

May 26, 2019

Mark 15:42-47; 16:1-8

The Tomb

Introduction In session eight of our study of Mark's Gospel, we discussed the Resurrection of Jesus. At that time, we celebrated Easter by studying Mark 15 to discover how Mark described the events surrounding the resurrection. As we conclude our survey of Mark's Gospel this week, we return to the tomb. The final two chapters of this Gospel provide encouragement for believers today as we seek to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

Explore (Mark 15:42-47). After Jesus dies, Mark noted that "a prominent member of the Sanhedrin," a man named Joseph, asked for the body of Jesus (Mark 15:43). He had a place where he wanted to place the body of the Lord. Surprised that Jesus had died so quickly, Pilate sought confirmation about his death (Mark 15:44). When the death of Jesus had been confirmed, Pilate agreed to let Joseph have his body (Mark 15:45). Since the Passover was approaching, Joseph did what he could to prepare the body of Jesus for burial. For this reason, he bought some linens, wrapped the body of Jesus in them, and placed Him in the tomb (Mark 15:46). This portion of the text ends noting that two women who had followed Jesus when He was in Galilee came to the tomb and saw where Jesus was placed (Mark 15:47).

Grieved (Mark 16:1-4). Due to the regulations regarding the Sabbath, the body of Jesus was not properly prepared for burial. For this reason, when the Sabbath ended, some ladies came to the tomb early so they could anoint him in a more appropriate fashion (Mark 16:1-2). As they approached the tomb, they were asking themselves a question, "Who will roll away the stone from the entrance to the tomb for us?" (Mark 16:3). It was certainly a valid question. Even Mark described the stone as being "very large" (Mark 16:4). When the ladies arrived at the tomb, however, the stone had already been moved (Mark 16:4)! While does not state how this happened, Matthew's Gospel explained that an angel of the Lord "rolled back the stone and was sitting on it" (Matthew 28:2). Since the stone was rolled away, these ladies would have no problem entering the tomb.

Resurrected (Mark 16:5-8). The ladies entered the tomb and were shocked at what they found. Instead of seeing the body of Jesus, they saw "a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side" (Mark 16:5). This young man had a message for the ladies that contained two parts. First, he explained to them that Jesus, who had been crucified was not there, but that "He has risen" (Mark 16:6). Second, he encouraged the women to carry a message to this disciples and Peter. The fact that Peter's name is highlighted here is interesting. One commentator explained this detail this way: "No doubt Peter was singled out because he had recently been such a miserable failure and needed to know he had not been excluded from the apostolic company or from usefulness." How many modern-day disciples need to be reminded of this also? What was the message, then, the women were told to relate? They were to tell the disciples to go to Galilee where they would see Jesus (Mark 16:7). These ladies would have the privilege of sharing the most exciting news ever! Jesus was alive. That message still rings true today.