

# LESSON 30: THE KING OF GLORY

## Matthew 27:62-66; 28:1-20

**Previous Lesson Recap for Teacher:** Last lesson, we came to the end. After hours upon hours of awful conflict and agony, it was over, the bitter cup of God's wrath towards our sin drunk down to the last drop (Ps. 75:8), and Jesus' words recorded in the Gospel of John, "It is finished" (John 19:30). We left Jesus' body being laid in the fresh tomb of "*a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus*" (Matt. 27:57).

**Transition to Text:** Use the children's timelines to briefly explore what happened in the previous lessons.

Today, we will find out that Jesus' final death and burial, events which seemed to signal the end, were not the end after all. But before we come to this glorious news, let's put ourselves once more in the shoes of those who were there, the first-hand eyewitnesses of the events that changed the course of human history forever!

**Reverently Read:** Matthew 27:62-66; 28:1-20 (Note: This longer passage can be broken down into two smaller readings followed by a narration of each reading. I would recommend Matt. 27:62-66; 28:1-10 and Matt. 28:11-20.)

**Children Narrate:** "What did you hear?" OR "(Child's name), will you begin to tell back the story that we have just heard using as many of the actual Bible words as you remember?" and then "Now (another Child's name), what happened next?" and so on until the story is finished.

### Discussion Questions:

#### 1. Close your eyes and imagine this scene with me.<sup>1</sup>

- a. You are at Jesus' funeral in a beautiful garden, amid the brightness and perfume of flowers, in the quiet sunset time. But, oh what a miserable funeral! Were there ever such forlorn mourners following a corpse as those who followed the blood-stained body of Jesus to the tomb that evening? Were there ever such desolate hearts? It is a dismal thing to return from any funeral—leaving the body of one's loved one in the grave, going back to an empty house, and thinking of all the long, dreary days of loneliness stretching out in front of you. All those emotions are here, but far worse. Not only had they lost their dearest, most true friend (John 15:13), but they had thought He was the Divine Messiah—the One they had been waiting for who would redeem Israel. The One who was to found the Kingdom of God. The One whom they thought would dwell with them in power and glory. What an awful disappointment to see Him arrested, tried like a common prisoner where He stood helpless before His enemies, mocked, scourged, spit upon, nailed upon a cross between two robbers, taunted to come

down and yet not doing so, bled, weakened, and at last killed like an ordinary criminal. They were now putting His blood-stained corpse into the tomb.

- b. This was the end of it all—their love, their hopes, their future, all buried in the tomb. He could not be the Christ of God after all. He must have been mistaken. Yes, He was good, pure, and holy, but He could not have been the Son of God since death had conquered Him. Thus they went home from that funeral with hearts utterly crushed. Two of them were too heartbroken to go home at all. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus (Matt. 27:61) sat there opposite the tomb as dark night fell on them in their passionate, despairing grief, and their deep, hopeless love. This is the final view that we get of the funeral of Jesus.
- c. The next day was the Sabbath day, when people rested from their work and went to the temple to worship God. Oh, how miserable that first Sabbath day was. Judas was hanged. Peter was going wild with remorse while all the rest were sunk in hopeless grief. Perhaps some went to the temple and heard prayers uttered by the cruel priests who had murdered their friend. The men began to sadly think of going back to their fishing and tax-gathering, while the women waited through the night with spices and ointments to anoint Jesus' body to keep it from decay (Mark 16:1). How blind they were to the joy that was set before them.
- d. The chief priests must have been planning all the time that they were worshipping at the temple that Sabbath day to go and approach Pilate and say, "*Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.' 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 has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first*" (Matt. 27:63-64). So the Sabbath evening closed with a strange scene—a guard of Roman soldiers tramping through the quiet garden, and the chief priests stretching cords across the opening of the tomb and sealing them with their signet rings, so that they could tell if someone were to tamper with the tomb.

**2. How did the women in this story seek to honor Jesus, and how were they honored by Him?<sup>2</sup>**

- a. The women were the last ones at the grave on Friday night and the first ones at the tomb on Sunday morning. Women bear the image of God, and here, we see them exhibit God's grace, loyalty, support, and devotion. They were bringing oils and spices that were precious to them to preserve the body of Jesus. They may have lost their hope, but they had not lost their love for Him. Christ honored them by allowing a woman to be the first to see Him after He arose. It was Mary Magdalene who received His first loving greeting outside the tomb (John 20:11-18). Jesus' influence and treatment of women changed the degraded position of women going forward. Wherever Christ is being honored, women, too, should be treated with courtesy, according to the will and example of Christ.

