

After His Death.

DECEMBER 3

MARK XV : 38-47

Golden Text, Verse 39.

COMPARE Mat. 27 : 51-66 : Luke 23 : 45-56 : John 19 : 31-42. The Romans would have left the bodies on the cross till they had wasted away or had been torn to pieces by vultures : but not so with the Jews. A dead body must, according to their laws, be buried on the day of death, before sunset. But especially must it be done in this case, for the next day was the great paschal Sabbath, and to leave these corpses exposed would be to defile the holy city on that day. A deputa- tion of the chief priests therefore waited on Pilate for permission to put the crucified ones to death if they were still alive and to bury them out of sight at once. To prevent the possibility of a rescue, the cruel custom of the Roman soldiery in such cases was to break the legs of the victims by blows of clubs. This was indeed done to the two thieves, but as Jesus was already dead his body was spared that indignity—that the scripture might be fulfilled Jn. 19 : 31-33. Thus the symbolism of the paschal lamb was unwittingly preserved, “neither shall ye break a bone thereof,” Exo. 12 : 46. V. 38. *The veil was rent*—the costly veil of purple and gold which covered the entrance to the holy of holies, into which only the high priest could enter, and that but once a year, Exo. 30 : 10. The rending of the veil signified that a way of access to God was now opened to all, through the blood of Jesus Christ, Heb. 9 : 7-9, 24-25 : V. 39. *The centurion*—The captain of the band, who had charge of the execution. Even this heathen testifies to Christ’s divinity. V. 40. *Mary Magdalene*, see Luke 8 : 2, often mistaken for “the woman which was a sinner” in Luke 7 : 37, and sometimes for the sister of Lazarus. *Mary the mother of James*—the wife of Alphaeus, Matt. 10 : 3. *Salome*—Zebedee’s wife, mother of James and John, probably the sister of Mary mother of Jesus. V. 43. *Joseph of Arimathea*—a rich member of the Council, but at heart a disciple, and *crazed the body*—asked as a favour that he might be allowed to make such amends as he still could for his cowardice in not taking a decided stand for Jesus while he was living. V. 44. *Pilate marvelled*—at the early death of Jesus, who had only been six hours on the cross, and to find that this influential man was a sympathizer. V. 46. *Pilate gave*—willingly consented, perhaps to the relief of his conscience. V. 46. *Fine linen*—for a winding sheet. Nicodemus provided the spices, Jn. 19 : 39, and these two, no longer “secret” disciples, with such aid as they required from others about the cross, tenderly took the body down and wrapped it in the linen within the fold of which were plentifully strewn the myrrh and aloes. This being all the embalment that time permitted, the body was hastily conveyed to a tomb, cut out of the rock face in a garden near by, Jn. 19 : 41. *Rolled a stone*—such tombs were closed by a round large stone like a mill-stone. The Saviour rode into Jerusalem upon an ass “whereon yet never man sat, and now he is laid in a tomb “wherein never man before was laid,” that it might be seen that in all things he was SEPARATE FROM SINNERS. Heb. 7 : 26.

His Resurrection.

DECEMBER 10.

MARK XVI : 1-8

Golden Text, 1 Cor. 15 : 20.

COMPARE Matt. 28 : 1-8 : Luke 24 : 1-11 : John 20 : 1-21. The resurrection of the dead and the immortality of the soul are fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, which were only dimly apprehended by some of the Old Testament patriarchs, Job 19 : 25-27 : Isa. 26 : 19 : Dan. 12 : 1-3. But in the New Testament, and by the resurrection of Christ, they have been clearly established, 2 Tim. 1 : 10. The fact of Christ’s resurrection rests upon the strongest possible evidence. The testimony of eye-witnesses, 1 Cor. 15 : 3-8, is corroborated by Josephus who, writing in A. D. 60, admits that “the Christ whom Pilate crucified appeared to his disciples alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold.” The importance of it cannot be overestimated. (1). It affords indisputable proof of Christ’s divinity ; (2) of the life immortal beyond the grave. (3). It is the pledge and assurance of our own resurrection. See 1 Cor. 15 : 1-22. V. 1. *When the Sabbath was past*—after sunset on our Saturday. *Had bought*—The women had provided the spices with which they intended to anoint the body immediately after their Lord’s death, but they would not break the Sabbath by even attending to this duty. V. 2. *Very early*—at the dawn of day. Having lain in the tomb Friday afternoon, all Saturday, and part of Sabbath, Christ thus rose on “the third day,” Ch. 9 : 31 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 4, hence called “the Lord’s Day.” Rev. 1 : 10, Vs. 3, 4. *Who will roll us away the stone?*—It would have taken two or three men to do what was done by the angel. Matt. 28 : 2. Often in the experience of Christians doubts and difficulties in the way of duty are removed by an unseen hand. V. 5. *Mary seeing the stone removed*, and supposing the body to have been abstracted by the Jews, ran to find Peter and John. Jn. 20 : 2. The other women entered the sepulchre and saw a *young man*—the angel of the Lord. Matt. 28 : 2. V. 6. *It is risen*—To a woman Christ made the first announcement of his Messiahship, Jn. 4 : 26, and to women the first intimation was given of his resurrection. V. 7. *Till his disciples*—The salutation of the early Christians to one another on Easter morn was, “Christ is risen.” The admonition from this lesson is,—“Go tell that he is risen.”—Spread the good news that Jesus died for us and rose again, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life, Jn. 3 : 16. *And Peter*—a special token of love to the one who had so lately denied him, but had repented. *He goeth into Galilee*—to which these women belonged. *There shall ye see him*—refers to those public manifestations of Himself to large numbers of the disciples at once, Jn. 21 : 14 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 6 ; Matt. 28 : 16, for he was seen by these very women almost immediately after this, Vs. 9, 10. *Fled from the sepulchre*—with mingled feelings of doubt, joy, and fear. *Neither said any thing*—that is on their way to tell the disciples. They were too excited to speak to any one on the way, but obedient to their instructions they hastened to tell the disciples and Peter. There is a moral resurrection. Col. 3 : 1.