

## **Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ**

### **Sleepy Guards and Awakened Saints Go Into The City**

Last time...the risen Lord appeared to the faithful women; they saw and heard and touched Him, and witnessed all of that to the 11...who did not believe them, except John

Peter and John, hearing Mary Magdalene's report about the missing body of Jesus, raced to the tomb;

- Peter wondered...What has happened?
- John believed...Jesus is risen from the dead, just as He had repeatedly foretold; by faith, John "saw" the risen Lord

John 5:21      *For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*;  
even so the Son quickeneth whom he will*

Jairus' daughter, widow of Nain's son, Lazarus...

John 10:17-18

With the exception of John, a thoughtful soul, the disciples did not believe the testimony of the women that Jesus was risen from the dead

Does their unbelief have any impact of the truth that Jesus is risen from the dead?

None! So they are "opposing themselves"...not believing what Jesus has said

This time...we encounter more unbelief, a very determined hard-hearted unbelief, in the Resurrection of Jesus as sleepy guards and awakened saints come into Jerusalem

We will be in the Gospel of Matthew

### **Matt 28**

v11      they were going...came into they city:

As they, the women (v1-10), were going into Jerusalem to tell the 11 to go to Galilee to see the risen Lord there, some of the guards were also going into Jerusalem

Posted by the chief priests and Pharisees to guard the tomb of Jesus  
(Ch 27:62-66), they were coming into the city; i.e.

Calvary and the nearby tomb are outside the city  
[ map ]

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after Jesus' crucifixion, the guards went to report to those had posted them at the tomb, declaring all that was done...v2-4

When they "woke up"/came to their senses, the tomb they were to guard was open and empty...no body of Jesus

Their mission did not have any impact of the execution of God's Plan of Redemption of fallen men, including them

v12-14 taken counsel...large money...secure you:

The chief priests and the elders (Sanhedrin) hear the report of the "failed" tomb guards...earthquake, angel, rolling stone

The Jews huddle up – "Now what are we going to do??"

After deliberation, their solution is worldly and irrational and illegal

In yet another perversion of justice (God's and man's), the Jewish leaders give the guards

- bribe/hush money...the judges are bribing the witnesses
  - Ex 23:8                      And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous
  - Prov 17:23                A wicked *man* taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment
  - 1 Sam 8:3                 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment. (vs 1 Sam 12:3)
  - Ps 26:10                  In whose hands (bloody men, murderers) *is* mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes
  - Amos 5:12                For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate *from their right*
- a story...a different narrative, their narrative
  - Don't tell anybody what you saw (v2-4)
  - Give a false witness to keep the truth a secret
  - Spread a false rumor
  - Lie
  - (self-incriminate yourselves – we were derelict in our duties)
- "assurances" of covering for them, protecting them from repercussions that may come from Pilate if he gets wind of what really happened

Note: If they were Roman guards, they would have been executed and nothing and no one could have saved their lives

The religious and civic leaders of the Jews are like...their father (John 8:44)

- liars
- murderers
- false witnesses
- deniers of the Word of God

They preach a counterfeit truth

v15 took the money...as they were taught...until this day:

The guards, in spite of their personal eyewitness experience,

- took the hush money/bribe
- buried the truth deep in their corrupt minds
- spread the lie they had been taught, playing the role of bumbling, unfaithful watchmen  
That's their story and they are sticking to it!
- sold out the absolute, unchanging Truth for some silver that perishes

And...the people bought it, believing unto this day (about 30 years after the fact) that the disciples of Jesus Nazareth stole His body, rather than believing "He is risen!"

Has anyone heard this lie?

It persists even to this day

The chief priests and elders and Pharisees

1. WILL not believe that Jesus rose from the dead;

Their will is to not believe it

Their will is to believe a lie rather than to believe the Truth

Such is their hatred for Jesus

John 15:23-25

Such is their love for Self

John 11:47-48

John 12:42-43

They obstinately remain dead in their sin

John 8:21-24

2. Led/taught others into believing a lie (keep James 3:1 in mind)

The guards they bought off

The people who believed their lie

Their will is to not believe that Jesus rose from the dead, which means,  
they did not believe what happened next:  
While the sleepy guards came into the city...  
others were coming into the city as well!

## Matt 27

v52-53 graves...many bodies...after His resurrection...appeared to many:  
Not only was Jesus' tomb opened that morning, so were many others  
(earthquake, Matt 28:2)  
Not only did Jesus walk out of His tomb (bodily resurrected), so did many others  
(bodily resurrected)!

