

Amazing discovery of the Roman guards' at the tomb of Jesus

Introduction

Many people in the world today are skeptical about the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, in spite of the overwhelming evidence to show that He truly rose from the dead. The following is an eyewitness account of what happened after the death and resurrection of Jesus, which is worthy of your attention.

The death of Jesus

A detailed account surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew 27:45-53, "From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?'—which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' When some of those standing there heard this, they said, 'He's calling Elijah.' Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said, 'Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him.' And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people."

The terrifying experience of the Roman Guards

"When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, 'Surely he was the Son of God!' " (Matt 27:54).

Burial of Jesus

Matthew 27:57-61 says, "As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb."

Religious leaders placed guards at the tomb out of fear

Matthew 27:62-66, "The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. 'Sir,' they said, 'we remember that while he (Jesus) was still alive that deceiver said, "After three days I will rise again." **So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first.** 'Take a guard,' Pilate answered. 'Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.' So

they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard."

The resurrection of Jesus

Matthew 28:1-10, "After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him. Now I have told you.' So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. 'Greetings,' he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'"

The guards' report

Matthew 28:11-15, "While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened."

The deception of the Religious Leaders

"When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day."

Do not be deceived God does not lie

Today many people do not have time to search for the truth in the Holy Scriptures (the Bible) recorded by the eyewitnesses. Instead they choose to believe the false story just like the one circulated by corrupt Roman guards and the prejudiced religious leaders.

Common objections to Jesus' resurrection:

1. Jesus did not die on the cross.
2. Disciples of Jesus stole his body.
3. Someone else died in his place.
4. Jesus did not rise up from the dead.

However we must be careful not to be misled but must look honestly at the eyewitness accounts as recorded for us in the Bible. (You may even ask, is the Bible trustworthy? See "Is the Bible God's Word?")

Answers to the four common objections:

1. (Mark 15:42-47), Before releasing the body of Jesus to Joseph of Arimathea for burial, Pilate, the Roman Governor made sure that he was dead.
2. (Matthew 27:62-66), The religious leaders made sure that no one could steal the body by placing Roman guards at the tomb.
3. Above answers also prove that Jesus was the person whom they crucified and it was his body that was released for burial.
4. But Jesus did rise from the dead triumphantly. This was accompanied with further signs and wonders. He even appeared to many of his followers after his resurrection, (John 20:1-31).

From the beginning many things happened to destroy God's plan of salvation.

- (Matthew 2:13-18), King Herod tried to kill Jesus.
- (Matthew 4:1-11), Immediately before Jesus started his ministry Satan tempted Him to sin against God three times. But Jesus remained obedient to God each time.
- Throughout Jesus' three years of ministry, the religious leaders of the day falsely accused Him of breaking God's laws. They challenged his

claims of being equal with God. They rejected him because he challenged their religious views, tradition and authority. They rejected him as one sent by God even though he demonstrated his divine authority and power through his miraculous signs. They even planned to kill him.

However, no one in heaven or on earth could destroy God's great plan of salvation.

So, from the eyewitness' accounts in the Bible, there is sufficient evidence to believe that Jesus conquered death by rising from the dead and proved to be the Son of God (Romans 1:4).

Well, you may ask, how does Jesus' death and resurrection affect me?

For more information, see "Why should I receive Jesus?"

My earnest plea

I plead with you. Please do not believe the lie about Jesus that is circulating in the world. But trust in the resurrected Jesus. He is only way to God.