

Did Jesus really Die?

Text: Mark 15:42-47

Take your Bibles, please, and let's turn to the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of Mark: chapter 15, and we will begin with Vs 42...

(Read Vs 42-47)

Prayer

Father, I thank you for that day when Jesus died on the cross for our sins. And I pray that you will speak to all of us, right now, about the importance of the death of Jesus Christ. And I pray that those here who have been toying with their commitment, might understand that Christianity is built on the historical fact that Jesus actually died on the cross. It wasn't faked, or covered up, but Jesus truly died on the cross for our sins. And Father, I pray that you would clearly show that to people today. And we would understand that without the death and of course the resurrection of Jesus there is no hope for any of us. We are wasting our time and we are still in our sins. So speak to our hearts. May people be saved. For we pray this in Jesus name.....Amen...

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You know, ^{Dear Friends} folks, there are many people who believe that Jesus never really died on the cross. Oh, they believe that he was nailed to the cross. But somehow the disciples got him down from the cross before he died. And the whole idea that Jesus ~~was~~ ^{actually} really died is fake...made up....not true.

^{New Proof is a lot of History based} ~~But, Dear Friends,~~ the Bible gives us much ^{evidence} detail about the death of Jesus to prove that He actually did die. And I want to look at some of that ^{evidence} ~~proof~~ today. And I want you to know that Jesus truly died on that cross. And the reason he had to die was for your sin and mine. That without the death of Jesus, there would be no hope...no salvation...for any of us.

^{SO} O.K... let's look at some of that ^{proof} ~~proof~~....

(1) Take your Bibles and turn over to John chapter 19. And I want to show you something. John chapter 19 verse 31 to 37.....Verses 31 to 37

The timing of the death of Jesus is in the Bible. Jesus was put on the cross at 9:00 in the morning. And he died at 3:00 in the afternoon. This is all recorded in the Bible.

Now, the Jewish day ends at sun down. *at 6:00 pm* So, you have about three hours in which you have to prove that he was dead and then get him down from the cross and put Him in the tomb. And a lot of people feel that it just couldn't be done in that short of a time frame. But the Bible is very careful about this. Notice John chapter 19 verse 31.

In Vs 31 the Jews ask Pilate that the legs of those on the cross might be broken so that they might take the bodies down.

Now, please remember that the thieves were on crosses, also.

~~They~~
~~They were probably tied. Which was the normal way of Roman crucifixion.~~

And they are dying a slow, sorrowful death. *And* they said, "We want to take them down because the next day is a special day. It is the feast of unleaven bread. Let's get these people off these crosses. So, they ask Pilate if they could go by and break their legs. Thus, bringing shock and kill them."

Vs 32..."The soldiers therefore came, and broke the legs of the first man, and of the other man who was crucified with Him; but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs."

That was a fulfillment of prophecy, by the way. The Bible says that not one bone of his body was broken.

Vs 34..."But one of the soldiers pierced His ^{side} ~~side~~ with a spear,"...^{That was} Also a fulfillment of prophecy..."*And* immediately there came out blood...and..water." "And he who has seen has borne witness."

John Now, John wrote John. And it says that he who has seen has borne witness.' *John* was an eyewitness. He saw it himself. "His witness is true, And he knows that he is telling the truth, so they you also may believe."

Vs 36.."For these things came to pass, that the scripture might be fulfilled 'NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN' and again another scripture says, 'THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHO THEY PIERCED.'"

It was a very unusual occasion when the soldier would pierce the side of a person on the cross. *I hope you realize that.*

But, it ^{is} ~~is~~ all a fulfillment of prophecy, even though the soldiers didn't know it.

Now, turn over to I John chapter 5...I John 5....The Bible gives much proof so that there is no question, there is no doubt in anybody's mind that Jesus died. That Jesus was buried..that he literally arose from the dead. The Bible is very careful about this issue. Probably more so than on any other issue. There are details given to prove the point.

I John 5....The same writer, John. He is writing some 60 years later. He is an old man. I John 5 verse 6 says.."This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood."

Now some of

The 9

Vs 9

How many of you have KJ text? ~~Some of you do.~~ There is one verse in there that uses late manuscript evidence and it ought not to be in there. It gives you the idea that somehow the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit are the three things bearing witness. If you have the KJ that should not be in the text. ^{Newer Translations} ~~The NAS~~ has it correctly as it is in the Greek. And it is very important, by the way.

cc ~~in the text~~

The Bible says that it is the one who came by water and blood. Not the water only, but the water and blood. ^{Vs 7} And it is the spirit that bears witness.

Now follow this carefully: HOW DID THE SPIRIT BEAR WITNESS?

Vs 8 says that there are three that bear witness: The Spirit..and the water and the blood. And the three are in agreement. WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT?

Well, the same writer, the only writer, that recorded this in the Gospel of John, how when the soldier pierced his side out came blood and water.

