

EASTER
THE PLACE OF THE SEPULCHER
MATTHEW 27:55-66; 28:1-6

Introduction

Last week we looked at **the sufferings of our Lord Jesus from the Garden of Gethsemane all the way to His being crucified** on *Golgotha (a/k/a Calvary, meaning “The Place Of The Skull”)*

Without that Cross of Christ, we would have **NO HOPE, NO HELP, NO HEAVEN, AND NO WAY TO MISS HELL** because there would have been **NO PAYMENT made for our sin!**

But praise the LORD, Calvary wasn't the end! Amen! **For without the resurrection of Christ, there would be no need to preach on the cross!** Because a Saviour that is in a grave is not much of a Saviour!

There is no way that we could over-emphasize the importance of the Cross. It was a necessity! But so was the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Crucifixion was a common practice for Capital Punishment during Bible days.

Many people had previously died there on that place called **“The Place Of The Skull.”** To the vast majority of those who passed by that day, Jesus death was just another death! They didn't know, but Jesus death was different!

What happened three days after the crucifixion of Christ is what set apart His death from all the other deaths that had occurred on this hill called Golgotha. And also from all other deaths in history period!

There was no other person that was crucified that ever got up on the third day or any other day for that matter!

To the disciples, the crucifixion appeared to be the saddest day on the earth! That's because **they didn't understand what Jesus had told them about His death, His burial, and His resurrection! They didn't get it!**

But when Jesus showed himself alive three days later, that had to be the gladdest day ever for them!

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The Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Saviour is one of the great centerpieces of Christianity! Christ is not a DEAD VICTIM but a LIVING VICTOR!

In Christ's Birth God did the EXTREME ... He was born of a virgin!
In Christ's Death God did the SUPREME...God raised Him from the dead!

Let's look this morning at **THE PLACE OF THE SEPULCHER:**

I. CHRIST'S SEPULCHER WAS A PLACE THAT WAS BORROWED! (Matthew 27:57-60)

A. We See The Boldness Of Joseph of Arimathaea!
John 19:38 indicates that **Joseph of Arimathaea** was **“a disciple, but secretly for fear of the Jews.”**

(Now we know that **Nicodemous** was another secret disciple who came to Jesus by night in *John 3*, and we see in *John 19:39* that he came to help **Joseph** by bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes and he helped **Joseph** to prepare the body of Jesus for burial.)

Mark 15:43 calls **Joseph “an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God” which indicates that he was one of the seventy council members (sometimes referred to as the Sanhedrin) which was made up of the Pharisees, but was not like those on the council who had issues with Jesus who both desired and conspired to see Jesus dead.**

Luke 23:50-51 calls him **“...a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them...”**

Though previously he may have been timid and shy about openly being Jesus' disciple out of fear, we notice that something changed after Christ's crucifixion.

Mark 15:43 indicates that he **“went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.”**

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Luke 23:52 also says that he “...*went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.*”

It is believed that Joseph wanted to ensure that Jesus’ body was buried in accordance with Jewish law.

Deuteronomy 21:22-23– “*And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: 23 His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.*”

We See The Boldness Of Joseph!

B. We See The Borrowed Tomb Of Joseph!

We call it the **borrowed tomb** because **it was only occupied for three days!**

Not only was Joseph willing to take a stand for Christ, but he was also **willing to give to his newly hewn tomb for Christ’s burial!**

This to my knowledge, is the only time, as well as the last time that this Joseph is mentioned in the Bible.

The Tomb that he had prepared for himself and his family was in a garden according to **John 19:41**.

There was never a body that had decomposed in that tomb before Jesus (and by the way, Jesus did not decompose in it either!)

Psalm 16:10– “*For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*”

This tomb had a great stone that he rolled over the doorway to seal it shut.

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Joseph had designed it and made it for his own purposes, but he willingly gave it up for Jesus to keep Him from being buried in the fashion that the true criminals were buried!

**II. CHRIST’S SEPULCHER WAS A PLACE THAT WAS BORROWED!
CHRIST’S SEPULCHER WAS A PLACE THAT WAS BARREN!**

A. It Was Barren Or Empty Before Jesus Was Buried In It!
Scripture says it was a ***newly hewn tomb wherein never man before was laid!***

B. It Was Barren Or Empty After Jesus Arose From It!
Matthew 27:55-56 says that women which came with Jesus from Galilee. **Luke 23:55** and **Mark 15:47** says that they followed Joseph and beheld the sepulcher and how Christ’s body was laid in the tomb.

Luke 23:56 says that they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.

Then came Sunday morning when the women returned just as the sun began to rise. (**John 20:1** says that it was “***yet dark***”) They came with their spices and ointments for the body of our Lord.

(Read Matthew 28:1-6)

Jesus was not there because He had arisen from the dead!

The ladies ran to tell Peter and the other disciples what they had found. **(Read John 20:2-10)**

John outran Peter and looked inside the tomb, but Peter went in first and found the grave clothes and the napkin folded together by itself, but there was **NO BODY** in the tomb!

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III. THE SEPULCHER WAS A PLACE OF BLESSEDNESS!

It was a place that **first caused weeping because of the confusion surrounding what had happened!**

But when Jesus showed Himself alive again it was a cause of rejoicing!

Paul understood how important the Resurrection of Christ is to the Christian faith. (1 Corinthians 15:12-23)

A. Without The Resurrection, Preaching And Believing The Gospel Is A Work Of Vanity! (Vs 12-15)

All the preaching by all preachers of the Gospel, including myself, would be nothing but empty lies and would offer no hope!

All the witnesses who have testified that God raised Jesus up would be nothing but liars too if Jesus is still dead!

B. Without The Resurrection, Our Faith In Christ Would Be Vain And We Would Still Be Dead In Our Trespasses And Sins! (Vs 16-18)

The word *vain* here means it would be **empty and meaningless**. It would do no good! It would offer no hope!

Romans 10:9 – “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

Romans 5:10 – “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

That life that we are saved by is not speaking about the years that Jesus walked upon this earth but rather the resurrected life after His death!

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C. Without The Resurrection, Our Hope Perishes! (Vs 18-19)

Were it not for the resurrection of Christ, when we go down to the funeral home and have a service for a loved one that has died as a Believer in Christ, we could not say I'll see you again!

Rather it would be goodbye forever to our loved ones!

Because, if the resurrection is a hoax, we will never meet them again!

D. But Christ Did Arise From The Dead And Because He Lives We DO HAVE A BLESSED HOPE! (Vs 20-23)

1. There Will Be A Transformation Of Our Bodies! (Vs 42-48)

At salvation we were transformed on the inside, and when Christ returns we will be transformed on the outside as well!

2. There Will Be The Thrill Of Seeing Our Saviour!

1 John 3:2 – “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

3. Death Will Be Swallowed Up In Victory! (Vs. 54-57)

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18–“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

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Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Conclusion

We celebrate Christ our living Saviour today! Bu not just on Easter Sunday, but each and every time that we meet!

"He lives! He lives! Christ Jesus lives today!"
Does He live within your heart?