

POSTING OF GUARDS (Matthew 27:62-66)

It was on *the next day that followed the day of the preparation* (62) that the chief priests (Sadducees) and the Pharisees (representing the Sanhedrin) came to Pilate.

1. What did they want Pilate to do? (Matthew 27:64)_____
2. Why? (Matthew 27:64)_____

Also in verse 64, they claimed *the last error would be worse than the first*.

3. What do you think they meant by this (above)?
Last Error _____
First Error _____

The last error would be the belief in the resurrection of Jesus, the first the belief in His Messiahship.

4. What was Pilate's reply? (Matthew 27:65)_____

5. Do you think Pilate was agitated with these Jewish religious leaders?_____

A 'watch' was a guard of four soldiers, which were changed every three hours. They also sealed the tomb by stretching a cord across the stone and an official seal with clay was fastened at each end so it could be detected if the grave was opened.

VEIL OF TEMPLE RENT AND GRAVES OPENED (Matthew 27:51-56; Mark 15:38-41; Luke 23:47-49)

When Jesus had cried again with a loud voice, and yielded up the ghost, behold, the veil of the temple was rent (torn) in twain (in two) from the top to the bottom (Matthew 27:51). This was the inner veil, which separated the holy of holies from the holy place. The spiritual meaning of this is stated clearly in Hebrews 9:1-14; 10:19-22. Through the rent veil of Christ's flesh the way was now opened into the very presence of God. In Christianity one can worship God anytime, anywhere.

1. What happened next? (Matthew 27:51b-52)_____

2. When did this event take place? before the resurrection of Jesus, or after? (Matthew 27:53)

And the earth did quake, and the rocks rent. The rending of the veil is recorded in Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; and Luke 23:45, but the earthquake and the resurrection of some saints is recorded only in Matthew 27:51b-53. Whether there was any connection between the earthquake and the rending of the veil we do not know; nothing is stated there. They would seem to be two separate, supernatural consequences of that earth-shaking death. Neither are we told what happened to the saints who rose.

Jesus was the first resurrection of the dead never to die again, the “First Fruits” (I Corinthians 15:20). These others were saints who were looking for the Redeemer, the Messiah. Verse 52 of Matthew 27 says their bodies arose, not their spirits. If it were just their spirits, there would be no need for the graves to open. God used the earthquake to open the graves. The bodies of the saints that arose and came out of the graves after the resurrection, appeared to many people in Jerusalem. The Roman centurion and they that were with him were greatly impressed at these phenomena. This centurion was the soldier in charge of the crucifixion. He and the soldiers feared greatly and cried out, *Truly this was the Son of God*.

3. Name the women who were standing by.
(Matthew 27:55,56) _____

4. Mary, the mother of Jesus is not mentioned here. Do you believe she was present also? _____

5. Who smote their breasts at the sight they beheld? (Luke 23:48) _____

THE BURIAL OF JESUS (Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42)

Late that afternoon at nightfall there came a man of Arimethaea named Joseph, who went and begged for the body of Jesus. The custom in the case of a crucified criminal was usually to throw

the body away. But God had planned for the tender and sacred care of the body of His precious Son, that it should be preserved for the resurrection morning. It was Joseph who cared for His precious body at his birth and a Joseph who cared for it at His death. This seems to be the first time Joseph of Arimethaea had come out openly for Christ.

1. Describe Joseph of Arimethaea according to our Scripture text in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

It took courage to go in to Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus. But Joseph did it, and his request was granted.

2. Who helped Joseph with the burial of Jesus?
(John 19:39) _____

3. What did Nicodemus bring to the burial? (John 19:39) _____

Because there was no time for the extended treatment of the body, he simply *wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out of the rock* (Matthew 27:59-60). In John 19:39, we also read where spices were wound in the linen clothes which was the manner of the Jews. He rolled a great stone against the door and left.

4. Who was watching carefully where they laid Him? (Matthew 27:61) _____