

Dear Gayle,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked why Joseph was not at Jesus' crucifixion and wondered if he had already died. You also wanted to know if Jesus appeared to his mother after his resurrection or did others tell her of the event.

Why was Joseph not at Jesus' crucifixion? The last biblical reference to Joseph, the adoptive father of Jesus, is found in Luke 2:41-52. In the account we learn that Jesus was twelve years old when Joseph and his family went to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. Although there is no mention of Joseph's death in the Bible, it is supposed that he died sometime after this incident, but before Jesus reached the age of thirty, and was baptized at Jordan. Joseph is never referred to during Jesus' three and a half year ministry, although Mary and Jesus' brothers are mentioned in the gospels. Therefore, it is safe to assume that Joseph died prior to Jesus' crucifixion.

Did Jesus appear to his mother Mary right after his resurrection or did others tell her that Jesus arose? We cannot give you a 100% definitive answer to this question since Bible scholars have differing views regarding who the "other Mary" (Matthew 28:1) was at the tomb with Mary Magdalene. Some say that the "other Mary" was Jesus' mother. However, when we look back at the events of the crucifixion we are told in Matthew 27:55-56 that many women were watching from a distance and among them were Mary, the mother of James and Joseph. Even though Jesus had brothers who were named James and Joseph, the Gospel of Mark 15:40 clarifies that this Mary was the mother of James the Less or the Younger, who was one of Jesus' Apostles. We learn further that this James was the son of Alphaeus (Matthew 10:3, Mark 3:18). Matthew 27:61 refers to back to the same Mary of verse 56, cited above. "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting opposite the tomb." Therefore, we conclude that the "other Mary" who witnessed Jesus' resurrection was not our Lord's mother, but the mother of James the Younger, an Apostle of Jesus.

Did Jesus appear to his mother just after his resurrection? Perhaps he did, but there are no conclusive scriptures affirming his appearance to her in particular. Most likely others told her about our Lord's resurrection.

We hope we have answered your questions. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio

Let us go up to the mountain of the LORD... and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths...
Micah 4:2 (KJV)