Now, John said that the Holy Spirit is bearing witness. WHY? Because when John wrote the Gospel of John, who is the true author? Who inspired John or inspired that writing that John gave, WHO WAS IT? THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The Holy Spirit bore witness to the truthfulness of that. This is a tremendous text on the inspiration of the Bible. When John recorded what actually happened. He says now, in his ~~epistle~~ epistle, that that was the Holy Spirit bearing witness to the fact. So that the blood and the water, plus the spirit all bear witness to the fact that Jesus in truth died.

But what is the point of the blood and the water? You see, friends, if Jesus had been alive, when the soldier pierced his side, strong spouts of blood would have appeared with every heart beat. Instead they noticed the obvious separation of blood and water. According to medical knowledge this is evidence of masses clotting of the blood in the main arteries. And it is the strongest medical proof you can give of actual death that has occurred. Medically, it is called a rupture of the heart.

The Bible is specific. Why? Because it wants everyone to know that Jesus didn't just have a fainting spell on the cross and someone then quickly took him down and hid him out of sight until he recovered.....NO ^{WHY} ~~WHY~~.....

The Bible says he died. And the proof was there. *And the Romans knew it.*

O.K. let's come back to the Gospel of Mark. It is interesting that the Romans, themselves, are the ones that checked out the evidence. And we will see that in a moment.

(2) ^{Sandals} Let's look at the request for the body of Jesus on that cross. The request. According to Mark chapter 15 and verse 43, it says that "Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, a man who was himself waiting for the Kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus."

(1) Now, first of all, the person who requested the body of Jesus. To save time I want to quote from the gospels. Because you need to look at all the Gospels about Joseph. But to save time, let me just share with you about Joseph.

He was rich. He was a prominent member of the Sanhedrin, 71 members who ruled Israel. He was a disciple of Jesus. He was waiting for the Kingdom of God. He was Messianic. He was a good and righteous man. He did not consent to the plan and action of the Sanhedrin. He was from Arimathea, which was a city of the Jews. And the Bible says that he was a secret disciple for fear of the Jews. All of that is said about this man who requested the body of Jesus. The question is WHY DID PILATE GIVE ^{The Body Jesus} TO HIM?

Friends, that is really much easier to answer than you might think. The Romans were out to get any kind of money that they could from anyone. The fact that the Bible emphasizes the wealth of Joseph of Arimathea is your key as to why Pilate gave him the body. He would not have given the body to any ordinary person. Especially under the circumstance of Jesus claiming to be the Messiah and all those people following him so faithfully. Pilate knew the problem. The possibility of revelation.

The fact that he was a prominent member of the Sanhedrin would release Pilate of some responsibility. And the fact that he was rich. I believe Pilate was paid off. I don't know that. But I expect that. I think that is the reason why one of the gospels emphasizes his wealth. He ^{no} doubt gave Pilate the money necessary to allow Pilate to release the body of Jesus to him guaranteeing that he would bury him.

Now, our story doesn't end there.

(2) The second thing that I believe is involved is the proof of death from the standpoint of Pilate. Pilate has to know that ^{Jesus died.} And according to Vs 44, it says that Pilate wondered if he was dead. This was always a problem in crucifixions.

Now, notice this, Vs 44 "and summoning the centurion." Again the definite article "THE". Not just any old centurion. But "THE" centurion. Who is he talking about? A particular one. WHICH ONE? The one who is mentioned in the early part of this chapter.

Vs 39.. "When the centurion" .. the one in charge of the crucifixion. "When the centurion, who was standing right in ^{front} of Him, saw the way He breathed ^{out} His last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!".

We learned last week that this centurion believed in the Lord Jesus and knew that he had died.

It is interesting to me that Pilate summoned that same man. And the Greek text is clear on that point. Pilate summoned that Centurion and questioned him whether Jesus was already dead. Vs 45.. "And ascertaining this from the ~~centurion~~ centurion, he ^{granted} ~~granted~~ the body to Joseph."

It was the actual death of Jesus Christ that caused the centurion to believe. And the centurion who had seen many, many crucifixions knew that Jesus was dead. The proof was there. He ought to know. He was experienced.

(3) Then the body was removed. Let's take a look at that ^{line of proof.} Especially in terms of the preparation of the body. In Vs 46 the Bible says "and Joseph bought a linen sheet, took Him down, wrapped Him in the linen sheet, and laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a stone ~~against~~ against the entrance of the tomb, And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus were looking on to see where He was laid."

I want you to notice several things here about the removal of the body. (1) First of all the preparation. Turn to John 19.. John 19.... Vs 39 to 40 of John 19 gives some very important information about what they did to the body of Jesus Christ which to me proves that death had already occurred.

