

Events Surrounding His Death

Sermon 96 in the Matthew Series

Matthew 27:51-56

I. The Miracles occurring at Jesus' Death Matt. 27:51-53

The veil is torn (split = schizo) in two as Christ gives up His Spirit.

Then – the powerful earthquake.

The rocks are “split” – using the same Greek word as the splitting of the veil.

A. The Miracle of the Veil

1. No one but the High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place – Heb. 9:6-8

2. The New Way Opened Heb. 8:8-13 (note especially verse 13)

Some of the priests considered what they saw, heard, or what they knew from the Scriptures and came to believe in Messiah!

Acts 6:7 -- Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

3. This was the first official action of the dismantling of the whole Levitical System

1) Hebrews 9:11-15

2) Hebrews 10:11-20

a) What has been done. The veil has been rent.

b) What we therefore have. Bold access to God.

c) How this is accomplished. By the blood of Jesus.

B. Saints Raised and Revealed – (7 Questions) Matt. 27:52-53

1. How could the graves open and people still not believe?

2. How many dead saints arose?

3. Who were they?

4. How could they rise before Christ?

5. Where did they go after showing themselves in Jerusalem?

Dr. Greg Lanier believes we need to understand that in Matthew the focus is on Jesus – so in literary fashion the saints resurrection is placed here – before focusing on Christ alone and his resurrection in the next chapter.

So, putting the account together – according to his timeline:

- 1) Jesus dies
 - 2) At his death many saints' tombs are split open – caused by the earthquake and the split rocks
 - 3) Jesus's tomb opens -- on Resurrection Sunday
 - 4) Jesus is raised → then the saints are raised – from tombs that had already been split open. There were no stones to roll away for them.
 - 5) These saints go into the city where they were seen by eyewitnesses.
6. Did these saints rise, and then die again?
7. What can we learn from this?

II. The Centurion -- Matthew 27:54

A. Who was this Man?

B. What he Saw and What he Said

1. He feared – because of what he saw.

2. His words and their meaning

Son of God, God's Son, or righteous man?
All are possible.

C. Twelve Hours with Jesus

III. Witnesses – from a Distance -- Matt. 27:55-56