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12 Following the Messiah Episode 10 (4:56-11:40) Jesus' Burial and Resurrection

Opening:

1. You have viewed the video "Following the Messiah Episode 10 at www.appianmedia.org and have worked through the study guide Lesson 12 available by request at wtg2@hughes.net.
2. In the previous study we followed the chronology of Jesus' crucifixion on Friday, the day of His death. In this study we will pick up there and move forward with His burial and resurrection.

Into the Text:

1. Reading of Jn. 19:31-37.

Things are coming to a stand still in Jewish households on Friday between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m. At 6 p.m. the Sabbath begins. This was a special Sabbath associated with the Passover celebration. My experience is that there is a flurry of activity going on in these final moments as preparations are being made. All "work" ceases at 6:00 p.m.

This even had implications regarding the crucifixion of criminals. The Jews asked Pilate to break the legs of the prisoners, effectively finishing them off, so that everything might be completed before the Sabbath. Why break their legs you might ask. Hanging on a cross necessitated that the one crucified push up using his legs in order to catch a breath. Breaking one's legs meant that he could no longer complete this process and therefore he would die unable to breathe. You can only imagine the suffering of being crucified and then having both your legs broken and then dying of suffocation.

When the soldiers came to Jesus they saw that He was already dead and did not break His legs. But put a spear through His side. This was done probably to pierce the heart. The text says, "blood and water came out." John says, "He who saw it has borne witness." I take this to mean that John, himself, saw what happened. He observed that this took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled that none of His bones were broken (cf. Psa. 34:20). And they looked on Him whom they pierced (cf. Zech. 12:10). The Gospels are careful to note multiple passages of Scripture being fulfilled in the crucifixion.

There can be no doubt that Jesus was dead. Indeed all three of those crucified were dead by strict order of the Jews and Pilate before 6 p.m.

2. Reading of Mk. 15:42-47.

These events also must have occurred prior to 6 p.m. They further confirm the death of Jesus. Pilate, surprised that Jesus was already dead, checked with the centurion and it was confirmed. Joseph took the body down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid it in his own tomb. Since Joseph was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin we might wonder where he was when Jesus was condemned earlier in the morning.

Perhaps, Annas, Caiaphas and the rest of the Sanhedrin were thinking that with the death of Jesus their worries over, but they had one more thing that they wanted just to be sure.

3. Read Matt. 27:62-66.

So, they sealed up the tomb and set a guard there to prevent the disciples from stealing the body and telling people that He had risen from the dead. Jesus had indeed predicted that He would be raised from the dead on the third day (ex. Matt. 17:22-23). Friday, Saturday (the Sabbath), Sunday would be the third day.

4. Read Matt. 28:1-8.

Interesting that we do not have any information about the Sabbath. Where were the disciples? Were they celebrating in the regular way on the Sabbath? Were they able to sleep through the night Friday, Saturday? What were they thinking?

Our text begins, "after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week." I wonder sometimes how the writer knew his information. Had Matthew talked with Mary Magdalene and the other Mary about their experience? Can you imagine doing so? They must have both been incredibly excited. I wonder who spoke first, who added what information to the account as it unfolded. What was it like to hear an angel speak to you? How do you recognize an angel? What does an angel look like?

These two Mary's have been diligent to prepare spices to use at the tomb. It seems they were not expecting a resurrection on the third day. And the disciples . . . they seem not to be expecting a resurrection either. Maybe if they were expecting a resurrection they would have gone to the tomb and just watched and waited???

5. Read Jn. 20:2-10.

When they report their experience to the apostles two of them ran to the tomb, Peter and John. John arrives first. He saw the linen cloths lying there. Peter went inside and saw the linen cloths and the face cloth folded and lying in a place by itself. John enters and investigates too. They did not understand that He must rise from the dead. What did they make of His predictions? Why weren't they expecting this? Looking back from our perspective it is easy for us to ask such questions but we

need to understand that all this is radically incredible!!! Would you bother to get up early on a Sunday morning if someone had predicted that they were going to be raised from the dead that day? Would you go to the cemetery and wait?? What would you do after seeing the empty tomb? Start looking for the body? Inform the police? “They went home” (Jn. 20:10). This may mean more than you think. Peter and the others were from Galilee. Peter’s house was in Capernaum. Going home entailed doing just what the angel had said, “He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you shall see Him” (Matt. 28:7). I think I would go home too!

Applications:

1. What does the hope of resurrection mean to you? Read 1 Cor. 15:12-19. How does Christ’s resurrection relate to your own resurrection?
2. How is your life affected by Christ’s resurrection?
3. How does His resurrection establish His power to raise you from the dead? What does it mean about His power to abolish death (see 1 Cor. 15:26)?
4. While some see little connection between baptism and resurrection Peter, a witness to Christ’s resurrection said, “Baptism now saves you—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:21). What did he mean?
5. Rom. 6:3-14 reasons that we cannot go on sinning if we have been baptized. Why not? He speaks of those who “have been buried with Christ through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.” What do you suppose this means? How does it affect your life?