

Mount Olive Wednesday Night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

March 23, 2022

John 19: 38 - 41 and John 20: 1

38 And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. 39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. 40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. 42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

John 20: 1

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

Verses 38 and 39

And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. 39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

*Here is what we know about Joseph of Arimathaea:

- He was a disciple of Jesus
- He kept his belief in Jesus secret - some theologians feel he should have been more open with his convictions
- The reason Joseph kept his belief secret was his fear of the Jewish leaders
- Yet he boldly asked Pilate for the body of Jesus when he died
- He was wealthy enough to have a brand new grave site nearby

*Here are some legends about Joseph of Arimathaea:

- He became a missionary to England
- He took a thorn or plant that the thorn came from to England
- His staff was from the thorn tree that the crown of thorns came from
- He planted this staff when he landed in Somersetshire, England
- Out of this stick sprouted a white thorn tree
- On Christmas Day this type of tree buds in the morning, blooms at noontime and the blooms die at night.

*If Joseph had been open about his beliefs back in Jerusalem, he may have been among those who were persecuted by Paul and others after the resurrection. The same persecution occurs in China, Korea, Africa and Russia today.

What would we do if we were persecuted? Would we gather, hide or be killed?

One curse of COVID was the closing of churches to assemble. Scripture says to not forget to gather together for worship. It was/is an exasperating time that gives us a taste of what it could be like if we were not born in the USA.

Pastor Tom reminded us that the “Draw the Circle” book says we should be bold in our prayers. How will that affect us in days, weeks, months or years to come? Think about what kind of bold prayer Joseph must have prayed to be able to approach Pilate for the body of Jesus and to bury him in his own grave and then go on to be a missionary.

Verses 40 - 42

Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. 42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

Discussion began pertaining to the linens that were used for Jesus' burial and how they were found in the grave after the resurrection. More talk followed about where Jesus got the 'raiment' he wore when he did come alive. Also noted was the customary manner in which the linens were folded: according to Jewish custom they were folded in a way that would indicate that he was returning to that place.

*As noted in verse 41, the tomb was in a 'Stone Garden'. We spoke briefly last week about the beginning of sin occurred in the Garden of Eden. Jesus prayed for the cup to be removed from Him in the Garden of Gethsemane and now He was buried and rose up from the dead in a stone garden.

* The women had come to finish the anointing/embalming process that was started on Friday but had to stop because of the Sabbath day custom of no work on that day. These women truly expected to find Jesus' body in that tomb. But their first thoughts would have been, 'Who is going to roll away that huge stone so we can get in there?'

John 20: 1

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

*This first day of the week follows the idea of the women not being able to continue working on Jesus' body on the Sabbath day, Saturday. So comes our custom today of worship and rest on Sunday, the first day of the week.

The 4 Gospels include other details from the writers' different perspectives:

Matthew 28: 1-6

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. 2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: 4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. 5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

*This account from Matthew includes the earthquake and the angel of the Lord. These events caused the professional soldiers to faint! (v.5)

*Also to note the similarity of the vision in Daniel 10:6 and the description of Moses when he came down from the mountain to this angel of the Lord: a bright countenance and clothing as white as snow. Another interesting thought was that we will be taken up to heaven naked but the Lord will give us white robes as well.

*In verse 5, the angel speaks to the women, reassuring them about their fears and where Jesus is.

Pastor Jon added that when Jesus died with all of our sins upon him, he physically went to the depths of Hell to deposit our sin there. He experienced the sins just as we do. Then on the 3rd day He rose from the dead.

Much good, thought-provoking discussion tonight.

Good night to all on the phone.

Go in peace, go in joy, go in love!

May the Lord watch between me and thee

While we are absent one from the other.
