

James Rafferty **THURSDAY LESSON 12 LAID TO REST**

September 19

Daniel - a King dressed as a criminal judged by a criminal dressed as a king

Ryan - reminding us of the physical sufferings of Christ

John - reminding us of the co crucifixion and co resurrection and a co eternal life.

Jill-

Laid to Rest

Read Mark 15:42-47. What is the significance of Joseph of Arimathea's intervention, especially because all of Jesus' disciples were nowhere to be seen?

And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

43 Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother of* Joses beheld where he was laid.

RESTING ON SABBATH FROM HIS FINISHED WORK OF SALVATION AS HE DID
AT CREATION

GEN 2:1-3

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

John 19:30:

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.

2COR 5:14, 17, 18, 21

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

17 Therefore if any man *be in Christ*, *he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

18 And all things *are of God*, *who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;*

21 For he hath made him *to be sin for us*, *who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

ISAIAH 63:3

I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people *there was none with me:*

After all that drama, the more "mundane" things happen next. For starters, dead people always have to be buried. But several factors in what follows are quite touching spiritually, and others are extremely important historically.

In this passage, Joseph of Arimathea appears for the first and last time in the Gospel of Mark. He was a respected member of the Sanhedrin and one of what are called the "urban elites." As a wealthy and respected man, he had standing with the governor, which explains how he could dare approach Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus. It is a touching detail that a member of the council took such interest in Jesus' burial. Meanwhile, where were Jesus' trusted disciples in all this?

One historical detail of extreme importance here is the verification of the death of Jesus. Mark 15:43 tells of Joseph's request for the body of Jesus. But Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was already dead (*Mark 15:44*). He, therefore, summoned the centurion in charge of the crucifixion and asked if Jesus were already dead. The centurion confirmed that it was so.

The reason this is important is because of the later claim by some that Jesus did not die on the cross but only fainted. The testimony of the centurion to the Roman governor directly counters that assertion. The Romans did, after all, know how to execute criminals.

Joseph brought a linen shroud to wrap Jesus in and laid His body in a tomb hewn from rock. This tomb was large enough to walk into (*Mark 16:5*). Along with Joseph, the Gospel writer notes two women who saw the location—Mary Magdalene, and Mary,

the mother of Joses. These two, along with Salome, watched the crucifixion from a distance; all three will go to the tomb on Sunday morning to, they think, complete their work of embalming Jesus (*Mark 16:1*).

Why the reference to these three women? They will be the witnesses to the empty tomb in Mark 16, and thus are important witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus.

How ironic that Jesus' followers are "missing in action" while a member of the Sanhedrin, the very body that condemned Jesus, becomes the "hero" here. How can we be sure that, in crucial times, we are not missing in action, either?

Joseph of Arimathia - ONE OF THE GREAT TRIUMPHS OF THE CROSS!

FRIDAY

September 20

Further Thought: Read Ellen G. White, "In Pilate's Judgment Hall," "Calvary," and " 'It Is Finished,' " in *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 723-764.

"Pilate longed to deliver Jesus. But he saw that he could not do this, and yet retain his own position and honor. Rather than lose his worldly power, he chose to

sacrifice an innocent life. How many, to escape loss or suffering, in like manner sacrifice principle. Conscience and duty point one way, and self-interest points another. The current sets strongly in the wrong direction, and he who compromises with evil is swept away into the thick darkness of guilt."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 738.

"Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all. He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon His heart. The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father's mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme. But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father's reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt."—Page 753.

Discussion Questions:

1. Look at how central the theology of substitution was to Ellen G. White (and the Bible; see, for instance, Isaiah 53). Why is any theology that in any way downplays the central role of substitution and Christ's dying in our stead, paying in Himself the penalty for our sins, a false theology?
2. Who or what is the "Barabbas" in today's world that gets asked for instead of Jesus?
3. What should the story of Joseph of Arimathea tell us about not judging outward appearances?
4. Review Daniel 9:24-27. Why should you be able to give a Bible study on this section to anyone who asks? Can you?

MESSIAH BOOK