

Easter Series: The Last Week of Jesus. Day 7 Jesus's Descent to the Dead

Mark 15:42-16:2



Mark 15:42-16:2 *And when evening had already come, because it was Preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 43 Joseph of Arimathea came, a*

prominent Council member, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. 44 And Pilate wondered if He had died by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He already died. 45 And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. 46 And when Joseph had bought a linen cloth and took Him down, he wrapped Him in the linen cloth and laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. 47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were looking on to see where He had been laid. 1 And when the Sabbath passed, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him. 2 And very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.

1) In The Decent Christ Experienced Death. When Mark records that Jesus “breathed His last” that means Jesus physically died. Jesus stopped breathing, His heart stopped beating, and He died. As Saturday starts it does so with Jesus’s dead body having been placed in a tomb. But

through His body died, His soul lived. Both Old and New Testaments affirm that though our bodies die our souls continue to live somewhere. Jesus is no different than us in this regard, that He experience death just like all other people. Since His soul lived that means He had to be somewhere and on Saturday that somewhere was the place of the righteous dead.

2) In The Decent Christ Conquered the Grave. Though Mark does not record the activities of Jesus on Saturday, other biblical passages shed light of what Jesus did while in the place of the righteous dead. When Jesus rose from the dead He brought with Him the “keys of Death and Hades.” These things were not given to Him; He had to go and take them. This is why both Isaiah and Paul can rejoice that “death is swallowed up in victory.” When Jesus arrived in the place of the dead it was as a conqueror who had come to defeat the grave, to remove the sting of death, and to forever establish His reign over all who are in the grave.

3) In The Decent Christ Proclaimed Victory. The Apostle Peter tells us that while Jesus was in the place of the dead that not only did He conquer the grave, but He also proclaimed victory to all who are there. This proclamation of victory was the news that all the righteous dead had been waiting for while at the same time served as a final message of defeat for the disobedient spirits and non-believers from the beginning of time. Just as Jesus came on earth to proclaim the will and purposes of God for the living, so too did He go to the place of the dead to proclaim the eternal will and purposed of God to the dead. In death, Jesus did not continue to suffer, that all ended on the cross. Rather, Saturday of the last week of Christs was the beginning of His rise to glory starting first among the dead, and being revealed to the living come resurrection Sunday.