

Mark 15:42-16:1 | The Biblical Account of the Burial

- The burial of Jesus was done quickly to facilitate the Sabbath (v. 42) and the Passover (Jn. 18:28, 19:14).
- Those who took the lead in the burial:
 - Joseph of Arimathea: an **honorable counselor** (v. 43) of the Sanhedrin, **which also waited for the kingdom of God** (v. 43).
 - We are told in Luke 23:51 that he **had not consented to the counsel and deed of them** at the trial of Jesus. However, he must have done so on legal reasons, because he was a disciple **secretly for fear of the Jews** (Jn. 19:38).
 - We are told in Matthew 27:57 that he was a **rich man**.
 - Nicodemus: **which at first came to Jesus by night** (Jn. 19:39).
 - Only the Gospel of John mentions the help of Nicodemus.
- The burial place was a **sepulcher which was hewn out of a rock** and a stone had been placed over the doorway (v. 46).
 - John 19:41 tells us that it was a **new sepulcher wherein was never man yet laid**.
 - Matthew 27:62-66 tells us that the stone was sealed and guarded.

Where was Jesus in the time in which He was Buried?

- We know that body and soul are separated at death.
 - Ecclesiastes 9:5 speaks of the body.
 - The body and soul can be separated – Hebrews 4:12
 - Paul stated his desire to be **absent from the body** – 2 Corinthians 5:8
- The body of Jesus Christ was clearly in the tomb of Joseph until it was seen sometime on Sunday morning. But what about the soul?
- The Hebrew Scriptures only speak of *Sheol* after death, which was certainly a place of consciousness and of waiting.
 - Acts 2:24-31 (quoting Psalm 16:9-11, where the Hebrew *Sheol* is used) gives us some indication of what is happening to Jesus in the grave.
 - The word **Hell** (Acts 2:27) is not used as *the lake of fire*, but as “The dwelling place of the dead” (Oxford English Dictionary).
 - These scriptures teach that the soul of Jesus was in Sheol but would not remain there (v. 27).
- Luke 16:19-26 gives us some indication of life after death prior to the cross.
 - Both the rich man and Lazarus were consciously in the place of the dead.
 - Abraham was **afar off** (v. 23) from the rich man, and Lazarus was carried to Abraham. Both Lazarus and Abraham were in the same place.
 - There was a **great gulf fixed** between the two places (v. 26).

- In Luke 23:43, Jesus told the thief on the cross, **Today, thou shalt be with me in paradise**.
 - Up to that point, there could not have been any understanding of **paradise** outside of what we have in the Hebrew Scriptures.
- Conclusion: Jesus went to Sheol / Hades / Abraham’s Bosom / Paradise when he died. There was no other understanding that had been revealed.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 | The Burial is Part of the Gospel

- Practical reasons it included as an essential in the Gospel:
 - It fulfills prophecy - Isaiah 53:9. Notice the plural wicked and the singular rich man.
 - It defied all expectation and gave a very well-known place for the grave.
 - The Romans did not bury crucified criminals.
 - The Jews buried criminals in a far-away unmarked grave.
 - It proved His death, thus giving validation to His resurrection.
- Theological reasons it is included in the Gospel:
 - To be **Lord both of the dead and of the living** (Rom. 14:9), Jesus had to do more than die, He had to be in the world of the dead and have dominion over it.
 - At His resurrection, Jesus had had dominion over...
 - Self (the temptations)
 - Nature (calmed the winds and waves)
 - The animal world (fish with the coin)
 - Demons (many occasions)
 - Sickness and death (many occasions)
 - Sheol / Hades
 - His own confinement to the grave
 - Without displaying dominion over all these things, He could not be considered to be **Lord both of the dead and of the living**.
 - Now Jesus can truly say that He has **the keys of hell and of death** (Rev. 1:18).

Two Misunderstood Passages

- Jesus took captivity captive – Ephesians 4:8-10
 - This passage is sometimes taken to mean that Christ released the Old Testament “paradise” inhabitants to heaven.
 - It actually says essentially the same as Romans 14:9, that through His completed work He take **captivity captive** to His own domain.
- Preached to the Spirits – 1 Peter 3:18-20
 - These verses are sometimes used to teach that the pre-cross world had a second chance.
 - They actually speak of Jesus going **in the flesh** (the resurrected body) to **the spirits in prison**. This would have taken place after the ascension.