

## **Sunday 17-April-22 [Easter Sunday]    The King's Victory**

### **Matthew 27:57-28:15**

#### **The Burial of Jesus**

<sup>57</sup> As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup> Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. <sup>59</sup> Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, <sup>60</sup> and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. <sup>61</sup> Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.

#### **The Guard at the Tomb**

<sup>62</sup> The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. <sup>63</sup> "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' <sup>64</sup> So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

<sup>65</sup> "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." <sup>66</sup> So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

#### **Jesus Has Risen**

**28** After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

<sup>2</sup> There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. <sup>4</sup> The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

<sup>5</sup> The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

<sup>8</sup> So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

### **The Guards' Report**

<sup>11</sup> While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. <sup>12</sup> When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, <sup>13</sup> telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' <sup>14</sup> If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." <sup>15</sup> So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

## Sermon: The King's Victory

It would be good to have your **Bibles opened up to Matthew 27** – starting at verse 57 and we're **going through to Matthew 28** – verse 15.

There's a **sermon outline** – if you want to take notes.

Let me **ask God for His guidance and understanding**

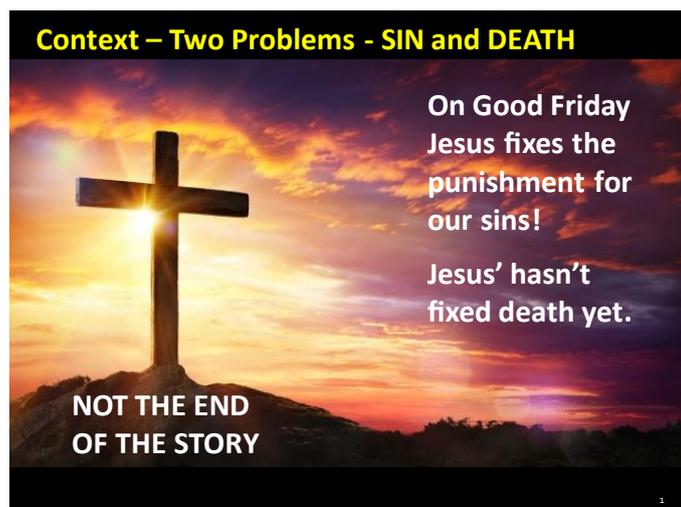
Let's pray...

## Context (Good Friday)

Before we **look** at the **events** of that 1<sup>st</sup> **Easter Sunday**

We **need** to get the **context**

[PowerPoint 1-Context]



- There are **two problems** we all have – **Sin and Death**
- So, **God sent** His Son – **Jesus** - to fix these **two problems**

We **left Jesus** on the **Cross** on **Good Friday**...saying:

- *My God, My God, why have you forsaken me* [Explain]
- And saying - *It is finished* [Explain]

**On Good Friday** – by His death – **Jesus has fixed Sin** -- we still sin – but the **Jesus has fixed the punishment** for our sin – once and for all – **He's taken our punishment off us!**

So, we **left Jesus dead** on the cross **on Good Friday**.

His **death** has been **witnessed by** the **women** at the cross, the **Apostle John**, the **centurion** and his **soldiers** and various **bystanders**

**But** at this point **Jesus hasn't fixed death**

**But** – **Praise God** - it's **not the end of the story**

We *pick up the story* from **Matt 27 – verse 57** – and the **burial of Jesus** and that's **followed by His resurrection** on that **1<sup>st</sup> Easter Sunday**

As I said on Good Friday - I'm sure **we've heard the story of Jesus death and resurrection many times**

So, this morning – I'd like us to look at the **main characters in the story** – and from that **hopefully** –we can see **what our response should be to Jesus' resurrection** - this morning!

