

# Luke 24:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

## Analysis

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**When they found not his body** (μὴ εὐροῦσαι τὸ σῶμα, mē heuroûsai to sōma)—The absence of Christ's sōma (body) initiates the resurrection narrative. This wasn't grave robbery; the burial clothes remained (John 20:6-7), and Roman guards secured the tomb (Matthew 27:66). The missing body posed an inexplicable puzzle until angelic interpretation provided the solution.

**A vision of angels, which said that he was alive** (ὀπτασίαν ἀγγέλων... λέγουσιν αὐτὸν ζῆν, optasian angelōn... legousin auton zēn)—The term optasia (vision/appearance) describes supernatural revelation, not hallucination. The angels' proclamation uses the present infinitive zēn (to be living), emphasizing ongoing life. Yet notice the disciples' secondhand reporting: 'they came, saying'—they hadn't personally encountered the risen Christ yet, creating incomplete conviction.

## Historical Context

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Jewish angelology held that angels served as divine messengers, particularly at critical redemptive moments (compare Gabriel's announcements in Luke 1). The empty tomb alone didn't prove resurrection—it required angelic interpretation and later personal encounters with Christ. Ancient critics claimed body theft (Matthew 28:13); the gospel accounts refute this by emphasizing the grave clothes and multiple witnesses.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. Why wasn't the empty tomb sufficient evidence for resurrection faith?
2. How do the angels' words 'he is alive' challenge modern attempts to spiritualize the resurrection as merely symbolic?
3. What role does testimony play in building faith when we haven't personally seen Christ?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ μὴ εὐροῦσαι τὸ σῶμα αὐτὸν ἦλθον λέγουσιν  
**And not when they found** <sup>G3588</sup> **body** **his** **they came** **said**  
<sup>G2532</sup> <sup>G3361</sup> <sup>G2147</sup> <sup>G4983</sup> <sup>G846</sup> <sup>G2064</sup> <sup>G3004</sup>

καὶ ὄπτασίαν ἀγγέλων ἐωρακέναι οἱ λέγουσιν αὐτὸν  
**And a vision of angels** **seen** **which** **said** **his**  
<sup>G2532</sup> <sup>G3701</sup> <sup>G32</sup> <sup>G3708</sup> <sup>G3739</sup> <sup>G3004</sup> <sup>G846</sup>

ζῆν  
**was alive**  
<sup>G2198</sup>