LIFE BIBLE MINISTRY

Matthew 27 (Part 2) :11-66

The Crucifixion

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Matthew 27, let's pray and then let's get into what we're dealing with here today. Father, be with us, we pray. Speak to our hearts. Minister grace, oh God, minister grace. Jesus, teach us, fill us, direct us.

Your Word is truth. We look to you. Let your Word fill our hearts. Let it fill us up, Lord, like a cup to overflowing. May we listen, really listen with our spirit in addition to our ears.

May we hear the voice of the Lord, the voice of our Savior speaking today, ministering grace to us. We look to you, Father God. We look to you in Jesus' name, amen. We are going to, Lord willing, finish chapter 27 here this morning. It's only been about two and a half years now that we've been in Matthew, so we're doing just fine.

But we are at that place in the story. We're picking it up in verse 11. For those of you that may need some reminding there, but we're picking up that place where Jesus is standing before the procurator, the governor, pilot, who had obviously been placed there by Rome to do Roman law for the people, you know. And this was a tough sell, as we've mentioned, for the Jews to be able to somehow communicate to pilot that this man is worthy of death by Roman standards because they wanted him dead for other reasons. And in Matthew 27, 11, it says, now Jesus stood before the governor and the governor asked him, are you the king of the Jews?

This is the question that he needed to ask because if Jesus claimed to be a king, that would, in fact, be treason. That would, in fact, be a crime against Rome. And Jesus simply responded by saying, you have said so. Now, you know, what Matthew doesn't give us here in this conversation between Jesus and pilot is that Jesus went on actually to say, you know, but my kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my subjects would have fought, you know, against my capture and so forth.

And so pilot responded by saying, oh, so you speak of a kingdom. So that means you are a king and so forth. And yet Jesus, again, reiterated, you know, my kingdom is not of this world. And that response, and

it doesn't give it here, but that response, I believe, completely just kind of put pilot off from even pursuing it. He's like, his kingdom is not of this world.

Okay, he probably just thought he was Looney Tunes or something, I don't know. But essentially, that would take away any real threat to Rome. And it doesn't really say that here, but it goes on to say in verse 12, but when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. And then pilot said to him, you know, do you hear how many things they testify against you? But he gave no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

This begins for you and I, a series of prophecies that are fulfilled in this passage. I tell you, from here to the end of Matthew chapter 27, there are so many prophecies fulfilled. It begins here with Isaiah chapter 53, and we're going to put this one up on the screen for you, where it says, he was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that's before its shearers is silent. Look at, so he opened not his mouth. 700 years before Jesus was born, Isaiah wrote this down, prophetically speaking of how Jesus would stand before his accusers and would make no reply.

Verse 15 goes on to tell us now at the feast, and it's the feast of Passover right now that is going on. The governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. This was something that was uncharacteristic of Rome, but something they did for the Jews to help pacify the Jews. The Romans considered the Jews a very difficult people to govern. They were very hot-headed.

They didn't include some things for the Jews that they did for other peoples that they conquered. For example, the Jews required their subjects once a year to bow the knee and say, Caesar is Lord. But they didn't tell the Jews they had to do that, because they knew that if they commanded the Jews to bow the knee and say, Jesus is Lord, they wouldn't do it. And the punishment or the penalty of not doing it was death. So you literally, you have to say, Caesar is Lord or you die.

But they knew, well, we can't ask the Jews to do that or there won't be any people left. They just won't do it. They will not bow the knee and say, Caesar is Lord. So they didn't require it of them. The Jews were a difficult people.

And so we see here that one of their practices was, in fact, at the feast time and in celebration, in a sense, of Passover, which, of course, Pilate couldn't have cared less about. But he would release a prisoner and say, okay, just to pacify the crowd, who would you like me to release? I'm going to do it, you know, just for you guys. Well, it's setting the stage here. And it tells here in verse 16 that they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.

So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called Messiah or Christ? For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. Pilate knew that it was because of envy that Jesus had been arrested and delivered to him. He assumed the people knew that it was envy that Jesus was given to him. And so he's baiting them, assuming that the people are going to see through this charade and they're going to say, yeah, you know, release Jesus to us.

