

59. Jesus Was Recognized as the Son of God

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand the fact that Jesus had to experience separation from the Father during the time our sins were placed on Him. In our topic today, we are going to see that the death of Jesus had a great impact on the centurion who was guarding the cross.

We saw, in the last topic, that Jesus willingly gave up His spirit once He had paid the penalty for our sins. We also see that something else happened immediately. Mark 15:38-41 says, “Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, ‘Truly this Man was the Son of God!’ There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, who also followed Him and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.”

Jesus had told His disciples, as He introduced the Lord’s Supper during the Passover meal, in Mark 14:23-24, “‘This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.’” Once Jesus had paid the penalty for our sins, He had fulfilled the Old Testament law, and the Old Covenant was immediately replaced by the New Covenant that Jesus had promised the previous night. Christ came to do the will of the Father. Hebrews 10:10-13 says, “By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.” The blood of the Old Covenant sacrifices could never take away sin. In contrast, Jesus offered His blood once and His sacrifice for sins is forever. That is the blood of the New Covenant.

Once the blood of the New Covenant was paid, there was no more need for any sacrifices for sin. Hebrews 8:13 says, “In that He says, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.” That is why Mark 15:38 says, “Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.” Once each year, the High Priest had gone beyond the veil of the temple to offer blood as a covering for sins. Hebrew 9:7-8 says, “But into the second part the high priest *went* alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and *for* the people’s sins *committed* in ignorance; the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.” Then, Hebrews 9:12 adds, “Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.” There was no more need for the veil to separate man from God. We can now come directly to the Father through Christ. That is why 1 Timothy 2:5 says, “For *there* is one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus.”

The sufferings and death of Jesus also had a great impact on the Roman centurion who was in charge of the crucifixion of Jesus. As he saw how Jesus died, he said, “Truly this Man was the Son of God!” The centurion also spoke for all of the soldiers who were with Him that day, because

Matthew 27:54 says, “So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, ‘Truly this was the Son of God!’ The word translated “truly” means *most certainly*. By this statement, the Roman centurion, and the men with him, believed in Jesus and recognized Him as the Son of God. Their lives were changed for eternity that day.

We also see that there were many women, who had ministered to Jesus in Galilee, who were in Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. They had been watching from a distance as Jesus suffered and paid the penalty for our sins. We will see that some of these women brought spices to place on the body of Jesus after the Sabbath Day had passed.

Meanwhile, we also see that Jesus was recognized as the Son of God by Joseph of Arimathea. He was a prominent member of the Sanhedrin. However, he and Nicodemus were very different than the sixty-eight other men on the Sanhedrin that had condemned Jesus to death. Luke 23:50-51 says, “Now behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. He had not consented to their decision and deed. *He was* from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God.” John 19:39-40 adds, “And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.” These men had been secret believers, but now became bold believers.

Once Joseph saw that Jesus was dead, we see that he took courage and went to Pilate and asked for permission to bury the body of Jesus. Pilate was amazed that Jesus was already dead. To make certain that fact was true, he sent a messenger to get the centurion to verify the fact that Jesus was already dead. We see that one of the soldiers Pilate sent made sure Jesus was dead. We see what the soldiers who were sent from Pilate did when they arrived at the place of the crucifixion.

Pilate was surprised that Jesus was already dead. The Jewish leaders also wanted the bodies removed from the crosses before the sun set. John 19:31-34 says, “Therefore, because it was the Preparation *Day*, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.” The soldiers who came also told the centurion that Pilate wanted him. He went to Pilate and confirmed the fact that Jesus was already dead and had already been dead for a period of time. That could be clearly seen, because the blood had already separated and become blood and water.

Mark 15:45-47 says, “So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Joseph observed where He was laid.” Once the centurion had verified that Jesus was dead, Pilate gave Joseph permission to take the body down from the

cross and bury it. Then, Joseph went and bought fine linen so he could wrap the body of Jesus for burial.

Matthew gives us additional details about Joseph. Matthew 27:57-60 says, “Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.” From these verses, we see that Joseph was a rich man. We also see that he had become a secret disciple of Jesus. The place where he and Nicodemus buried the body of Jesus was a new tomb that he had prepared in advance for his own death. This tomb had been cut out of the rock. As a result, the tomb had never been used.

This fulfills the second half of a prophecy that was mentioned in an earlier topic. Isaiah 53:9 says, “And they made His grave with the wicked—but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor *was any* deceit in His mouth.” In the earlier topic, we saw, in Isaiah 53:12, that Jesus was numbered with the transgressors because He was crucified between two criminals. Here, we see that, although Jesus died between two criminals, He was buried with the rich. As a result, the second part of this prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus was buried in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

We also see that Nicodemus became a public disciple of Jesus that day and helped Joseph with the burial. John 19:39-41 says, “And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.” Here, we see that Nicodemus got about one hundred pounds of spices to place on the body of Jesus when they wrapped Jesus in the fine linen cloth before placing him in the tomb. The other disciples had fled and left Jesus alone the previous evening. Here, we see that two men who had been secret disciples, because of the fact that they were the only two among the seventy men of the Sanhedrin that believed in Jesus, had been secret believers until this time. Now, they had become bold as they publicly buried Jesus.

In the same way, we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to become bold as they tell others about the death and resurrection of Jesus. That boldness will not come from our own strength. Acts 4:29 says, “Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word.” May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children the importance of praying for boldness.