- So, we'll look at the **characters involved in Jesus' burial** (27:57-66)
- Then we'll look at the **characters involved in Jesus' resurrection** (28:1-7)
- And then we'll look at the **responses to Jesus' resurrection** (28:8-15)

### **Jesus' Burial (Matt 27:57-66)**

First then Jesus' burial

[PowerPoint 2-Burial]



## Joseph

### First – there's **Joseph of Arimathea**

- He is a **rich man** and a **follower of Jesus** – if it hadn't been for Joseph – Jesus **would not have had a decent burial**
- Joseph got **permission from Pontius Pilate** to collect Jesus' body and Joseph placed Jesus' body in a **brand-new tomb** – with a **huge rock rolled over the entrance**.
- Having a **new tomb** was **important**
  - Jesus came into the world in a virgin womb – and at His death He was **placed in a virgin tomb**
  - Also, when Jesus rises from the dead – **there can be no confusion or suspicion that another person has risen other than Jesus!**
- By Jesus' being buried in Joseph's tomb it also **fulfils a prophecy from Isaiah 53:9:**  
*He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.*

## The Two Mary's

- Then in v61 – we discover that the **two Mary's** were **sitting opposite the tomb**.

- This is **important** because it means they were **eye witnesses that Jesus is dead** and **eye witnesses to where He is buried** too!
- The fact that there are **several eye witnesses** also **helps to dismiss some claims** that Jesus wasn't really dead at all!

### Religious Leaders

- In contrast to Jesus' friends – **Jesus' enemies – the religious leaders - the chief priests and Pharisees - are busy at work at the time of Jesus' burial** too
- See v62 – it's the **day after Preparation Day** – which means it's the **Sabbath Day** (Mark 15:42) and they **ask Pilate to put some guards at the tomb**
- Isn't it **ironic** that these **religious leaders break the Sabbath to do this** – after all the flack they gave Jesus for healing on the Sabbath?
- Isn't it **ironic** that the religious leaders also remember what **Jesus said when He was alive that He would rise after three days? Especially when Jesus' own disciples have been told the same thing** (Matthew 16:21) – but have **doubted Jesus** and are **afraid** and have **run away!**
- It's also worth pointing out that by the religious leaders saying "when Jesus was alive" **proves they believe Jesus to be dead too!**
- The **reason for their request for a guard** on the tomb is in case **Jesus' disciples steal Jesus' body.**
- But if we think about it; it's **extremely implausible** that the **disciples would steal Jesus' body.** The religious leaders know Jesus' **disciples are afraid and have fled** the crucifixion scene; so, they are not going to steal Jesus' body. What the **religious leaders are really afraid of is Jesus' power!**

- **Pilate agrees to the request** and puts a Roman **guard and a seal on the tomb** – which means that it would be **impossible for friend or enemy to steal Jesus' body**.

### Jesus' Resurrection (Matt 28:1-7)

As we hit chapter 28 – it's the **first day of the week** – **Sunday**

It's also the **third day since Jesus' death**

[PowerPoint 3-Resurrection]



### The Two Marys

- The **two Mary's come to Jesus' tomb** – we know from Mark's Gospel they came to **anoint Jesus' body** and they were **wondering how they would be able to roll away the stone** from the entrance of the tomb (Mark 16:1-3)
- It's **remarkable** that the **women and the disciples** did not believe Jesus would rise from the dead – **Jesus told them repeatedly He would rise from the dead** (Matt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 26:32)

### The Angel

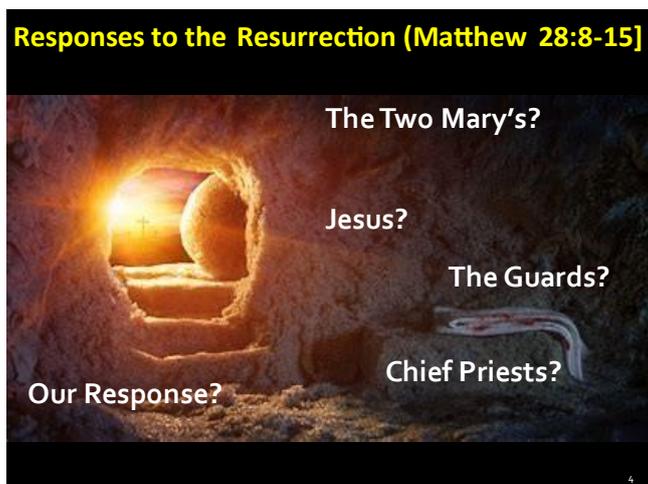
- At the tomb – an **angel from Heaven has rolled away the stone & is sitting on it**.

