

Mt. 27:57 **THE BURIAL AND RESURFRECTION OF JESUS**

**Introduction:**

It might be helpful for you to know that Jesus was crucified on the Passover Day. The Passover Day came once each year and portrayed the death of Jesus, who is the real Passover Lamb. The Jews counted the arrival of dark in the evening as the beginning of a new day. Therefore, this Passover Day on which Jesus was crucified had started at dusk on the evening prior to the crucifixion.

The arrest and hearing of Jesus before the Jews had taken place during the nighttime. But it was on the Passover Day. The trials of Jesus before Pilate and Herod had taken place in the daylight period which followed, but they, too, all took place on that same Passover Day. It was on that same Passover Day that Jesus was crucified on the center cross between two thieves.

Our text involves that period of time when the Passover Day would close and the arrival of a new day was close at hand. The new day would be a special sabbath day. It would not be the regular seventh day sabbath. It was a special sabbath (“...*an high day...*”), John 19:31. This special sabbath always followed immediately after the Passover, John 19:31.

**I. The breaking of the legs of the two thieves**

A. Because death by crucifixion was usually a prolonged event, this posed a problem for the Jewish leaders.

1. It was against Jewish law for a human body to hang on a tree on a sabbath day, John 19:31.
2. They made a request of Pilate that he order the legs of those who were crucified to be broken so that they would die quickly and their bodies could be taken down from the crosses before the arrival of the new sabbath John 19:31.
3. They needed to be taken down from the crosses before darkness arrived because that was when the special sabbath day would arrive.

B. The next day was a sabbath day.

1. It was not the regular seventh day.
2. It was a special high day (sabbath day) because it followed the day of the Passover

C. Pilate granted their request and ordered that the legs of those who were crucified to be broken to hasten their death.

1. The legs of the two thieves were broken, John 19:32.
2. However, because Jesus was already dead they did not break His legs, John 19:33.
3. This is important information because Old Testament prophecy had declared that the legs of the Savior would not be broken, Ps. 34:20.

**II. Joseph of Arimathaea begs the body of Jesus**

A. In our text Matthew tells us that Joseph was a rich man. (This may have been the reason that Joseph was able to get a hearing with Pilate. (It is to be presumed that not just anyone could get a hearing before the Roman governor)

B. Matthew also tells us that Joseph was a disciple of Jesus.

1. He was a secret disciple.
  - a. That is, he had truly believed that Jesus is the Christ and had trusted Jesus to be His Savior.

- b. But he had not made it known publicly that He believed in Jesus.
  - c. He apparently knew how bitterly the Jewish leaders hated Jesus and for him to make it known to them that he believed in Jesus would have brought persecution upon both him and his family.
- C. But this godly man could not bare to see the body of His Lord and His Savior be carried out to the city dump and burned along with the city garbage.
- D. Therefore, he bravely went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus so that he could give Him a decent burial.
- E. He knew that it would cause him trouble with the Jewish leaders, but he would just have to suffer whatever persecution the Jewish leaders might dealt out to him.

### **III. The burial of Jesus**

- A. John tells us that Nicodemus joined with Joseph and furnished spices for the burial of Jesus.
- 1. Nicodemus had secretly gone to Jesus and Jesus had told him how to be saved.
  - 2. It appears that these two, who had become believers in Jesus, somehow discovered that they both believed in Jesus and a great bond of friendship resulted.
- B. The two men wrapped spices around the body of Jesus with a linen cloth and laid the body in a grave that Joseph had prepared for himself and his family.
- 1. The spices would help to counteract the odor that would come from a decaying body and make it more bearable to visit the tomb.
  - 2. It also showed the great respect which those two men had for Jesus.
- C. The tomb was a small hand dug cavern chipped into a huge boulder rock.
- 1. It was big enough for a man to enter into in and find space enough to lay several different human bodies.
  - 2. It was designed to accommodate the bodies of Joseph and his family.
- D. At the entrance of the tomb a groove had been chipped out which would serve as a track in which a large flat round rock could stand on edge and be rolled back and forth to cover and uncover the entrance to the tomb.
- 1. The rock was so heavy that it would take several strong men to roll it back and forth to open or close the entrance to the tomb.
  - 2. This would make it difficult for grave robbers to enter the tome in search for valuables that might be placed there.
- E. Mary Magdalene and another Mary had followed them to the tomb and were present when the body of Jesus was placed in the tomb, v. 61. (Therefore, they would know right where to go when they would later return to visit the grave.)

### **IV. The sealing of the tomb**

- A. On the day following the crucifixion the chief priests paid another visit to Pilate and requested that he make sure that nobody could steal the body of Jesus and claim that He had risen from the grave, V. 62-64.
- 1. They cited a statement which Jesus had made about them destroying the temple and Him raising it up in three days.
    - a. They had earlier claimed that He was saying that He would raise up Herod's temple in three days, whereas Jesus was saying that He would arise from the grave in three days.
    - b. Now they reveal that all the while they had understood what He meant.
    - c. They had just been trying to make His claim sound ridiculous to the people.

2. They were never afraid that He would arise from the grave; they were just afraid that the disciples of Jesus would steal His body and claim that He had risen from the grave.
- B. Pilate placed soldiers at their command so that they could make sure that the body would not be stolen.
1. A cord was stretched across the stone which sealed the tomb and secured on either side of the stone to the boulder rock with wax.
  2. The wax was stamped with the governor's ring so that no man would dare to break that seal and steal the body. .
  2. Then they set Roman soldiers at the tomb to make sure that nobody could steal the body of Jesus, V. 66.
  3. This security which they set at the tomb is positive proof that His body was not stolen.
  4. It gives strong evidence that Jesus did, indeed, arise from the grave.
  5. It is ironic that those who were totally opposed to the idea that Jesus arose from the grave unwittingly gave proof that He did arise from the grave.

#### **V. The empty tomb, Mt. 28:1-7**

- A. When the women came to the grave they found the stone rolled away and the grave empty
1. The stone had not been rolled away so that Jesus could get out.
  2. It was rolled away so that people could get in and see that the grave was empty.
- B. An angel of God sat at the tomb and announced to the women that Jesus had arisen.
- C. They were instructed to go and tell the disciples that Jesus had risen.
- D. Jesus lives.
1. Because He lives those who trust in Him for salvation will also live.
  2. Because He lives those who are lost in sin can repent of their sin and be saved. (They will not enter into the pits of hell, but will enter into the portals of glory.

#### **Conclusion:**

1. Do you believe the Bible record that Jesus arose from the grave?
2. Have you trusted Him to save your soul and keep you of hell? See Acts 10:31; Rom. 10:13.
3. Have you committed yourself to live for the Savior who died for you?