

The Aftermath of the Cross

Matthew 27:50-54 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. ⁵¹ Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, ⁵² and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³ and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴ So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Pray

The Resurrection of Jesus is the greatest event in all of history.

The Cross of Christ is the most complex and important event in all of history.

No message can do it justice or convey everything that happened. You have to read over 100 verses to get the complete account of the crucifixion.

Today we will look at 5 verses.

When Jesus died, a great many things happened.

- Dozens of prophecies were fulfilled.
- All of Psalm 22 came to pass.
- And spiritually, a lot happened. Death was defeated, the captives were set free, the enemy was shamed and defeated, sin was defeated, and we were offered peace with God. And a lot more.

We are going to look at the 3 things that happened on the earth at the moment of Jesus' death and see what they mean for us.

Matthew 27:50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

- Jesus died. Did Jesus cease to exist? No. Definitions of dead and alive.
- Ghost. Definition – the seat of life or intelligence; a guest of the body.

What happened immediately following the death of Jesus?

Matthew 27:51-53 Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, ⁵² and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³ and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

#1 - The Veil of the temple was torn in two.

What was the purpose of the veil?

- To separate the holiest from anything not perfectly holy.
- There was a physical barrier set between God and man.
- The purpose of the Holiest of Holies where the veil was located, was to be the place where God would dwell among His people.
- But people did not have direct access to God. They had to go through a priest, to the high priest, who then, only once a year, and with many sacrifices and shedding of blood, could enter in.

But God tore the veil

- Note that it was torn from top to bottom. The tear originated from God. The top of the veil was about 30 feet high. No person could tear that far, nor reach that high.
- This was God destroying the barrier between Himself and His people.

This is because the Blood of Christ satisfied the wrath of God

- **Ephesians 1:7** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace
- **Romans 5:9** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

- This is only possible because Jesus paid the price for our sin to become sin for us and grant us righteousness.
- we shall be saved from wrath through Him.
- We are forgiven because God sees the blood of Christ
 - What determines the value of something?
 - Why is a baseball card valuable? Art?
- The blood of Christ is valuable because God values it. To understand it's value, we must see how God values it.
- Blood has to do with atonement.
- In Leviticus 16, on the Day of Atonement the High priest would take the blood from the Altar, enter the Holiest of Holies and sprinkle the blood there 7 times. No one was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies.
- The blood was a transaction. Between the priest who symbolized Jesus and God. The priest was sprinkling the blood of sacrifice before God and God alone. This brought satisfaction to God. Hence, atonement.
 - **Leviticus 17:11** For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'
 - In **Exodus 12:13** The blood of Passover was placed outside the house, but the meal and everything else was on the inside. Who was the blood for?
- It is God's holiness, righteousness that demands that a sinless life be exchanged for man. Life is in the blood. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." The blood of Christ wholly satisfies God.
 - **Romans 3:25** whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed

The blood of Christ has made you completely clean.

- This is only possible because Jesus paid the price for our sin to become sin for us and grant us righteousness.
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

So now you are at peace with God and can be in His presence.

- **Romans 5:1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

#2 - The earth quaked, and the rocks were split

Earthquakes in the Bible almost always accompany times that God's presence came.

- **Exodus 19:17-19** And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. ¹⁹ And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.
- **Matthew 28:1-2** Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.
- **Acts 4:31** And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Of Note - Geologists say Jesus, as described in the New Testament, was most likely crucified on Friday, April 3, in the year 33. The latest

investigation, reported in International Geology Review, focused on earthquake activity at the Dead Sea, located 13 miles from Jerusalem

The earth itself recognizes the redemptive plan of God.

- **Romans 8:19-21** For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; ²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

The plan of redemption is to break the curse that sin brought to the earth – and the earth was responding to the beginning of the curse being lifted.

- When man sinned in the garden a curse was placed on man, woman, the earth, and the devil.
- When we put our trust in Jesus and make Him our Lord, we are redeemed from the curse.

That is because the blood of Christ breaks the curse.

- **Galatians 3:13** Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "*Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree*")

And just as the earth quaked and rocks split, we also must break before Jesus as we are redeemed from the curse.

- **Matthew 21:44** And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

#3 - Many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised

Note – The graves were opened at the death of Christ, but the dead did not rise until after the resurrection of Christ.

- **Matthew 27:52-53** the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³ and coming out of the

graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

- This is establishing a few things:
 - Jesus is the resurrection
 - Jesus conquered death
 - Jesus has power over life and death
 - The grave does not have power over the saints of God.
- These people were brought back to life similar to Lazarus.
- Jesus' death, and His resurrection, brings life to the dead. We can have eternal life because Jesus rose back to life. And He sent some who died physically to come back to life physically as a picture of what happens to us spiritually because of His physical death and resurrection.

Jesus conquered death

- **Revelation 1:18** *I am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.
- **Isaiah 25:8** He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken.

We become recipients of eternal life

- **Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- **We deserved death – but Jesus took our death and gave us life.**
- **Isaiah 53:4-6** Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone

astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Finally, what was the result of these things?

- **Matthew 27:54** So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

It is all for God's glory.

Jesus died to tear down the separation between us and God.

He broke the curse of sin.

He destroyed death.

Ephesians 1:12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.