- We should understand here that the **stone** has not been **rolled back** so Jesus can come out but so that **people could see for themselves that the tomb is empty!**
- The angel utters those amazing words in v6 *“He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay”*
- From John’s Gospel we know what lay in the tomb was Jesus’ **grave clothes** – left behind as evidence He is a live – they **lay there like a cocoon wrapped in the shape of Jesus’ body** – with Jesus’ body having passed through the clothes (John 20:5-7)
- The **angel tells** the **women** to quickly **go and tell Jesus’ disciples** that **Jesus has risen from the dead** and is **going ahead** of them to **Galilee**. They should not be surprised about this really. Back in **Matt 26:32** Jesus said this: *But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee*

Which brings us to the **responses to the Resurrection**.

### Responses to the Resurrection (Matthew 28:8-15)

[PowerPoint 4-Responses]



### The Two Mary’s

- See v8, the **women**, they were **both** – **afraid** - **and** - **filled with joy**.

- Understandably – **afraid** because they hadn't expected to see an angel and hadn't expected for Jesus to not be in the tomb - and yet full of joy because their **Lord is alive!**
- The women hurry off to tell the disciples when amazingly **they meet Jesus alive!**
- They **say nothing** – they just bow down and worship Him!

## Jesus

- Then there's the **response of Jesus** – v9 – He says "*Greetings*" – but that doesn't really cut it as far as translations go – the word means more like *Rejoice or Glad tidings* – it's a **happy greeting!**
- Then in v10 – **Jesus reassures the women.** He **understands** they would be **afraid** – and that they would not really be sure what's going on –
- He says – "*Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.*"
- This would be words of comfort to the disciples – the **fact that Jesus' calls them brothers** – even after they had mostly run away afraid and deserted Him – it **shows the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus.**

## The Guards

- Not all the responses are **favourable** though
- Look at v11
- The **guards reported** to the chief priests what had happened.
- Their story would have been interesting – they are **guarding the tomb** – there's an **earthquake** – an **angel appears** – the **guards start shaking** and **pass out like dead men.**
- The **guards** don't really have a clue what happened.

- But why are they **reporting to the Jewish leaders** and not to the **Roman authorities**?

### The Chief Priests

- The **guards' story** does **not deter the chief priests** from **devising a devious plan**.
- Just like they **paid Judas money** to betray Jesus
- They now pay the guards a large sum of money to say 'Jesus' disciples came during the night and stole his body' while they were asleep. The chief priests also say they would keep the guards out of trouble from the governor.

There are a **number of holes in this cover up story**:

- If the soldiers were asleep – how could they **know it was the disciples that stole the body!**
- If the soldiers were asleep – they **violated the strict law of the Roman army** which forbade soldiers sleeping on watch – an offence **punishable by death**
- All the soldiers would have to be asleep at the same time and would have had to sleep through the noise of the disciples trying to roll back the stone and taking Jesus' body
- There was no guarantee that the chief priests had such a great relationship with the governor that they could keep the soldiers out of trouble; very unlikely indeed!
  - **Mark Twain** once wrote that ***"a lie can go around the world while truth is still lacing up her boots"***

Unfortunately, basic sinful human nature makes it easy for people to believe lies.

The truth is - **Jesus is risen** – and **over** the course of **the next 40 days** [Acts 1:3] – Jesus **appears to over 500 people** [1 Cor 15:6]

## Our Response?

So, what should our response to Jesus' resurrection be.