**3. What joyful news were the angels able to proclaim earlier in Christ's story? What news in this story?<sup>3</sup>**

- a. The angels were once heralds of the joyful news that King Jesus had been born in Bethlehem

(Luke 2:8-14). Perhaps these two angels had also been in that Christmas chorus in Bethlehem when they all proclaimed, *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”* (Luke 2:14). The Savior had accomplished the peace for which He had come through His perfect life, death, burial, and now resurrection! How glad they were for God to be rightly glorified and Christ rightly magnified with this new revelation of His divine love for sinners.

b. The news they proclaimed in today’s story was *“Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you”* (Matt. 28:5-7). The mysterious words Jesus had spoken about future events, which only used to puzzle them, were now perfectly clear! They saw it now! Not only was their Lord alive, but their trust and hope were restored. He was the Christ, the Son of God. He had not deceived them or been mistaken. What a glad, delightful change from the misery of yesterday.

**4. How does the gladness that these women experienced when they looked in upon the empty grave trickle down to us today when we stand by an open grave or cry for the death of a loved one?<sup>4</sup>**

a. The Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, *“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep.”* Paul refers to Christians who have died as being “asleep,” which reinforces his main point that they will awake from the grave at the second coming.<sup>5</sup> If Christ had not defeated death and risen from the grave, we would not have much hope that we ourselves, or our loved ones, would also rise (1 Cor. 15:12-19). This makes an enormous difference in this sorrowful world marked by death.

**5. When their hearts were full of the glad news, the directions they received from Jesus were to “go and tell.” What does this mean for us today?<sup>6</sup>**

a. The new glad knowledge brought with it a new glad duty to go off at once and make others sharers in the joy. Pray that, whenever it is God’s will, He would guide you to go out and that you would listen and obey His call wherever He might lead. It is often so hard to get people to go. Go wherever He might lead and tell whoever He brings across your path.

**6. Remember at Jesus’ birth, King Herod tried and failed to thwart God’s plan. So now, do you think the priests bribing the soldiers to tell the terrible lie, “His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep” (Matt. 28:13) is going to work?<sup>7</sup>**

a. No, but it does show that the grave was empty in spite of the Roman guard of soldiers and that they were at their wit’s end to come up with some kind of explanation. Yet sadder still is that this lie shows their fierce hatred of Christ and their determination to reject Him at any cost from being their Lord and King. Jesus’ Parable of the Wicked Tenants was prophetic: *“But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us*

*kill him and have his inheritance”* (Matt. 21:38). They did that. They did worse. When He rose again and proved His divine claim, they concocted a lie to try and keep Him out of His Kingdom. What vain foolishness to think that any lie or scheme could upset God’s great plan of salvation.

**7. We began Matthew when Jesus was born “King of the Jews.” We have thought about how He was crowned King, how He went forth to battle as King, how He founded His Kingdom, how He gave laws for this Kingdom, how He told parables of the Kingdom, how He ordained His followers to proclaim His Kingdom, but always “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 10:6). What great and final command does our King give us, and what does it mean for His Kingship?<sup>8</sup>**

- a. Jesus’ great and final command is worthy of reading aloud again. *“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age’”* (Matt. 28:18-20).
- b. Jesus has all authority over all nations. Anyone who could give this command must surely be divine. How else could He send these few ignorant men and women, you and I included, and take possession of all the nations in His name? How insane this would appear if He were not God. But, He is God. And as our King Jesus reminded us earlier in His public ministry, *“With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible”* (Matt. 19:26). This mission is not based on our abilities, but His promised Spirit who goes before us who will bring this mission to completion. *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”*
- c. The Kingdom of God is spreading still. The Church still marches on with this final command from our King to make disciples of all nations. We are members of the Kingdom, and it is our duty to help in this great work of the King. No longer is Jesus just “King of the Jews,” but He is “King of all nations,” of all the universe, the King of Glory. Come, Lord Jesus.

**Optional Timeline Entry:** “Draw a picture in your timeline to remind yourself of this story.”

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1. Smyth, *St. Matthew*, 206-207.
  2. Smyth, *St. Matthew*, 208-209.
  3. Smyth, *St. Matthew*, 209.
  4. Smyth, *St. Matthew*, 210-211.
  5. Colin Nicholl, *1 Thessalonians 4:13 footnote*, in *The ESV Study Bible*, (Crossway Bible, 2008), 2309.
  6. Smyth, *St. Matthew*, 211.

7. Smyth, *St. Matthew*, 212-213.

8. Smyth, *St. Matthew*, 213-214.