This thing is going to backfire on him because the religious leaders have already been working the crowd. And, you know, you work a crowd. Crowds can be worked, you know that. And they've already been working on the crowd and they've been telling everybody that when the question is asked, they are to say, release to us Barabbas. And it says in verse 19, besides while he was sitting on the judgment seat, and here's something else that happened, his wife sent word to him, have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.

Boy, she's a smart lady. She refers to Jesus as that righteous man, that man who is right before God. Have nothing to do with him. So probably she sent a message to him by a messenger saying to her husband, hey, be very, very careful what you do with this man. And so Pilate decides he's going to he's going to bring the crowd into this.

And by the way, that's kind of a coward's way of dealing with justice, you know, if you believe that someone's innocent, then you should just declare them innocent and let them go. I mean, and how many times throughout the course of this mock trial did Pilate say to the crowd, I find no basis for a charge against this man. And yet he went to the people first. Well, what do you guys think I should do? You know, I get to release somebody and he's just assuming and probably hoping against hope that the people are going to respond by saying, yeah, because he knew that Jesus was popular with the people.

And yet, as I said, the religious leaders have been working in the crowd. What they've been exactly saying to the people, we don't know, but we know they've been working the crowd. And now and then his wife sends this message. And it says in verse 20, it kind of tells us about that crowd control thing. Now, the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd, who knows, probably with threats to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.

And the governor again said to them, which of the two do you want me to release for you? And they said, Barabbas. And that must have shocked Pilate. And Pilate said to them, well, what shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ? And they said, let him be crucified, which is the most horrific form of punishment that the Romans knew, saved for the worst criminals.

And of course, there's no reason for him to be crucified. And so he asked the question, why? What evil has he done? Look what it says, they shouted all the more, let him be crucified. Do you know what evil does when it's confronted with its evil?

It just makes noise. It just tries to drown out the voice of reason and the questions of confrontation. That's one of the, you know, shouting matches can very quickly happen in a situation where someone is posed a question and they don't want to answer it. And so what they do is they just shout louder. If I can maybe drown you out, maybe you'll give up and go.

away, let him be crucified over and over. So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, and you need to understand something. As a procurator, as a governor, Rome would have looked very, very dimly upon Pilate's leadership if a riot would have broken out. This was something that every Roman governor would fear greatly. If word got to Caesar that under the governorship of this particular man, a riot broke out, that would look very badly upon his ability to lead the people.

So usually, a Roman governor would be willing to do just about anything to keep his reputation intact. And so it says when he sees that a riot is about to begin, he took water, a bowl of water, and washed his hands before the crowd saying, I am innocent of this man's blood, see to it yourselves. I'm sorry, Pilate, now all the water in the world isn't going to wash away your cowardice and your injustice. Water just simply can't do that. The fact of the matter is Jesus was innocent, and he did not deserve death.

But this man caved to the will of the people because he was afraid. He was afraid for his own reputation. Who knows, he might have even been afraid for his life. These Jews are pretty hot-headed people, and he knows it. He's been here for a while, he knows how difficult life can be under them.

And it says that the people responded in a most incredible way. Look at verse 25, and all the people answered, his blood be on us and on our children. Now, they didn't mean it, you know, the way you and I talk about the blood of the Lamb being upon us. When they say his blood be on us and on our children, they're basically saying, don't worry about it, we'll be guilty. We'll be guilty for this.

But, you know, the beautiful thing is, in a very true and genuine sense, because he was crucified, his blood was now able to be upon them if they would appropriate it. And that's the important thing. If they would but appropriate it, his blood could be on them for the forgiveness of sins. But, of course, they're not thinking of that right now. And it says in verse 26 that, then he released for them Barabbas.

And having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified. It's amazing to me in this last verse how it just quickly, just so quickly says, and having scourged Jesus, he released him to be crucified. And it comes so quickly off our lips, we read it, it just takes a second, and having scourged Jesus, and having scourged Jesus. It makes it sound like it's no big deal. Men died from this scourging.