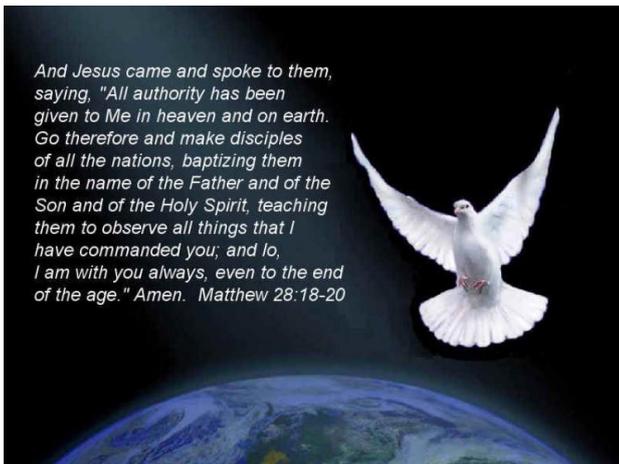
1. Jesus' resurrection means we can **believe in God's absolute sovereignty over life and death.**
2. Jesus' resurrection means we can **believe Jesus' claim to be the Son of God and the Messiah** and it shows He is perfect in every way and the source of all that is true
3. Jesus' resurrection' means we can **believe that all of Scripture is true – all the prophecies about Jesus came true – just as it was written. If Jesus had not suffered the way He did on Good Friday, then Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 would not be true! If Jesus had not come out of the tomb on Easter Sunday, then Psalm 16:10 and Hosea 6:1-4 and Hosea 13:14 would not be true!**
4. Jesus' resurrection means we don't **have to be afraid of death** – as Paul writes *“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”* (1 Cor 15:55)
5. Jesus' resurrection means we **are assured of our own future resurrection.** As Jesus says *“He is the resurrection and the life, the one who believes in me will live, even though they die”*. And as Paul writes – one day we will be raised to be like Him (1 Thes 4:13-18)
6. Jesus' resurrection gives us **power for Christian living** – because we know we have the certain hope of Heaven – **we have a new life in Jesus** – and **we can live in His strength and persevere.** As Paul says: *“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain”* (1 Corinthians 15:58).

## Action (Matthew 28:16-20)

- To finish up then

- There's **one more action** we are commanded to take when it comes to our response to Jesus' resurrection.
- It's in the same chapter of Matthew 28 – in **verses 16 to 20**– which we didn't read  
[Please turn there now]

[PowerPoint 5-Matthew 28:18-20]



- And it's no coincidence that Jesus gives this command to His disciples – after He has risen
- **The risen Jesus now appears to His disciples** in Galilee as He said He would
- And **He gives His disciples a command** from verses 18 to 20:  
*“All authority has been given to me in Heaven and on Earth. Go, therefore **and make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you**. And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*
- The proper definition of a disciple is someone who **attaches themselves to a teacher, identifies** with the teacher, **learns** from the teacher, **lives** with the teacher, and ultimately **does what the teacher does** – which includes making more disciples. It's a **multiplying task** – making more and more disciples of Jesus – not disciples of ourselves!

- As Christians - we all disciples of Jesus – we are all meant to take up Jesus’ command – it’s not a suggestion – it’s a command - we’re not meant to just be cheerleaders for others to make disciples.
- And there are many ways we can make disciples – through - friendship, neighbourly gestures, Christian example to our family and friends, teaching children, visiting the sick and the elderly, giving practical help, loving conversations, invites to church, bible conversations, referring people to talk to someone else, explaining what Christmas is about, explaining what Easter is about – and so on...
- And this action we are commanded to do is not something we do on our own – **Jesus promises He will be with us to the end** – and He fulfils this promise shortly after His resurrection – **when He ascended to Heaven and sent the Holy Spirit to live in all Christians** – and **teach, guide and encourage us.**
- So will we be committed this morning – **to making disciples as Jesus commanded us** – in whatever form that takes for us in our lives...

Let’s pray...

*Father God, Thank You that in your grace and mercy, you sent Jesus as the Saviour of the world.*

*Thank You that Jesus willingly laid down His life to be the perfect once and for all sacrifice for sins to be forgiven on that 1<sup>st</sup> Good Friday.*

*Thank You that in your sovereign power over all things, you raised Jesus to life on that glorious 1<sup>st</sup> Easter Sunday.*

*Help us to respond to Jesus’ resurrection – knowing we have the certain hope of Heaven – and committed to sharing this incredibly Good News with others, as Jesus commanded us to do.*

*In His precious name, Amen.*