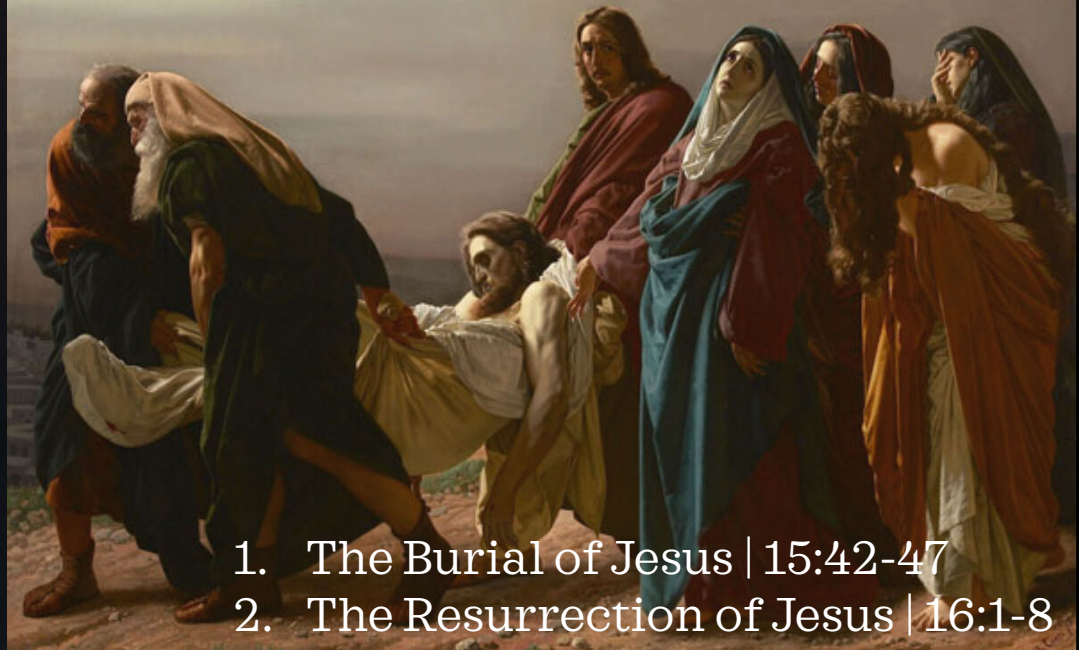


WEEK 59

Antonio Ciseri – The Transport of Christ to the Sepulcher 1864-70



1. The Burial of Jesus | 15:42-47
2. The Resurrection of Jesus | 16:1-8

The Burial of Jesus | 15:42-47

- 42-43 – *In Roman times, the execution of a man did not mark the final moment of his humiliation. Roman law dictated the loss of all honors in death, including burial.*
 - *It was not uncommon for a body to be left on a cross to rot or be eaten by birds or animals.*
 - *The release of a corpse depended solely on the generosity of the magistrate.*
 - *In practice, the body was often given to relatives for burial. Except in the case of high treason where such requests were denied on principle. The command was also issued that there could be no public mourning.*
- *The burial of the dead as an act of piety is attested in the OT (2 Samuel 21:12-14).*
 - *Josephus says “We consider it a duty to bury even enemies.”*
 - *Jewish law prescribed bodies should be taken down and buried before sundown (Duet 21:23). Although cursed of God, a body was not to hang on a cross after dark lest there be a defiling of the land.*
 - *And burial was afforded everyone, even criminals. There was an area marked far outside Jerusalem for burying executed criminals.*

The Burial of Jesus | 15:42-47

- *Normally request for burial would have come from family or disciples (see 6:29).*
 - *Mary must have been emotionally exhausted from these events.*
 - *There is no mention of Jesus' brothers or sisters.*
 - *And the disciples have fled.*
- *In the absence of those related to Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea courageously asked permission to bury the body of Jesus.*
 - *Joseph of Arimathea was a much-respected member of the Sanhedrin whose piety is clearly indicated by the statement "who was himself waiting for the Kingdom of God."*
 - *His surname indicates the village of Ramathain, 20 miles north of Jerusalem (where Samuel was from – 1 Samuel 1:1).*
 - *He would have been familiar with Roman requirements for permission to bury the body.*
 - *Despite the fact Jesus had been crucified for high treason and that Joseph was unrelated, he boldly petitioned Pilate for the right of burial.*
 - *The approach of the Sabbath which began at sundown lent urgency to his action.*