This was the famous 40 lashes minus one, where the leather of the whip had embedded in it sharp pieces of bone so that when it was laid across the back of the victim and pulled again, it would rip and tear away at the skin and cause, you know, hemorrhaging, and it was a terrible thing. But to you and I, it's just this quick statement that Matthew doesn't bother to kind of elaborate for us, and having scourged Jesus. Again, some men didn't survive it. Some men who were set aside to be crucified didn't make it to the cross. Or if they nailed him up there, they were already dead by the time they got there.

It was a huge thing. And it says, they delivered him to be crucified. Verse 27 says, then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. Some people say this could be as many as 200 to 600 men. Gathered a whole battalion around him.

And what did they do? They stripped him. They stripped him. And then they began to mock him, first of all, by putting a scarlet robe. Scarlet was the color of royalty.

Oh, so you're a king, are you? So they found a scarlet robe and they put it on him. And then twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head. And by the way, these thorns, this crown that they put together, you wouldn't be able to put it on with your hands because of the thorns themselves. I don't know, have you ever...

Certainly, you've grabbed a rosebush. Sue dug up one of her rosebushes the other day, and she just kind of left it sitting by the driveway for me to pick up and throw in the back of my pickup. And I didn't...and I am the most unobservant person in the world. And I saw it sitting there, so I went over to grab it. And of course, I just grabbed it and lived to regret it.

But, you know, and these are these little tiny rose thorns, but they made this crown out of these vines with...and you couldn't...you would have had to put it on sticks, like a staff. And then they would have taken it with a couple of sticks and put it on his head that way and then pressed it down so that it cut into his head. But obviously, it was all to mock him. It was a mock crown, of course. And it says that they put a reed in his right hand as if it were a scepter, you know, as a mock scepter.

And kneeling before him, they mocked him saying, hail, king of the Jews. And they spit on him, which was...you want to make somebody angry, just spit at him. And particularly in the Middle East, it's a sign of

great disrespect and dishonor. Of course, again, even here in the United States, we don't need anybody to translate that for us, you know, to be spit at and so forth. But they spit at him.

And it says that they took the reed that they'd put in his hand and they hit him on the head with it. They struck him on the head. So they would...they beat him. So remember, he's already been bleeding profusely because of the scourging. And now, they bring him into this area and they're mocking him, putting this crown of thorns on him and hitting him in the head with the stick.

Over and over and over and...he doesn't mean anything to them. These are Romans. They don't care. They don't care about...you know, the Jews probably, for the most part, made the Romans angry. They were a difficult people to govern.

They were a difficult people to bring justice to. And here's this man who has claimed to be the king of the Jews. Boy, I tell you, let's just take out all of our frustration on this guy. He's going to the cross. He's going to be dead in a few, you know, well, we don't know how long.

Sometimes, they could hang on a cross for days, but it doesn't matter. He's dead. He's as good as dead. So, why not just abuse him? And this they did over and over again.

And it says in verse 31, and when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him. And as they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, and they compelled this man to carry his cross. Stop there. It was the very common Roman practice to command someone who was going to the cross to carry the instrument of their death to the place where he would be finally nailed to that cross and die. However, it appears, you know, that Jesus stumbled under the load of the cross in such a way that he was not able to carry it.

He made his way, how far, we're not sure. But here's this man, Simon of Cyrene, which is North Africa. And he's there, obviously, we believe that he's a Jew. He just came from where he lived, which Jews did. They would travel long distances just to come and celebrate the Passover feast.

And so, he's there and, you know, he's seeing this horrible thing as Jesus is walking down what they call the way of suffering to the place of the cross. And Jesus stumbles under the load and the weight because of the loss of blood. He's no doubt very weakened by the loss of blood. And so, the Romans simply just find this man who's standing in the crowd. It could have been anybody.

You, come here. And he has to comply. Pick up his cross, carry it behind him, you know, and so forth. You got to wonder about what a privilege it is to be able to have carried that cross for Jesus on the way to

Golgotha. Verse 33 says, and when they came to a place called Golgotha, which means place of a skull, they offered him wine to drink mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.

