

INTRO: Sunrise sermon last year re: Mary Magdalene; theme = lesser known characters in Bible. This year, not people; substitutes. Rather than lamb or goat, today we will focus on a burial tomb.

I. ABOUT THE TOMB

A. A probable description of the scene

1. Jesus pronounced dead (spear) late Friday afternoon
2. rich Joseph of Arimathea requested Jesus' body from Pilate
3. Joseph's **new** tomb was near site of crucifixion
4. excursus on church of holy sepulcher vs. Gordon's tomb (photo)
5. Joseph and Nicodemus wrapped body with linen cloths (plural) w/100 lbs. of spices
6. Matt.27:60 **new** tomb cut in rock...rolled great (**mega**) stone to the door...
7. next day, guard request; stamp/seal on Saturday

B. Evidence of a Resurrection from the tomb

1. women came at first light; Mary Magdalene runs to tell; John and Peter look and leave
2. saw stone rolled, cloths lying there, folded face cloth; no haste; a 'made bed'
3. angels' message to women, "Come, see the place..." (Matt. 28:6)

C. Human eyewitness testimony

1. Matt.28:11 soldiers told chief priests '...all the things that had happened'
2. Jesus appeared to the women on the road (Matt.28:9)
3. and to Mary Magdalene at the tomb (John 20:14)
4. to the Emmaeus disciples (Luke 24:13)
5. Luke 24:34 ...Lord appeared to Peter
6. 'the eleven' in the upper room (John 20:19 & Luke 24:34)
7. former unbeliever Saul of Tarsus writes about more than 500 eyewitnesses

II. SOME CONCLUSIONS

A. God's word is reliable

1. remember Wed. evening #5 re: Isaiah 53:9 ...made His grave with the rich at His death...
2. great Old Testament 'substitution' chapter foretold Joseph of Arimathea

3. plus the 'sign of Jonah' Jesus applied to Himself (Matt.12:39 to Pharisees)
4. so they knew, understood; reason they requested a guard!

B. There are some 'substitution' examples here, also

1. Joseph of Arimathea's tomb instead of Joseph of Nazareth's tomb
2. Joseph's tomb was used by Jesus instead of Joseph himself
 - a. although he may have reused it for himself
 - b. would you?
3. Jesus' empty tomb prefigures ours
 - a. another 'firstborn' lesson (Col.1:18 He is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the preeminence)
 - b. remember those 'firstborn' examples: lamb at Exodus to save firstborn in each house; lamb/pigeons for each firstborn 'redemption'
 - c. Jesus rose from the dead as our firstborn substitute because we cannot do it ourselves
 - d. another promise in upper room: ...yet a little while and the world will see Me no more, but you see Me; **because I live, you shall live also** (John 14:19)

CONCLUSION: The wages of sin is death, and we all shall die because we all are sinners. But Jesus died, bearing on Himself, the iniquities of us all. Our substitute was laid in a new tomb, and then became alive and victoriously came out of that burial place. Because our Substitute lives, we who confess Him as Savior and Lord will live also. Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed. Hallelujah. Amen.