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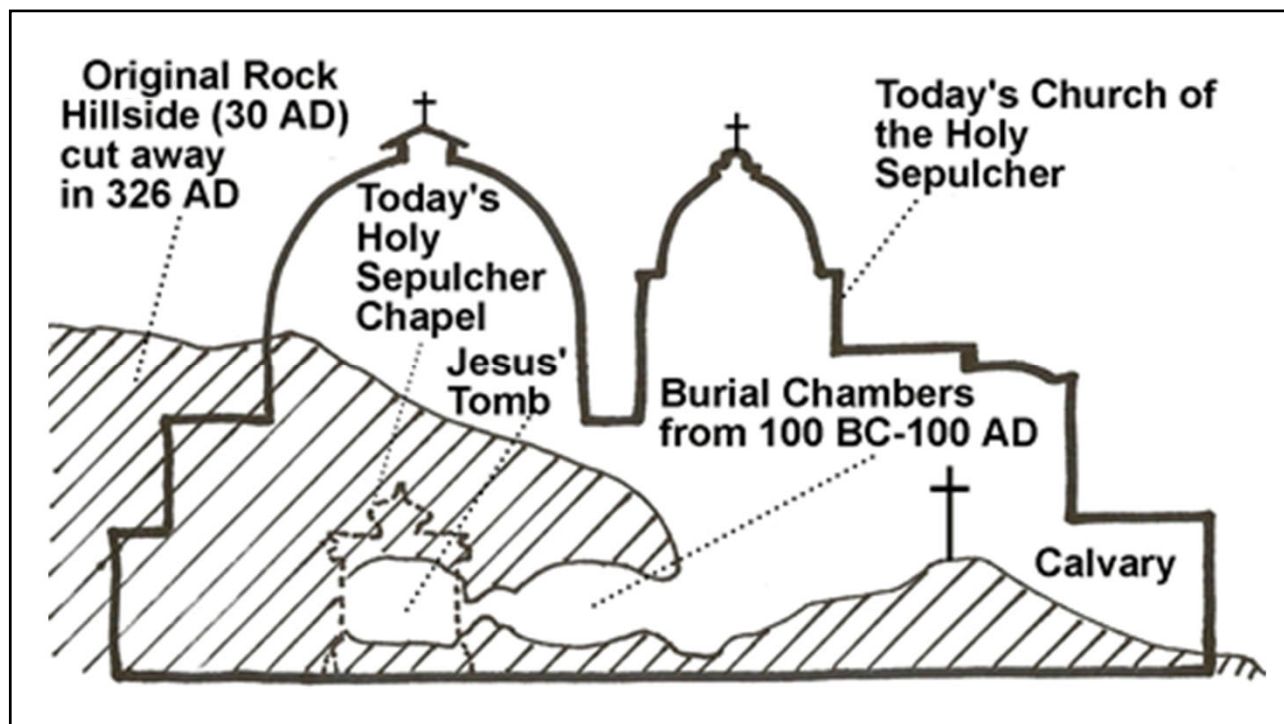
The Burial of Jesus | 15:42-47

- 44-45 – *Pilate took the request seriously. But was surprised Jesus was already dead.*
 - *Knowing crucified men often live 2-3 days before dying, there was something extraordinary about the rapid death of Jesus.*
 - *Mark alone records Pilate's examination of the centurion responsible for the execution to assure himself that Jesus had been dead for some time.*
 - *Pilate then released the corpse for burial. This action was wholly unusual given the circumstances (high treason, Joseph unrelated to Jesus).*
 - *Only if Pilate had no reservations of Jesus' innocence would he have granted this request. This is consistent with the trial before Pilate (15:1-15).*
- 46 – *Mark ascribes removal of the body, purchase of linen cloth, & actual burial to Joseph.*
 - *But we know Nicodemus helped him (John 19:39-42). Plus there were likely servants.*
 - *Joseph appears to be the agent through which these things were accomplished.*
 - *The way Mark describes the burial indicates traditional Jewish burial of honor.*

Where was (is) the tomb of Jesus? 3 options.

from Bible Archeology Report, Three Tombs of Jesus: Which is the Real One?, April 20, 2019, by Bryan Windle