Why? Just because it was very bitter? No, well, and it was bitter. Gall was a very, very bitter herb. And in some cases, it could even be poisonous.

And that's an important thing to remember. But according to some ancient writings that are extra biblical, there were some wealthy women living in Jerusalem who would put together this concoction that would deaden the senses. And it was an act of mercy that was given to those who were being crucified. And they would give it to them to drink so that somehow there would be some lessening of the pain. But it says Jesus refused to drink it.

Here's an interesting... interesting prophecy once again that we see fulfilled. Let me put this one once again on the screen for you from Psalm 69. Look at this. Look at this.

A thousand years before Christ was born, it says, they also gave me gall for my food and for my thirst. They gave me vinegar to drink, which is basically wine that's gone bad. It turns to vinegar. Wine vinegar. Simple tasting stuff, I can imagine.

But one thousand years before Christ was born, this prophecy was written down in explicit detail of the things that would happen while Jesus would be crucified. And believe me, that is just the beginning. Notice the next few words in the next verse of your text. Verse 35. It says, and when they had crucified him.

Now, if you stop there with me for just a moment, it says they crucified him. But again, remember something about crucifixion. Crucifixion was a Roman form of execution. It was not a Jewish form of execution. Again, the Jews would pick up rocks and stone people to death.

That was their form of execution. It was the Romans who came up with crucifixion. And of course, they would nail the victim on a piece of wood, both his hands and his feet. That was crucifixion. And they would leave them there to die.

And again, sometimes people would take days to actually expire. That's why Pilate was so surprised when he heard that Jesus had died at what he considered to be prematurely. But what's interesting about this is once again, one thousand years before Christ was even born, the prophecy said that he would be killed in just this way. Look at Psalm 22, verse 16. It says, for dogs encompass me, and dogs was frankly another name for Gentiles, a company of evildoers encircles me.

Look at this. They have pierced my hands and feet. Now, what's interesting about this prophecy, not alone that it was written a thousand years before Christ was born, but the other thing is it speaks of a form of execution which had not been invented yet. And certainly, no Jew at the time that this was written was subject to crucifixion. Something had to happen in order for this prophecy to be fulfilled.

What had to happen? The Romans had to conquer Israel. And that would happen in that thousand year period interim between when this was written and when it happened. It had to happen. The Romans were the only ones that did this.

But back when David wrote Psalm 22, the Jews were an independent sovereign nation. And pierced my hands and my feet. Are you joking? Why would someone do that? Only later would they discover the Romans came up with this brutal form of death and it worked perfectly, it fit perfectly for what they did to Jesus.

And then look what it goes on to say in verse 35. We're just beginning to see the prophecies rolling in. It goes on and say after it says when they crucified Him, it says, they divided His garments among them by casting lots. Look at something else it says in Psalm 22, verse 18. They divide my garments among them and for my clothing they cast lots.

Again, I want to remind you this was written a thousand years before Christ was born. Alright? That's important for you to remember. The specific nature of these prophecies is truly amazing. It says in verse 36, that then they sat down and kept watch over Him there.

And over His head they put the charge against Him which read, This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. And then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left. And those who passed by derided Him, wagging their heads and saying, You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days. Of course, that's not at all what Jesus said. And they said, save yourself.

If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross. I want you to pay special attention to what they're saying to Him. And so also the chief priests with the scribes and the elders, they mocked Him. What did they say? They said, He saved others, He cannot save Himself.

He is the King of Israel. Let Him come down now from the cross and we will believe in Him. Listen to verse 43. Listen carefully. He trusts in God.

Let God deliver Him now if He desires Him. For He said, I am the Son of God. Look at Psalm 22, 7. Look at this. This is really, truly amazing.

Put this one up on the screen. All who see Me mock Me. They make mouths at Me. They wag their heads. He trusts in the Lord.

Let Him deliver Him. Let Him rescue Him, for He delights in Him. Again, 1,000 years before the birth of Christ. This was written down by David. And it says in verse 44, and even the robbers who were crucified with Him also reviled Him in the same way.