In contrast ^{to} the constant attempts of people to prove that he had not died. That he was in a weakened state but ^{he} soon revived/ And that is all that the resurrection means. If you don't believe that people believe this some of the hot selling books on the secular market are proving that fact..quote unquote ..Trying to prove the fact that Jesus did not die.

And an article appeared in the New York Times which said, "MOST BIBLE SCHOLARS BELIEVE JESUS DID NOT ACTUALLY DIE, AND RISE FROM THE DEAD."

I don't know where they get that. "MOST BIBLE SCHOLARS". Well, we have a church full of Bible scholars who feel differently.

Some ^{idols} ~~editions~~ who don't know anything about the Bible said that...They don't know what the Bible is talking about. The facts of the article ^{are} ~~are~~ completely contrary to the evidence in the Bible. When are people going to wake up?

People often ask: Why is this so important? If we all live like the Lord wanted us to live, why is it so important ^{to believe in his death?}

Friends, the Bible says that if Jesus did not arise from the dead, if he did not die and rise again from the dead, we are yet in our sins. And there is no salvation. No salvation at all. That is the true christian message.

^{christians} ~~isn't~~ nice ^{LITTLE} saying, ^{and} trying to live the best you can. That is not christianity. This is very, very important.

Well, if Jesus wasn't dead. I would like to know how he endured what they did to the body? The Bible says in Vs 38 of John 19.....(READ VS 38-39)

Now, notice..it says a hundred pounds weight." Have you ever been anointed with a hundred pounds of spices?.....And they wrapped him in all of this.....

Now, I don't know if you have lately smelled myrrh. Myrrh is the word from which we get our word "Mary". It means "bitter." It refers to that which must be crushed in order for the fragrance to come out. But, I am told that it causes a smell that you would not believe.

And if Jesus wasn't dead, I have a feeling that even his body would have reacted, just a little, to this strong smell of those spices.

Friends, he was dead. And do you mean to tell me that Nicodemus and ^{Jesus?} Joseph of Arimathea and all those watching would not have stopped if the body

Listen, they were friends of Jesus. They were griving at the fact that he had been crucified. Just ~~o~~ one little evidence that he was alive they would have stopped. They knew that he was dead. These folks are preparing a body, friends, for bural. And they knew that he was dead. And there was a hundred pounds weight involved.

() Let's look at the place where they laid him. John says that it was in a garden near the place of crucifixion. Mark says that it was a Tomb "hewn in the rock." That is a little unusally. Hewn out of solid rock. It isn't in the ground. He wasn't buried in dirt like the normal grave we think of. No..hewn out of solid rock.

The Bible, also, says that no one had ever been in that Tomb before. Joseph had made it for himself.

The Bible, also, says that a large stone was rolled in front of that entrance.

(3) Third, let's take a look at the people who were eye witnesses. A lot of folks believe that thas happened with just Joseph of Arimathea. And he and Jesus made the whole thing up. And no body really saw him placed in that tomb. That is not what the Bible says at all.

First of all, the Bible says in Mark chapter 15 verse 47 that "Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus were looking on to see where He was laid." So, we have two woman present.

~~*~~ Now, turn back to Matthew chapter 27. Matthew chapter 27 and notice verses 62 to 66.....(READ Vs 62-66)

Now, I find this interesting. We have chief Priests and Pharisees who according to the Bible, are along with the guards, which includes four Romans soldiers.

Now, do you really think they didn't look in to see if Jesus was there? Are you kidding. The whole point of securing that grave was so that the disciples couldn't come and take him away. The soldiers are the one's who put the stone in place and set a seal on the stone.

You see, we have both friendly and hostile eye witnesses to the fact that Jesus was not only dead, but wrapped in all those burial pieces and lenin.

And then those guards were placed in position. And it is sort of funny. The critics come along and say, "Well, there were only four soldiers. And there are eleven disciples. Those eleven could over power the four."

Are you kidding? If you believe that you haven't studied much about Roman guards. A Roman guard was so well trained that he could guard an area of 16 square feet against anyone..no matter how many. They were trained that well. In a fixed position, they would not give ground.

Friends, there is no way that those disciples, who ran away and fled, all of a sudden became mighty hero's....NO WAY!!....

Well, all of these facts are so clear. Jesus was dead...You ask, "O.K. Pastor, Jesus really did die. So what? What is the big deal?"

Well, it is a very important issue. Because without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. As in Adam all died...In the death of Jesus all have the possibility of new life. WHY? Because the wages of sin is death...but, the gift of God is life through Jesus Christ.

We are dead in our sins....We are separated from God....And so God who loved us and desires that no one should perish...sent his Son to pay the penalty for sin, which is death, so that we, if we choose to receive Jesus.. might be restored to fellowship with God.

Oh, dear friends, My God help you to understand....And may you respond to the Lord's invitation to receive Jesus and be saved....

SHALL WE CLOSE IN PRAYER