1. *Located about 5km south of Old Jerusalem the Talpiot Family Tomb is not the tomb of Jesus. Discovered in 1980, it rose to fame with the 2007 Discovery Channel documentary, "The Lost Tomb of Jesus". Joseph, Mary, Jesus, Mary Magdalene and a Judah are all named as buried there. But Jesus' family was poor and from Galilee. They would have all had common burials, not expensive rock tombs. And in Galilee, not in Jerusalem. Plus, the name claimed as Mary Magdalene was not related to Jesus, nor Judah.*
2. *The Garden Tomb popularized in 1883 by Charles Gordon is from the Iron Age, 600 years before Christ. Christ however was buried in a new tomb. This is not the tomb of Jesus.*
3. *The site with the oldest attestation to being the resting place of Jesus of Nazareth lies within the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.*



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- *Early Christian writer Eusebius described how the emperor ordered the removal of the pagan temple that Hadrian had built and the discovery of the tomb beneath. He also wrote about Constantine's order to construct a church to honor the site.*
- *Archaeological research has demonstrated that this was the site of a Jewish cemetery in an ancient limestone quarry outside the walls of Jerusalem at the time of Jesus's death.*
- *Archaeologist John McRay sums it up best: "Although absolute proof of the location of Jesus' tomb remains beyond our reach, the archaeological and early literary evidence argues strongly for those who associate it with the Church of the Holy Sepulcher."*
- *47 – Two of the women present when Jesus died were also at his burial.*
 - *Testimony of women was invalid in early Jewish society. Accordingly, Mark's account is intended to be factual as their presence would not otherwise commend the story.*
 - *They "saw where he was laid" confirms the identity of the tomb specified in 16:5.*

The Resurrection of Jesus | 16:1-8

- *Mark concludes his gospel with this paragraph concerning the visit of the women to the tomb of Jesus and the dramatic announcement of his resurrection. Two significant points –*
 1. *No difference between the crucifixion and the resurrection as to the history or facts.*
 - *On a given date, in a given place, at a given time, the man Jesus having been crucified and buried two days earlier came forth from the tomb.*
 - *Mark stresses that the identity of the risen One is the same as the crucified One.*
 2. *Resurrection of Jesus cannot be explained by categories of human understanding.*
 - *The reality does not conform to our experience of death.*
 - *Apart from revelation, it remains merely a mysterious event in history.*
 - *History can confirm that the body disappeared but this does not explain the gospel.*
 - *This is why Mark focuses our attention on the presence of the divine messenger.*
 - *What halted the dissolution of the messianic movement centered in Jesus was resurrection.*
 - *It is the resurrection which creates the good news of the gospel in 1:1.*

The Resurrection of Jesus | 16:1-8

- *1 – At the conclusion of the Sabbath (after sunset on Saturday), the women who had witnessed the crucifixion and burial, purchased aromatic oils to anoint the body of Jesus.*
 - *Spices were not used for mummification but as an offset to the smell of a decomposing body.*
 - *In ancient Jewish tombs such bottles of perfume were often found.*
 - *Anoint = the oils were to be poured over the head as an act of piety and devotion.*
 - *That they came to the tomb at all indicates they had no idea of an immediate resurrection.*
- *2 – When the women came to the tomb is somewhat confusing.*
 - *“Very early” = normally before sunrise, 3-6 AM.*
 - *But text notes “just after sunrise”.*
 - *Most likely the time was around 6 AM immediately after sunrise.*

The Resurrection of Jesus | 16:1-8

- 3-4 – *Though the women had witnessed the burial (15:47), they had no knowledge of the official seal of the tomb by the Sanhedrin or of the guard (Mat 27:62-66).*
 - *But they did know about the stone & Mark alone preserves this fragment of conversation.*
 - *Setting the stone in the grooved bedrock was easy, removing it was very difficulty.*
 - *Mark does not record how, only that the women saw that the stone had been removed.*
- 5 – *Inside the tomb door was a visiting chamber separated from the burial chamber by a small door about 2 feet high (common to Jewish tombs of the period).*
 - *The women were astonished upon entering to see an angel clothed in a white robe.*
 - *It was an angel (though the word can mean valiant young man) because he brought revelation from God (angels are denoted almost always by some supernatural feature) and because he wears white (the color of prophecy or apocalyptic events in Scripture).*
 - *“White” is less a color reference than an indication of the dazzling character of their glory. Recall the transfiguration in 9:3.*
 - *The angel underscores both the final judgment and final redemption inherent in the resurrection. Recall Christ’s words in 8:38 and 13:26-27.*