And then we have an amazing thing in verse 45. It says, now from the sixth hour, which is noon in the Jewish reckoning of time, there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour, which is three o'clock in the afternoon. So from noon to three, there was darkness in the land. It just got dark. It wasn't a cloud buildup and it was not a solar eclipse.

You say, well, wait a minute. This is 2,000 years ago, Pastor Paul. How do you know it wasn't a solar eclipse? Because we know what time of year they celebrate Passover. We know this is during Passover.

And Passover is during a time when there is a full moon. And in order to have a solar eclipse, there has to be a new moon. So this was a supernatural act. It just got dark. It became night in the middle of the day.

From noon to three o'clock. Someone once said, and I think it's probably an important comment, that this was the only commentary the Father made on the crucifixion, at least that men could even see or understand. But this is the one statement that God the Father made during the crucifixion of His precious Son on the cross for our sins. And He just turned it all dark for a period of three hours. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani.

And that is, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Let me put this up once again on the screen from Psalm 22, verse 1. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me from the words of my groaning? Have you noticed a similarity?

Psalm 22 is the psalm I've been quoting all the other passages from, all the other prophecies that have been fulfilled in the crucifixion of Jesus. And somebody once said, oh, well, Jesus was quoting poetry on the cross. Yeah, right. When people are nailed to a piece of wood and dying an excruciating death, they don't sit and quote poetry. Psalm 22, and frankly, this verse and the rest of that psalm was a powerful prophetic insight that David got to see a thousand years before the event took place.

And he wrote it down for you and I, so that we might put these two things together and see the power and unity and strength that is contained in the Word of God. But I want you to notice here what Jesus is saying, because it's important that we don't just think of it in the prophetic sense, but we think of it from

the sense of what it really means. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? If Jesus believed that he was forsaken, then you can bet it was because he was forsaken. And remember, this is at the end of this three hours of utter darkness that fell upon the scene there at Calvary.

And Jesus cried out, Jesus cried out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Was Jesus forsaken? Absolutely he was. He was forsaken so you would never have to be. Jesus bore that forsaken condition.

As the Bible says, he was literally made sin on our behalf. He became our sin on the cross and he was forsaken by his father. You have to understand from the standpoint of eternity, this is the first time ever that the father and the son have been separated. They have been one for eternity. And now the father cannot abide the son because of the sin that has been heaped upon him there on the cross and he turns away from the son.

And it is so excruciating to the son, he cries out at the top of his lungs, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And he was truly forsaken. But he was forsaken for us, for you and I. You and I will never cry this to the Lord. We will never say this to God because we will never be forsaken.

God's word says, I will never leave you nor forsake you. I will not abandon you. I will come to you. I will rescue you. Why?

Because Jesus was forsaken for us. Verse 47, some of the people misunderstood. Some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, this man is calling Elijah. They heard the first part of the Aramaic that he cried out. And they said they thought he's calling Elijah.

One of them at once ran and took a sponge and filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. Look at verse, I want to show you from Psalm 69, verse 21. They gave me poison for food. And for my thirst, they gave me sour wine to drink. But the others, verse 49, said, wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to him.

And Jesus cried out again. I want you to notice this with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. Did you catch that? It was a loud cry. You know, don't you, that on the cross, they had to push up to take a breath.

Every time they would take a breath, they had to push up on those feet that are nailed. They had to literally push up with their legs so that their rib cage had enough room to inflate the lungs. And then they could speak or say something. Most of the time, people just suffocated to death while they were being crucified. They would no longer have the strength to push up and breathe.

That's why when they wanted to hasten death, the soldiers came and broke their legs. Because once their legs were broken, they could no longer push up and breathe. So it hastened death by just suffocating them. And you'll remember that the Jewish leaders wanted their legs broken so that they wouldn't have men hanging there during the Passover. It doesn't look very nice when you're having a religious holiday.

So Jesus would have to push up on that nail-pierced foot to cry out. But he not only cried out, he cried out with a loud voice. And this is one of the things I think is very important for you at IHC. This is a loud voice. This isn't a whisper.

