

### It All Comes Together

The words “putting the pieces of the puzzle together” mean to understand something complicated or hidden. Most of us have had a hand at putting together actual puzzles. Jigsaw puzzles are some of the most common. They’ve been around a long time, since 1760. The earliest ones were maps placed on wood and then cut into puzzle pieces by a jigsaw (hence the name for the puzzles). The largest jigsaw puzzles come in at over 20,000 pieces, measuring approximately six feet by twelve feet. One of the smallest ever created measures about two inches by three inches, but has 99 pieces.

There’s something about putting a puzzle together and seeing the picture appear before your eyes. It can be so satisfying. The same is true of life – when struggling with some issue in life we find even more satisfaction when we finally see the “big picture,” when we finally understand what it is all about.

This week we will see people getting the big picture as they come to understand who Jesus is, that he is God in the flesh, and that he died for our sins and rose to resume his reign in Heaven. Have you seen the big picture yet? Let’s take a look at this week’s passages and see how it all comes together.

#### Monday – “He has risen, just as he said.”

1. Please read Matthew 28:1-10. Verse 2 says the angel rolled away the stone. Notice that the passage doesn’t go on to say that Jesus then came out. Where do you think he was?
2. How did the guards react in verse 2? What about the women in verse 8? How can you account for such different reactions to the morning’s events?
3. As the women ran to obey the angel’s instruction, they saw Jesus. What did they do next? In what ways did their worship involve their entire being? Since worship is reserved only for God, what does this tell you about Jesus?

**Making it Personal:** Are you ready to hold tight to Jesus and worship him?

#### Tuesday – From Mundane to Sublime, In a flash!

1. Does Mark 16:1-8 differ from Matthew 28? In what ways?

**Text Insight** - Keep in mind the words of E.P. Sanders: “A calculated deception should have produced greater unanimity.” Keep in mind that Mark is not giving a complete history, but a synopsis of events that may not include all facts known to him.

2. The women started the day with some very practical concerns: Let’s get an early start; We’ll need to take the embalming spices; Who can we get to move the big rock so we can enter the tomb? What did the angel say that swept away those concerns?

**Making it Personal:** Have you ever made plans only to find that God had other ideas for you? What plans did God have for the women that morning? Are you ready to follow God’s plans no matter how much effort you’ve put into your own agenda?

#### Wednesday – God’s Plan Revealed

1. In Luke 24:1-10, the angelic announcement gives more insight to the women than merely that Jesus is alive. What did the angel explain to them in verse 7?
2. How did most of the disciples react? What about Peter?
3. The women took the angel’s words to heart, the disciples found the news unbelievable, and Peter wondered what it all meant. How do you think you would have reacted?

#### Thursday – Racing and Clutching

1. John 20:1-19 brings a lot of detail into the picture, perhaps because it was written by someone who participated in the events at the tomb. John, the author, is the one racing there with Peter. Why do you think John hesitated at the tomb entrance while Peter rushed in?
2. Verses 10 through 18 depict a very tender and emotional moment between Mary Magdalene and Jesus. Verse 17 shows the depth of Mary’s feelings. What does that verse imply she did? Why would she do that?
3. We know from the other passages we read this week that the disciples were confused, disbelieving the women. Verse 19 says they even got scared. Look at John 20:19-28. How did Jesus handle these issues?

#### Friday – A Shadow of Things to Come

1. Please read Genesis 22:1-19. This passage is recognized as an Old Testament model of Jesus’ own actual sacrifice. What do you see in this passage that reminds you of Jesus’ death on the cross? (Look closely at verses 2, 6, 8 and 18.)

**Text insight:** This chapter doesn’t mention Isaac’s mother, Sarah. Perhaps she did not know the purpose of Abraham’s trip. But she quite possibly could have found out afterward. (Abraham: “Say, Isaac? Let’s just keep this between ourselves. No need to trouble your mother.... What do you mean you already told her? So that’s why she wants to talk to me....”)

2. Having looked at the reactions of various people to Jesus’ death and resurrection, what do you think Sarah felt? How does this help you understand the sacrifice our Heavenly Father made in sending his Son Jesus to the cross?

**For the Weekend:** Spend time in prayer, asking God the Father to lead you in your response to Jesus’ sacrifice and resurrection. Whether this is your first time responding to God’s grace or it is part of a long-standing relationship with God, commit yourself to him daily in submission and thanks.