The Resurrection of Jesus | 16:1-8

- 6 – *The actions of God are not always self-evident. So God provides revelation to help us interpret them.*
 - *The empty tomb is not by itself conclusive. The angel’s message of disclosure is conclusive.*
 - *The women had come to anoint the dead. But Jesus was risen!*
 - *The reference to “Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified” leaves no equivocation of the identity of the resurrected One.*
 - *“He is risen!” is followed by references specifically to the shelf on which the body had been placed. They stress that the tomb was indeed empty, that Jesus was indeed “not here”.*
- *Note the clarifying passages from Luke and Paul.*
 - *Acts 2:29-37 (Peter is the preacher 2:14, conviction & repentance is result 2:37-39)*
 - *1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (note “of first importance”)*

The Resurrection of Jesus | 16:1-8

- *The story of the theft of the body simply confirms the tomb was indeed empty (Mat 28:15). Also there was at this time an imperial edict against the theft of bodies and desecration of graves. In Mark, the certainty of the resurrection rests solely on the word of revelation.*
 - *Matthew and John were the disciples of Jesus who affirmed the empty tomb. (Matthew 28:1-10; John 20:1-10).*
 - *Eusebius records that Mark wrote the memories of Peter in the gospel he wrote, which testifies to the empty tomb (Mark 16:1-8).*
 - *Luke claims to have written an orderly account based on the testimonies of eyewitnesses (Luke 1:2-3) and records the empty tomb (Luke 24:1-12).*
 - *Both the guards and Chief Priests who pushed for Jesus's crucifixion acknowledged this fact and concocted a tale about the disciples stealing the body (Mat 28:11-15).*
- *That women were the first to receive the announcement of the resurrection is significant in light of contemporary attitudes. This fact was inconvenient and troublesome for the early Church. The early Church would not have invented this detail. The account is factual.*

The Resurrection of Jesus | 16:1-8

- *Remember why Christianity spread?*
 - *The passion of the Church.*
 - *Christians heralded it.*
 - *The transforming effect of the gospel.*
 - *The universal offer of salvation*
 - *Christianity offered answers to a crumbling empire.*
 - *The martyrdom of the faithful. Christians died well.*
- *7 – Having assured the women Jesus was alive, he commissioned them to tell his followers that they would be reunited in Galilee.*
 - *"His disciples and Peter" recalls 1:36. Peter is singled out because of repeated & emphatic denial of Jesus.*
 - *But Peter had been forgiven as Jesus confirms in 3:28.*
 - *The summons to Galilee = assurance that Peter had not been rejected by the risen Lord.*
 - *The message that Jesus goes before his disciples after the Shepherd is struck and all of them fall away repeats the promise of 14:28. And "there you will see him".*

The Resurrection of Jesus | 16:1-8

- 8 – *The women's response is in the category of terror. They fled unable to control their dread.*
 - *Those who are confronted with God's direct intervention in the historical process do not know how to react. This is because divine revelation lies beyond human experience.*
 - *The recalls Peter's experience at the transfiguration (9:6).*
 - *The women recognized the significance of the empty tomb.*
 - *For a time, they kept their experience to themselves because "they were afraid".*
 - *Both here and at the transfiguration fear was likely an expectation of judgment. A devout Jew would understand the beginning of the resurrection as a sign the end was at hand.*
 - *Fear is the constant reaction to the disclosure of Christ's transcendent dignity (4:41, 5:15, 33, 36, 6:50, 9:6, 32).*

The Resurrection of Jesus | 16:1-8

- *Mark concludes his gospel at this point.*
 - *That verse 8 is the official end of Mark's gospel is not seriously debated.*
 - *The contention that this was the original ending though, is debated.*
 - *That the gospel should end with fear seems incomplete.*
 - *Some propose that the lost ending includes an appearance to Peter and to the disciples in Galilee as promised. And an exhortation to faith and joy for believers.*
 - *But perhaps not. That Mark should conclude his gospel this way is consistent with the motifs of astonishment and fear Mark notes throughout his book. In verse 8, Mark sounds a note which he understood characterized all of Jesus' activity of healing, miracles, teaching, and his journey to Jerusalem.*
 - *Astonishment & fear qualify the events of Jesus' life.*
 - *That the empty tomb with its soul-shaking response should conclude the gospel is wholly consistent with the understanding of Mark.*
 - *A fitting conclusion to 1:1 "The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God."*