This isn't, OK, we got this. He cried out. This is a statement of declaration. It's a shout of completion. And this loud cry, which, by the way, Matthew doesn't record for us, is that statement, it is finished.

It's done. Do you guys understand that it was done on the cross? Do you understand that what Jesus paid for you and I was finished on the cross? Jesus said so. It is finished, meaning literally in the Greek, it is paid in full.

It's done. We miss this. There have been all kinds of weird misinterpretations of what it takes to be saved, what it takes to have your sins forgiven. Some people think that, oh, it's wonderful to believe in Jesus, but you have to do something else. You got to do this, you got to do that.

You have a list of things. No, it's finished. The work of salvation, the work of forgiveness for you and I, it was finished on the cross. Jesus finished it. That means there's nothing else that can be done.

Do you understand that? There's nothing more that can be done to secure our salvation, the forgiveness of sins. And he shouted it as a cry of victory. And then you'll notice it says he yielded up his spirit. Luke tells us what the exact words were in this.

Matthew doesn't, but Luke tells us that Jesus said, Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit. And I want you to notice something very important here. Jesus died because he gave up his spirit. When the spirit leaves a human being, they cease to live because the spirit is that which gives life. When Jesus gave up his spirit, when he dismissed, he literally dismissed his spirit like you and I would be dismissed from a room after a meeting.

You are dismissed. Someone might say, everybody gets up and leaves. Jesus dismissed his spirit. What does that tell you? It tells you that no one took his life from him, right?

Nobody took his life in that specific sense of the word. Look at John chapter 10. This is where Jesus actually said it ahead of time. He says, for this reason, the father loves me because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. Look what he says here.

No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I received from my father. This was done by him. And then Matthew records for us what we refer to as the Calvary miracles.

Look at verse 51. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn into from top to bottom. When Jesus died on the cross, when he dismissed his spirit, suddenly some pretty amazing phenomenon began to take place around there. And one of the things that took place was this huge thick curtain that separated the holy of holies from the holy place in the temple was torn into from top to bottom. You got to wonder which angel got the chance to come down and do that one.

That must have been fun. But this is a huge thing. It would have been very, very difficult to rip, but it was. And can you imagine how the Jews, when the priests came in and saw the thing ripped and the whole of the holy of holies exposed? You see, only the high priest could go into the holy of holies.

He could only go in there once a year on the day of atonement. He would go in two times on that one day, but he was the only one. Anybody else? No, forget it. You can't even look.

And here it is open. Why did God do that? Why did God send an angel, and I'm assuming it was an angel, to come down and tear this veil in two to expose the holy of holies? Well, remember in the temple, the holy of holies is that place of God's incredible presence. It literally signified the very throne room of God Almighty.

It meant coming into His presence, being exposed to His glory and the wonders of all that He is, and so forth and so on. So what is the purpose of tearing the veil? It should be fairly obvious. Jesus on the cross has completed that which was necessary for our access to come and meet God. You don't have to go through another human being or another, oh, can I just want to know God?

You can know God. You can experience God. You have access to God through Jesus Christ. Look at Romans chapter 5, verse 2. Love this verse.

It says, through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. By whom do we have access to meet with God? It's through Jesus. People say, well, you know, there's a lot of ways to know God. You don't have to put Jesus in the thing.

Well, that's not what Jesus said. Jesus said, I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life, and no man comes to the Father except through me. Look what He also says, Hebrews chapter 9. Love this next passage. Therefore, brothers, look it, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened up for us through the curtain or the veil, that is, through His flesh, wow, so that's a picture of Jesus.

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. Here the writer of Hebrews says that the veil between the holy place and the most holy place or the holy of holies is a picture of Jesus Himself. And when He died on the cross, that's that picture of the rending of the veil. He did this so that we might have access to God. Wow, that's amazing.

Look at verse 51, more Calvary miracles. And the earth shook and the rocks were split. I'm surprised that's all that happened. I'll be honest with you. Guys, this is the creator of the universe who just died here on the cross, the one who spoke all things into being.

