

CHRIST'S BURIAL

Let's begin our session today where we left off last week—by revisiting and taking a closer look at one verse in Isaiah 53.

Read Isaiah 53:9 in NASB or NKJV.

Following Christ's death on the cross, He was buried in a donated tomb. But that had not been the original plan of the officials. He was crucified between two criminals, and Jesus' "assigned" grave would have been with them in some ignominious place designated for those executed for their crimes.

So the NASB and NKJV express it correctly: Jesus was "assigned" a grave with wicked men, yet [NKJV "but"] a "rich man" intervened to offer Him a more dignified burial.

Read Matthew 27:57-60.

John tells us that Nicodemus joined Joseph, bringing with him myrrh [for its fragrance] and aloes [used for embalming] weighing about 100 Roman pounds [which, as the NIV translates it, would be 75 US pounds]. Both Joseph and Nicodemus were prominent members of the ruling council and, quite obviously, wealthy men. Joseph gave Jesus his own rock-cut tomb, and Nicodemus contributed a very expensive, extravagant amount of spices for His burial.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

Last week I posited that in God's salvation economy for man, no one could be literally, positionally saved until Christ died. Only then was He the Lamb slain, only then did His blood atone for the sins of all who would look up to Him on the cross and believe.

This week we see a similar revelatory step in God's salvation economy for man: the resurrection of Jesus. In His death we are saved from death; in His resurrection (as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15) we have the promise of bodily resurrection and eternity with Him.

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man [Adam] came death, by a man [Christ Jesus] also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. 1 Corinthians 15:20-22

The principal OT text prophesying the resurrection of the Messiah is found in Psalm 16.

Read Psalm 16:7-11.

vv7-9

We dare not pass over the important, powerful application here for us today, even though our focus is on the fulfillment of prophecy in Christ Jesus.

*I will bless the Lord who has counseled me;
Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night.
I have set the Lord continually before me;
Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.*

What is the answer to our worries, our anxieties? No matter how tough, how challenging life gets, could any one of us in a million years be faced with the situation in which Jesus finds Himself?

We will never be nailed to a cross; if we are a believer, we will never experience the Lord God forsaking us; and we will never, ever, feel the weight of the world's sin bearing down on us. Yet throughout the pain and anguish of those long hours Jesus was sustained by His hope in His heavenly Father.

When we “set the Lord continually before” us, we receive His counsel—even when it has not been specifically requested. Even in the night our mind [[literally, kidneys—our inner being](#)] communes with His, our spirit converses with His Spirit, and we are not shaken.

*Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices;
My flesh also will dwell securely.*

When we live this way our heart is glad, it is light and bright, and we are assured that not just our mind and soul, but even our physical being will be saved.

Timothy Cruso: A believer throws the whole weight of all his affairs and concerns, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, upon the promises of God, like a man resolved to stand or fall with them. He ventures himself, and all that belongs to him, entirely upon this bottom, which is in effect to say, if they will not bear me up, I am content to sink; I know that there shall be a performance of those things which have been told me from the Lord, and therefore I will incessantly look for it.

But of course, beginning here this takes on special meaning for the Messiah as His body is taken down from the cross and carried to Joseph's tomb.

v10

*For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol;
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.*

KJV: For Thou will not leave my soul in hell.

Albert Barnes: This word does not necessarily mean hell in the sense in which that term is now commonly employed, as denoting the abode of the wicked in the future world, or the place of punishment; but it means the region or abode of the dead, to which the grave was regarded as the door or entrance—the under-world. The idea is, that the soul would not be suffered to remain in that under-world—that dull, gloomy abode, but would rise again to light and life.

Again, how do we know that this pertains to Christ Jesus? Peter tells us in his sermon in Acts 2.

Read Acts 2:24-28.

And the apostle Paul affirmed this during his first missionary journey in a message to the Jews in Antioch.

Read Acts 13:32-39.

[Back to Psalm 16](#)

v11

You will make known to me the path of life;

In Your presence is fullness of joy;

In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

For Jesus—and because of Him, for all of us—after the grave there is only the fullest measure of joy with the Father. This is the path of life for the Son, as well as for all who believe: we are not abandoned at the grave; it is only the door opening onto paradise. And ultimately even the physical is restored. For us there will come a day when that weak and dying earthly body that *did* decay will be replaced by one new and eternal.

In David's vernacular, "path of life" is more often than not synonymous with *eternal* life. But let us not limit the truths of this verse to our post-death experience.

path of life = *orah* (o'-rakh) = a well-trodden road

The Christian's eternal life begins at the moment he is converted from a fleshly being to a spiritual being—that is, the moment He trusts in Jesus. For most that well-trodden "path of life" is a journey of many years, during which he experiences the "fullness of joy" from walking in the presence of the Lord. But of course, the "fullness" we experience while still on our earth-bound path pales in comparison to the "pleasures forever" we will experience once we are *literally* in His presence.

ISAIAH 9:2

If you will permit me—and if I can do it without being struck by lightning—I would like to add the messianic prophecy of Isaiah 9:2 to His resurrection. This is not customary, and I could find no other commentator who associates the two, but I would like the opportunity to make the case.

Traditionally Isaiah 9:2 is associated with Christ's incarnation; we typically hear it recited during the Christmas season.

Read Isaiah 9:2.

The NASB translates the tense of the verbs for our modern ears, but the original tense is what is commonly referred to as the "prophetic perfect" tense. That is, it is expressed in the *past* tense, but refers to something that will take place in the future. Hence, in the KJV:

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Let's start with His birth, but then trace this prophecy of "a great light" through the rest of Christ's life. In fact, I would be so bold as to suggest this prophecy in Isaiah 9 can refer to no less than five (and perhaps more) mile-markers in His interaction with this earth.

Birth

Let's begin at the beginning. Did the Messiah enter this world as light? Certainly the apostle John thought so.

Read John 1:4-5.

John the baptist, who was *not* the light, came to bear witness of the light (vv7-8).

[Jesus] was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.
John 1:9

But the darkness remained. The Incarnation did not remove all the darkness.

Read John 1:10-11.

Beginning Ministry

Matthew, in Chapter Four, cites and quotes Isaiah 9:1-2, associating it with where Jesus settled to begin His ministry—Capernaum.

Read Matthew 4:14-16.

Resurrection

The use of light in God's word includes not just illumination for the eyes, but illumination for the heart, for the soul. Light is used to communicate the glory and majesty of heaven to those in darkness on earth. And certainly the women who discovered the open tomb came there that fateful morning with their hearts darkened by the previous events. But there was light awaiting them.

Read Luke 24:2-5.

Second Coming

In the last chapter of Zechariah we read of a momentous day of bizarre "natural" events. Jesus the Christ has returned to do battle with His enemies. He stands on the Mount of Olives and establishes His lordship over the earth by disrupting the natural order of things.

Read Zechariah 14:6-8.

On that day the created things that normally give light are extinguished, while darkness suddenly has light. It is not said explicitly, but it is implied that Christ is the source of the unnatural light—as He is later on the new earth.

The New Earth

Finally, in Revelation 21, after the dark consignment of Satan to hell, we read of what it will be like for every believer in the New Jerusalem on the New Earth.

Read Revelation 21:10-11, 22-24.

We could add to this list the Transfiguration, when for a moment the true, brilliant glory of The Son of God shone through His earthly flesh. All occurrences, in their way, bringing light to a darkened land.