

## Easter | April 9th 2023

When Jesus died on the cross, He paid the perfect payment by His blood. The wrath of God had been satisfied. We couldn't come together at Easter to celebrate His resurrection if He didn't die. For His apostles and those who were following Jesus it was a terrifying moment that made no sense.

### Matthew 27:59-61 ESV

(59) And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud

(60) and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away.

(61) Mary Magdalene and the other Mary **were there, sitting opposite the tomb.**

The two Mary's watch as Joseph of Arimathea, put the body of Jesus into the tomb. Think about the flood of emotions they must have been feeling. They thought He was the Messiah. They thought He was going to offer redemption. There He was dead in a tomb. It is hard to imagine the despair and hopelessness they and the apostles felt. Then it was the sabbath. They couldn't do anything.

### Luke 23:56 ESV

(56) Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. **On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.**

They rested on the Sabbath just as they had been commanded. Think about what that Sabbath was like for them. I wonder how quiet the room was? Was there talking and planning for what they would do next, or did they sit in somber silence? Did they think back through Judas' actions trying to make sense of it all? Each time we see the disciples gathered immediately after the cross scripture mentions the doors are locked (John 20:19.) They had a tremendous fear. Would they be hunted down next? Then came Sunday morning.

### Mark 16:1-3 ESV

(1) **When the Sabbath was past**, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, **so that they might go and anoint Him.**

(2) And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb.

(3) And they were saying to one another, **"Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"**

The Mary's went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. They had no real plan for how to remove the stone. No plan for how to deal with the roman guards that had been assigned to it. They just wanted to anoint Him properly. Also notice, **they go the tomb that morning fully expecting to find a dead Jesus.** No one went that Easter Sunday morning expecting Jesus to rise. He had told them so many times, and yet they hadn't understood.

### Mark 9:31-32 ESV

(31) for He was teaching His disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and **they will kill Him.** And when He is killed, **after three days He will rise."**

(32) **But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask Him.**

This truth had been concealed from them. He told them so many times, and yet none of it made any sense. Even the religious leaders knew He had made these promises.

#### **Matthew 27:62-66 ESV**

(62) The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate

(63) and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while He was still alive, **'After three days I will rise.'**

(64) Therefore **order the tomb to be made secure until the third day**, lest His disciples go and steal Him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first."

(65) Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers. **Go, make it as secure as you can.**"

(66) So they went and **made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.**

I find it interesting that Jesus' claim that He was going to rise was not a secret. They knew what He claimed. No one thought He would be able to rise. These leaders wanted to prevent a hoax, and the women went to anoint a dead body. **Jesus had something else in mind.**

#### **Matthew 28:1-4 ESV**

(1) Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

(2) And behold, there was a great earthquake, **for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it.**

(3) His appearance was like **lightning**, and his clothing white as snow.

(4) And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men.

Each Gospel account adds various details. Notice how triumphant Matthew shows this moment. As the women approach the tomb there is a great earthquake. Then an angel appears, he looks like lightning. Think about what that must have been like. How terrifying and awe inspiring this angel was. The guards drop as dead men in his sight.

This angel rolls the stone back and sits on top of it. There is so much triumph and celebration in this action. This angel has the tremendous joy to open the tomb. **He sits on the top of that stone in triumph.**

#### **Matthew 28:5-6 ESV**

(5) But the angel **said to the women**, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

(6) He is not here, for **He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay.**

**Jesus was not there.** The stone had to be rolled away to let us see in the tomb, not to let Jesus out. It had to be moved to let these women and everyone else see an empty tomb. Jesus had risen! He had done it just as He said. He fulfilled His promise! He is not here! And the angel gets to invite the world **to come and see.** Many times, in scripture we are encouraged to come and see Jesus. We are encouraged to behold Him. To consider who He is.

**Matthew 1:21-23 ESV**

- (21) She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”
- (22) All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:
- (23) **“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel”** (which means, **God with us**).

We are told to Behold; it is a command to look and see. A virgin gave birth. He is to be called Jesus because **He will save us from our sin**. He is the savior; He is God with us. Jesus is fully God and fully man. He had to be born of a virgin so that He would have no sin nature. The sin nature is passed on from the father. Jesus was perfect and had no sin nature.

John the Baptist encourages us to see who Jesus is.

**John 1:29 ESV**

- (29) The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, **“Behold, the Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world!

Again, we are commanded to look and see. This time it is to see that Jesus is the Lamb of God. He came to be the perfect sacrifice. He came to offer Himself the perfect lamb. The only sacrifice that could appease the wrath of God. For so many years the Israelites had offered countless sacrifices.

**Hebrews 10:1-4 NLT**

- (1) The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow, **a dim preview of the good things to come, not the good things themselves**. The sacrifices under that system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship.
- (2) If they could have provided perfect cleansing, the sacrifices would have stopped, for the worshipers would have been purified once for all time, and their feelings of guilt would have disappeared.
- (3) But instead, **those sacrifices actually reminded them of their sins year after year**.
- (4) **For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.**

Year after year these animal sacrifices had to be given. Every time it was a reminder of sin. After each sacrifice there was already need for another sacrifice. They showed our sin over and over again. We needed a perfect sacrifice that would be offered one time. **Behold the Lamb of God**. Jesus is that perfect sacrifice.