Jesus is the creator. You know that from the scriptures, right? He died. Men mocked Him and spat upon Him and beat Him mercilessly, bloodied and weakened to the point that He died on the cross. And it says that we had a few earthquakes.

Big deal. The whole place should have vaporized. The whole thing should have just collapsed in on itself. That's what should have happened when they crucified the Lord of glory, the very creator of all things. By God's mercy, it was just a few earthquakes and a few rocks splitting.

Verse 52 says that the tombs also, look at this, were opened and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. I want you to notice the timing of this. It happened after His resurrection. Very important thing to recall. Jesus is the first fruit of those who rise.

And I don't personally believe that these people were like Lazarus. I don't think they got raised from the dead from the standpoint that they had to die again. You know, Lazarus had to die twice. Bummer deal, right? I mean, yeah, how would you like that?

Hey, Lazarus, come forth. He's like, really? I don't think anybody who dies in the Lord feels like they got gypped. I really don't. I think they probably think this is pretty good stuff.

But, you know, Lazarus had to die again. I personally don't believe these people, I think these people appeared in some form or another and just went to be with the Lord after they're making an appearance.

But that's just my opinion, and my opinion isn't worth a whole lot. So it says in verse 54, that when the centurion and those who were with him keeping watch over Jesus saw the earthquake and what took place when he dismissed his spirit, it says, they were filled with awe and they said, truly, this was the Son of God. And there were also many women there looking on from a distance who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, and among whom were Mary Magdalene, a woman whom Jesus, it says, elsewhere had cast many demons out of, and Mary, the mother of James, and Joseph, the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

And when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. And he went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. Luke tells us that Joseph of Arimathea was actually a member of the Sanhedrin, but that he was not in agreement with how they treated Jesus, how they arrested him, and obviously, how they put him to death through the Romans. And it tells us in verse 59 that Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock, and he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb, and he went away. And this is in fulfillment of Isaiah 53.

Let me put this on the screen, where the prophecy says, and they made his grave with the wicked and with the rich man in his death, although he had done no violence and there was no deceit in his mouth. Once again, 700 years before Christ was born, it said that he would be buried in a rich man's tomb. You know, just very quickly, being a member of the Sanhedrin, Joseph of Arimathea had a lot to lose. Whatever public attitude he kept about Jesus up to this point, or maybe he was like Nicodemus, we don't know. Maybe he was a disciple kind of in private.

But however much or little he let people know about his position as a disciple, it was all out of the bag now. I mean, to go in a very public way to Pilate and request the body, to take the body down from the cross, to wrap it up, to go through as much of the burial procedure as they could for the body of Jesus, this was something that, well, it's all out now, Joe. Everybody knows now where you stand as it relates to Jesus. I have to believe that his very public... You know, what's interesting is, you know, none of his disciples came for his body in the sense of his closest.

None of the 12, they didn't go do it. They were too afraid. It took a Pharisee of the Sanhedrin, assuming he was a Pharisee, and he was the one. And I thought about this statement from Luke 9. Let me put this one on the screen.

It says, for whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the son of man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. I just thought about Joseph of

Arimathea, and I thought about that passage, and I thought, you know what? Here's a guy who wasn't afraid to lay it all on the line, and you can bet whatever role he had in the Sanhedrin was gone after this. Whatever position of honor or whatever he held in Jewish society, it was gone. He gave it all up.

He laid it all down. He said, you know what? I don't care. I'm not ashamed. I'm not ashamed of whom I have believed.

It's pretty powerful stuff. Verse 61 says that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there sitting opposite the tomb. They were kind of like keeping vigil at the tomb. And the next day, that is after the day of preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate, and they said, Sir, we remember how that imposter said while he was still alive, after three days I will rise and therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people he is risen from the dead, and the last fraud will be worse than the first. Pilate said to them, you have a guard of soldiers.

Go make it as secure as you can. So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard. And that's where the chapter ends. I'd like to close here this morning by reading yet just another portion, if I could, of Isaiah 53 concerning the things that we've looked at here today. Here's what it says.

Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace.

And with his wounds, we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors.

Yet he bore the sin of men.