

The Burial of Jesus John 19:30-42

INTRO: “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost” (Jn 19:30). *Tetelestai*: “It is finished.” All that the heavenly Father had given Him to do while on earth was finished: *tetelestai*. After He said, “It is finished..... He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.” No one took His life from Him; He gave it willingly (Jn 10:11, 15, 17-18).

The things that we are dealing with are historical facts about the Gospel. What is the Gospel? The Gospel is clearly defined for us in I Cor 15:3-4. Friend, do you have faith in what Jesus Christ did for you? Do you believe that He died for you, was buried, and raised from the dead?

Our subject today is part of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel is not only that Jesus died, but also that He was buried and raised again. Our subject today is the burial of Jesus Christ.

I. VSS 31-34, THE SPEAR RIVEN SIDE OF JESUS

- A. Vs 31, The Sabbath spoken of here is no ordinary Sabbath or weekly Sabbath, but “an high day,” Sabbath. The first day of the feast of Passover was Wednesday sunset to Thursday sunset (15th Nisan).
 - 1. The tradition of the Romans was to let a condemned, crucified man hang on the cross as long as it took for him to die. The Jews on the other hand were not to let a body hang on the cross over night (Deut 21:22-23). The Sanhedrin wanted the men dead because of the special Sabbath that was approaching.
 - 2. The request of the Sanhedrin to Pilate was a cruel one.
 - a. The breaking of the bones was done by the use of a heavy hammer or a bar of iron.
 - b. The word for break in the Greek is *katagnumi* meaning “to shiver to pieces.”
- B. Vs 32, Here we have the record of the soldiers breaking the legs of the two malefactors.
 - 1. The breaking of the legs led to a fast death.
 - 2. With the legs broken, there was nothing to support the body and the whole weight of the body dropped down cutting off the breath. The victim’s death was hastened by asphyxiation.

3. “It is noteworthy that the penitent thief, even after his conversion, had more suffering to go through before he entered into Paradise. The grace of God and the pardon of sin did not deliver him from the agony of having his legs broken” (Ryle 368). Yet, it is blessed to know that these Roman soldiers were also the unwitting agents for fulfilling Christ’s promise: “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Pink 247).
- C. Vs. 33, Having broken the legs of the two thieves, now they come to Jesus who is already dead. It is possible that they refrained from breaking His legs upon orders from the centurion who was deeply impressed by Jesus (Mt 27:54; Lk 23:47).
 - D. Vs 34, To ensure, beyond a shadow of a doubt that no life remained in the body of Jesus, one of the soldiers with spear in hand pierces the side of Jesus.
 1. The Apostle John records what he saw, and he saw water and blood immediately flow from the side of Jesus.
 - a. The death of Jesus was not a mere semblance; it was real. He died!!
 - b. There is no Gospel without the DEATH, burial, and resurrection of Christ.
 2. We need to say here that Christ suffered more than any man before or since has suffered.
 - a. Psalm 69:20 prophetically says: “Reproach hath broken my heart. . . .” That this refers to the crucifixion is borne out in the next verse: *They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink (vs 21).*
 - b. The sufferings of Jesus, physically and emotionally, were so great that His heart was ruptured. Normally the body of a dead man does not bleed, but when the spear was driven into the side of Jesus out came blood and water.
 3. The blood and water are also linked to the effects of Christ’s atonement.
 - a. Matthew Henry says: “The blood and water signified the two great benefits which all believers partake through Christ – justification and sanctification. Blood stands for remissions, water for purification. The two must always go together” (1203).

- b. “Let the water and blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure.”

II. VSS 35-37, JOHN’S TESTIMONY OF CHRIST’S DEATH

- A. Vs 35, John testifies that he has recorded an accurate and reliable account of the water and blood flowing from the Savior’s side.
 1. John’s testimony proves that Christ was not a phantom. He had a human body.
 2. John’s testimony proves that Jesus died for man the creature’s sin (Heb 10:4-10).
 3. The Gospel is preached that men might believe (20:31).
- B. Vs 36, When John saw that the soldiers did not break the bones of Christ, he saw the fulfillment of Scripture.
 1. No bone of the paschal lamb was to be broken (Ex 12:46; Num 9:12; Psa 34:20).
 2. Christ was the true paschal (sacrificial) lamb (Jn 1:29; I Cor 5:7).
- C. Vs 37, The prophecy recorded here is yet to be fulfilled.
 1. He has been pierced; yes, but the Jews as a whole have not seen Him as their Messiah.
 2. Zechariah 12:10 says that the day is coming when they, the Jews, will look upon Jesus and believe.

III. VSS 38-42, THE ROYAL BURIAL OF JESUS

- A. Vs 38-40, These three verses go together because Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus worked together.
 1. Vs 38, All four gospels tell us about Joseph of Arimathea.
 - a. He was a rich man (Mt 27:57).
 - b. An honorable counselor, a member of the Sanhedrin (Mk 15:43).
 - c. A good and just man (Lk 23:50).
 - d. He was blessed of God to fulfill the prophecy that Jesus was to be buried by a rich man (Isa 53:9).
 - e. Joseph had the influence that was needed to get an audience with Pilate and receive permission to bury Jesus.
 2. Vs 39, With Joseph of Arimathea was Nicodemus, the ruler

- of the Jews who came to Jesus by night.
- a. When the disciples scattered these secret disciples came forward. These men were members of the Sanhedrin and had absented themselves from the proceedings that condemned Jesus. They were secret disciples who did not come forward and show their faith until Jesus was dead. “How much greater would loyalty in this life have been than a new tomb and a shroud fit for a king. One flower in life is worth all the wreaths in the world in death; one word of love and praise in life is worth all the tributes in the world when life is gone” (Barclay 307).
 - b. Because believers in both the Old and New Testaments believed in the resurrection of the body, care and reverence was given to the body.
 - c. The custom was to use about half the body weight in spices; so we can guess Jesus weighed about 200 pounds.
 - d. Jesus had been lifted up and Joseph and Nicodemus had been drawn into a closer walk with the Savior (Jn 12:32).
3. Vs 40, The incorruptible body was wrapped in rich swathing, and the sweet fragrance of the spices filled the air.
- B. Vs 41, “It was in a ‘garden’ that the first Adam sowed the seed that issued in death; so here in a ‘garden’ was sown the Seed which was to bear much fruit in immortal life” (Pink 252). Through the death, burial, and resurrection, all believers have life eternal (Jn 12:24).
- C. Vs 42, Here is proof that the Lord Jesus actually died– He was buried.

CONCLUSION: “He who had been born of a virgin mother, was laid in a virgin grave; there to remain for three days when He came forth as the mighty victor” (Pink 252).

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