**We must take time to come and see who Jesus is.** Twice during His trial Pilate presents Jesus to the crowd. Each time He announces Jesus in a different way. I am convinced that Pilate spoke more truth about Jesus than He had any clue of.

**John 19:5-6 ESV**

- (5) **So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the Man!”**
- (6) When the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, “Crucify Him, crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.”

The first time Pilate presents Jesus he tells the crowd to behold, take time to see, the Man. He is presenting Jesus to them. Jesus has been beaten and mockingly dressed up with a crown of thorns and purple robe. He is the Son of Man. God took on flesh and became a man. He had to take on human flesh in order to have a body and blood to present to be sacrificed. The crowd's response is to crucify Him; they refuse to see Him. The second time Pilate presents Jesus to the crowd he says:

#### **John 19:14 ESV**

(14) Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. **He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"**

(15) They cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, **"Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."**

This time Pilate is looking for a way to release Jesus. He tells them to behold, look at their King. The crowd does not want this kind of king. They go so far to say their only king is Caesar even though they hated Roman rule. Pilate has no idea the truth He just said.

#### **Zechariah 9:9 ESV**

(9) Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! **Behold, your King is coming to you;** righteous and having salvation is He, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Jesus is the King who come at the triumphal entry on a donkey. The entire Old Testament has been begging people to come and see, behold who Jesus is. Even Pilate who has no clue what He is saying is fulfilling scripture.

Behold Jesus. Born without a sin nature, the perfect sacrifice, who is fully God, and fully man, who will be the King for all of eternity. **The empty tomb the angel encouraged us to come see verified that Jesus was all these things.** He actually rose. It confirmed everything the scripture ever said about Him. And yet even with the empty tomb, **Thomas had to see Him, to believe.**

#### **John 20:24-25 ESV**

(24) Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came.

(25) So the other disciples told him, **"We have seen the Lord."** But he said to them, **"Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails, and place My finger into the mark of the nails, and place My hand into His side, I will never believe."**

Thomas says I have to see His hands. I saw the nails go through them. I have to see His side where the spear pierced Him. We can't be too hard on Thomas, the other 10 already saw Him.

#### **John 20:26-27 ESV**

(26) **Eight days later,** His disciples were inside again, and **Thomas was with them.** Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

(27) Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see My hands; and put out your hand, and place it in My side. **Do not disbelieve, but believe."**

Jesus shows Thomas so much grace. He doesn't chastise Thomas. He lovingly reaches out to Him. He gives Him an opportunity to see His hands, to see His side. Look at Thomas's reaction.

### **John 20:28-31 ESV**

(28) Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Thomas has seen the resurrected Jesus and responds immediately.

### **John 20:29-31 ESV**

(29) Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen Me? **Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**"

(30) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;

(31) but these are written so that you may **believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.**

Jesus talked about you and I. We have believed in Him even though we have not seen Him physically resurrected. There actually is a blessing for believing based on the Word of God. This is why we have the Word. John says He wrote His gospel so that we may believe. Jesus is the Christ. The Messiah who would make the perfect payment for sins on the cross. He is the Son of God, fully God and fully man. We can have eternal life by believing in Him. Behold Jesus. Take the time to really look at who He is.

### **1 Peter 1:8-9 ESV**

(8) **Though you have not seen Him, you love Him.** Though you do not now see Him, **you believe in Him** and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,

(9) obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Our belief in Jesus does not stop once we are saved. We continue in our trust of Him. We have not seen Him but we are to grow in our love for Him. When we start to see Jesus, it will change everything. We will grow in our love for Him. If we don't see Him, if we don't take time to behold who Jesus is, then we won't love Him. Look at what a difference it made in Moses' life when He started to see Jesus.

### **Hebrews 11:24-27 ESV**

(24) By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

(25) choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

(26) He considered **the reproach of Christ** greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, **for he was looking to the reward.**

(27) By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, **for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.**

Moses was looking forward to the reward. Over 1000 years before Jesus came, Moses was trusting and seeing Him who is invisible. He realized that life trusting the Christ will come and walking with God was better than anything the world would have to offer.

He was able to forsake Egypt and persevere in pursuing God because He saw who is invisible. Moses by faith was looking forward to the perfect Lamb of God. He was looking forward to the perfect King who was to come. As He looked forward to Christ it started to change Moses. Seeing Christ for who He truly is, will forever change us as believers.

### 1 John 3:1-3 ESV

- (1) **See what kind of love the Father has given to us**, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.
- (2) Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; **but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is.**
- (3) And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure.

As believers we don't know what we are truly going to be like in the end. We get little glimpses of what a resurrected body is like, but we really have no idea what is waiting for us and how glorious it is. When we see Christ. When we see the resurrected savior, we will be changed. We will be like Him! If this is our future if this is what is waiting for us, we are called to purify ourselves now. We should start to live for Him right now.

### Matthew 28:6 ESV

- (6) He is not here, for **He has risen, as He said. Come, see** the place where He lay.

**He rose just as He said. He will come back just as He said.** Listen to Jesus' proclamation at the end of the book of Revelation.

### Revelation 22:12-13 NAS95

- (12) "**Behold**, I am coming quickly, and **My reward is with Me**, to render to every man according to what he has done.
- (13) "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."