Others: saints, believers, those made innocent and righteous by faith  
Who "slept" like Lazarus "slept"

John 11:11-14

John 5:25

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming,  
and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of  
the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

On Resurrection Sunday morning...AFTER Jesus was resurrected  
(Jesus is ALWAYS first)...their tombs opened, they walked out...  
and they walked into Jerusalem, being seen plainly by many people

### Questions

1. Where did these resurrected people come from?

From Abraham's Bosom/Paradise

Luke 16:19-31

They are believers in the Messiah to come who lived and  
physically died before Jesus came then rose from the dead  
They were awaiting the arrival of the Messiah

Heb 11:39 And these all, having obtained a good report  
through faith, received not the promise

Jesus, the Promise of resurrection, came to them in Paradise after  
He laid down His life on the Cross

Jesus preached the Gospel to them...Heb 10:7

The blood of bulls and goats and sheep, which covered their sin,  
was a shadow of His Blood, the Lamb of God Who came to  
take away (remove, forgive) their sin

When Jesus received His glorified body, so did they

John 12:23-24

Eph 4:8-10 descended, descended, ascended, ascended

1 Cor 15:12-23, 42-57

2 Cor 5:1, 17

Death, the wages of sin, brought the separation of soul and body

Resurrection, the power of God and the promise of God,  
brought reunion of soul and body...in a different,  
sinless, glorified body immune from the 2<sup>nd</sup> death

Jesus Christ is the Father's Promise of the resurrection

2. Would the national leaders hear of these AMAZING "visitors"?

Without question!!

Surely now they believe that Jesus is risen from the dead, right?!

No!!

Matt 28:15

Acts 4:1-3, 15-18

Acts 5:25-28

They WILL not believe

### **Application**

Ex 23:7      Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not:  
for I will not justify the wicked

Are you, as am I, amazed by the hardness of the unregenerate and rebellious heart of the  
chief priests and elders?!

They refuse/reject the testimonies of

- God (The Word)
- Jesus Christ (The Living Word)
- the guards (eyewitnesses of what really happened that morning)
- the resurrected saints (Did they speak? What would they say?!)

Unbelief, a choice to not accept the truth plainly laid before them, is irrational

Unbelief is "not in one's right mind"

Does their unbelief have any impact of the truth that Jesus is risen from the dead?

None!

That is the thing about the truth – it does not change, whether we believe it or not

$2 + 2 = 4$

No it doesn't

$2 + 2 = 5$

Such thinking is irrational, not right minded

If I believe I can defy the Law of Gravity by jumping off a 10 story building and float gently down to earth, which will be true – my belief or the Law of Gravity?  
If drugs altered my mind to believe I can defy the Law of Gravity (Art Linkletter's daughter), whose work are the drugs doing?

I thought Clemson would beat LSU last Monday night  
Did my thought/opinion have ANY effect/bearing on the outcome of the game?

If I think/believe that marriage can be any combination...  
one man and one woman  
two men  
two women  
two women and one man  
one man and robot  
one woman and a robot  
and any other combination imaginable  
does my opinion/belief change the Creator's definition of marriage?

If I believe living together before marriage is not a sin, does my opinion/belief change God's definition of sin?  
If I were to do that, would I be living in sin, whether or not I thought I was?

What **is** true is true, regardless of what I think about it

The Source of Truth is the Creator, not me or any other creature  
Truth is not what men think is true, Truth is that which is revealed by God

Jesus **is** the Christ, the Son of the Living God...believe it or not  
Jesus **is** the Way, the Life, and the Truth...believe it or not  
Jesus **is** the Resurrection and the Life...believe it or not  
Eternal life **is** in Jesus Christ...believe it or not

He is not here, He **is** risen...believe it or not  
More certain than the sunrise (it won't always...heaven earth will burn with fervent heat)  
is the Son rise (forever)

Defining and establishing Truth is not given to man  
Science does not define truth, Science discovers Truth established by the Creator  
What is given to men: to believe God (His revealed Truth) or to not believe

To not believe the revealed Truth of God is like shooting a BB at a battleship – it has no effect on the Truth

To not believe is to “oppose oneself”, to not be in one's right mind

2 Tim 1:7

when we, by faith, “see” Jesus, when He meets us

2 Tim 2:22-25

2 Tim 3:1-5

perilous days are HERE (Selfies on a public forum, etc)

This mind-blowing, resolute unbelief of the chief priests and Pharisees and elders...  
Nothing new under the sun – it is coming again in a massive way

Rev 6:12-17

WILL not submit to what they know is true!!!  
When self-love reigns on earth

Rev 9:13-21

Rom 1:18-32

perilous days of Self-love are upon us!

While we have breath, we have an opportunity to repent of

- wicked, self-loving lifestyles
- murders (abortions, hating another without a cause)
- sin
- unbelief

and to receive

- forgiveness
- mercy
- grace
- eternal life
- peace
- joy
- contentment

Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand!!!

Jesus' life on earth closes with a miracle (resurrection from the dead) as great as the miracle at  
the start of His life on earth (virgin birth)

Do you believe both?

Heb 11:6      It is impossible to please God apart from faith  
Hab 2:4        the just shall live by faith