

75. Jesus Was Buried in a New Tomb

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children fully understand what Jesus meant when He said, “It is finished.” At that moment, the payment for our sins and for the sins of the whole world was completed. That means that all mankind can choose either to accept the payment that Jesus made or reject that payment and then pay for their own sins for all eternity. In our topic today, we are going to see where the body of Jesus was buried after He gave up His spirit.

The Jews did not want the three men left on the crosses overnight because it was the Preparation Day. John 19:31-32 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.” The Preparation Day was the day before the Sabbath so this verse is one of the ways that we know that Jesus was crucified on Friday.

In the Old Testament law, in Deuteronomy 21:22-23, the Jews were told, “‘If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.’” This law told the Jews that they were not to allow a person that was hanged or on a cross to remain hanging overnight. As a result, the Jews wanted Pilate to break the legs of the men to cause death so that they could no longer push down on the nails in their feet to make it possible for their lungs to get air. This would bring immediate death. They then could take the bodies off the crosses.

However, these verses from Deuteronomy also teach us another lesson about Jesus. These verses said that one who is hanged on a tree is accursed of God. Galatians 3:13 says, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’).” Jesus became a curse for us. That is why all those who have repented of their sin of unbelief and received Jesus are no longer under the curse of the law.

The soldiers broke the legs of the two criminals that had been crucified with Jesus. However, John 19:33-37 says, “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. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, ‘Not one of His bones shall be broken.’ And again another Scripture says, ‘They shall look on Him whom they pierced.’” The soldiers saw that Jesus was already dead when they came to Him. One of the soldiers then pushed his spear into the side of Jesus. Since Jesus was hanging above him on the cross, this spear went under the ribs of Jesus and ripped through the chest cavity, and possibly even pierced the heart.

Immediately, blood and water began to flow out of the hole where the spear had pierced the side of Jesus. This meant that the spear had either hit the heart or a very main artery for the blood and water to come flowing out. The fact that blood and water began to flow out also meant that Jesus was dead because the blood was already beginning to separate. John was there and was able to give eyewitness testimony of what happened when the spear was thrust into the body of Jesus. John said that the reason he gave this true personal testimony was so that all who read could know and believe that Jesus had died.

We see that these events after the death of Jesus also fulfilled two other Old Testament prophecies. The original Passover lamb that Israel ate in Egypt was to be a picture of the fact that Jesus would be our Passover. As a result, Exodus 12:46 says, “In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.” This was repeated again to Israel in Number 9:12 which says, “They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it.” As a result, John told us that the fact that the legs of Jesus were not broken by the soldiers fulfilled the Scripture that had been given to Israel in the Old Testament.

One day in the future, the people of Israel will, as a whole, turn to Jesus and recognize Him as the One that the Father sent to pay for their sins. Zechariah 12:10 prophesied, “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.” This prophecy says that the Jews will finally recognize the One that they pierced. Of course, in order for the Jews to recognize Jesus in the future as the One that they pierced, it was necessary for Jesus to be pierced in order to make the fulfillment of this prophecy possible. God used a Roman soldier to fulfill this prophecy.

We also learn about the burial of Jesus after He died. John 19:38-42 says, “After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave *him* permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. 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. So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews’ Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.”

Suddenly, as we come to the burial of Jesus, we learn about two influential leaders of the Jews who had become followers of Jesus. The first is Joseph of Arimathea and he is mentioned as the one who buried Jesus by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Luke 23:50 says, “Now behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man.” In this verse, we see that he was a member of the council (Sanhedrin), the group that had condemned Jesus to death. Mark 15:43 says, “Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.” In this verse, in addition to being a prominent member of the council, we also see that he was waiting for the kingdom of God. This meant that he was one of the very few council members that

had a true faith and he recognized that Jesus was the Messiah.

We also see that the death of Jesus caused Joseph to take courage and go to Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus. Matthew 27:57 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 action meant that Joseph was no longer a secret disciple of Jesus. Instead, he gave a bold witness to the men of the council that he had become a follower of Jesus. We see that he was also a rich man. Matthew 27:59-60 say, “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.” In these verses, we see that the tomb in which Jesus was buried was the tomb that Joseph had prepared for his own burial so it had never been used. This fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah 53:9 which 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.” By the use of this tomb, Jesus was buried with the rich.

We also see that a large stone was placed against the door of the tomb, which will be important when we come to the resurrection of Jesus. John also mentioned one additional fact that was not mentioned by the other three writers. John 19:39 says, “And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.” This verse mentioned that Nicodemus also helped Joseph bury Jesus. We were first introduced to Nicodemus in John 3 when Nicodemus came to talk to Jesus by night. Here, we see that he had also become a follower of Jesus, so two of the seventy men on the Sanhedrin did not agree when the other religious leaders condemned Jesus to death. Nicodemus brought about a hundred pounds of spices to place on the body of Jesus as they wrapped the body of Jesus for burial.

We also read that this tomb was near the place where Jesus had been crucified so these two men were able to get the body off the cross and into the tomb quickly. This was important because this was the Preparation Day and this had to be done before six p.m. We also learn from Luke that the women watched to see where Jesus was buried. Luke 23:55 says, “And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid.” Here, we see that the women followed Joseph and Nicodemus to the tomb where they buried Jesus so that was why the women knew where to come on the morning of the resurrection.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand that not all of the Jewish religious leaders wanted to kill Jesus. Here, we see that there were at least two of the men that were a part of the Sanhedrin that did not agree with the others to put Jesus to death. Instead, that very death caused them to become bold witnesses for Jesus by causing them to go to Pilate and ask for permission to bury the body of Jesus. Here, we see that these men had also developed a great love for Jesus. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children to also become bold witnesses for Jesus.