees and Sadducees:**

- Coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers!" (Matt. 3:7).
- You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? (Matt. 12:34).
- You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? (Matthew 23:33).
- You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (Luke 3:7).

**Adder:** comes from the Hebrew word (sh<sup>e</sup>phiyphon) meaning a kind of serpent (as snapping) and figuratively to overwhelm, break or bruise (adder is not used in the New Testament).

**Viper:** comes from the Hebrew word ('eph`eh) and refers to an asp, viper or any other venomous serpent and in the New Testament comes from the Greek word (echidna) and can refer to an adder, a viper or any other poisonous snake (literal or figurative).

**Serpent:** comes from the Hebrew word (nachash) and means a snake or serpent and figuratively carries the idea of a divine enchanter, soothsayer. In the New Testament it comes from the Greek word (ophis) and means snake, figuratively it carries the idea of a type of sly cunning and artful malicious person. It is true that a viper fastened on Paul's hand when he was gathering firewood, and no harm came to him (Acts 28:3) clearly God protected Paul, but the primary meaning of Jesus words: -

- They will take up serpents with their hands (Mark 16:18).

Is not that we should be purposely and deliberately picking up literal serpents, vipers and snakes (even Paul didn't do this), but to the false and prideful religious leaders of Israel and hypocritical teachers and rulers. Jesus is telling the eleven if they are proclaiming his name no-one no matter how corrupt or powerful can influence their faith in any way that would harm their eternal salvation, in fact they will destroy the powerful hold and control these false religious leaders (serpents) have over the entire nation of Israel (i.e. trample them underfoot). This is exactly what the message the apostles proclaimed did, since the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ proclaims that the death and resurrection of Jesus entirely abolished the need for the

Levitical priesthood, the need for a human priest and the need for a temple and that no one needs to strictly adhere to ceremonial rites, holy days or keep religious customs and traditions to be united to God and saved to eternal life. Jesus through his death and resurrection has made the way open to God to all people and not just Israel. It matters not if a person is born a direct descendant of Abraham or born a Hebrew or Jew, whether they are noble or lowly, rich or poor, a global church leader, a church mouse or of the secular world all must come to God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and by the grace of God.

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**For further information see:**

- Serpent in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).
  - Three days and three Nights, in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).
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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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