

## **The Dead Don't Die**

*What is the purpose of a text that is neglected and often misunderstood?*

### **Matthew 27:51-53**

#### **I. Introduction**

“Night of the Living Dead”

Context: Matthew’s emphasis on supernatural events surrounding Jesus’s death

The resurrection of dead bodies – how to understand an often misunderstood text

#### **II. The torn veil (51a)**

The end of the old religious order that separates God from humanity

Hebrews 6:19-20, 10:19-22

The beginning of a new order including access to God’s presence

#### **III. An earthquake, split rocks, open tombs, raised bodies (51b-53)**

Who are these “saints?”

Analysis of the grammar of the text (1 Co 15:20)

These are natural (not glorified) bodies of saints who recently died

Four of the five signs accompanied Jesus’s death

The hope of the resurrection of the body

The important themes of the text

Jesus’s divine identity as the Son of God

The life-giving mission of Jesus’s death

The Gospel was going to be first preached to Jews in Jerusalem

Fulfilled Prophecy (John 5:25, Ezekiel 37:12-13)

#### **IV. A “hinge text” that unites Jesus’s death with His resurrection as one event**

Parallels between Matthew 27:51-54 and chapter 28

the earthquake (28:2)

resurrection (28:6)

movement to a city (Galilee/Jerusalem 28:7)

Centurions (False/Genuine professions 28:12-15)

Mary and Mary

A stone rolled in front/away from the tomb

Why is this account included here?

The end of the old order and beginning of the new

Jesus is the powerful Son of God whose death brings life

His death is salvific

Foreshadow of the Great Commission

Unifies the death and resurrection as one Gospel event

## **V. Application**

Do you believe the Gospel? (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

As formerly dead, now alive people, are you sharing the Gospel message?

Rejoice! One day we shall be changed! (1 Corinthians 15:51-58)

## **VI. Epilogue**

The final "shadow-Sabbath" rest