



The Empty Tomb

By Ken Terry January 18, 2024

TODAY'S READING: John 20

I would like you to think back for a moment about when Jesus was with His disciples, and He told them His time had come. It was time for Him to die and shed His blood for the atonement for sin. *“Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: ‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You’”* (John 17:1, NKJV).

His time had come. You see, Jesus had spoken to His disciples time and time again about the crucifixion, His death, burial, and the resurrection, being raised on the third day. They had heard this and then it came to pass, the Son of God was killed and laid to rest in the tomb. Please trek with me, Jesus God Almighty was killed by lawless men, a jealous High Priest, and the evil Pharisees. How could this be? They had no authority over Jesus! But it happened for it was prophesied, *“He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people, He was stricken”* (Isaiah 53:7-8, NKJV).

Now think about their frame of mind when the horrific event was over and they went on their way from that place. Can you imagine their despair, broken hearts, and seeming disillusionment? That would be a lot for anyone, and these faithful few thought it was all over until Mary discovered the unimaginable. *“Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb”* (John 20:1, NKJV).

How could this be! The tomb was heavily guarded by selected Roman soldiers appointed by Pilate himself! *"Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.' So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard"* (Matthew 27:65-66, NKJV).

The tomb was empty, and Mary was beside herself. Her Lord had been taken, as she thought and there was no telling what was being done with the body of the Son of God. That may have been her thought until, *"But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain"* (John 20:11-12, NKJV).

The Angels calmed her spirit and Jesus granted her His peace and His comfort. The rest of the story--the significance of the empty tomb--sets the foundation of our faith. For without the tomb being empty, there would be no risen Savior! The prophecies of the Old Testament Messiah would not have come to fruition and considered mere stories and fiction for good dramatic reading. You see, there would be no New Testament period without the risen Savior, Jesus! I would like to bring one more thought out. In this chapter Jesus materializes in the room of His disciples after His resurrection. *"Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, 'Peace be with you'"* (John 20:19, NKJV).

This is Jesus first appearance to them. All the disciples were there except Thomas. When Thomas was told of this sighting, he did not believe it. Thomas made a dogmatic statement that has gone down and repeated throughout the ages. *"...We have seen the Lord."* So he said to them, *'Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe'"* (John 20:25, NKJV).

This is Jesus' response to Thomas unbelieving heart; *"And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, 'Peace to you!' Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving but believing'"* (John 20:26-27, NKJV).

My friends, what will you do with Jesus! What will you do with Him who lived the sinless life you should have lived and died the death you should have died due to your sin? Do you believe in Him? If you believe, accept, and trust Him to be who He said he was, the Son of God, Blessed are you because of your faith. Listen to the departing words Jesus gave to "Doubting Thomas." *"Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed'"* (John 20:29, NKJV).

PRAYER: Our Father in heaven, we come before You to thank You for spending time with us during our reading and study in Your Word today. Father, we thank You for Jesus, Your Son who sacrificed His life, so we could be spiritually awakened and have a loving relationship with you, in Him. Father, we ask that You continue to mold us and shape us more into His image so we can be prove ourselves worthy to be called the children of the living God. We ask this in the matchless name of Christ Jesus our Lord, amen.

TOMORROW'S READING: Luke 24

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