

Title ideas:  
The King in the Tomb!  
The King is Dead!

## Matthew 27:51-66 - The King is Dead!

Scriptures:  
Hebrews 4:15-16 - For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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,

Notes:  
Several miraculous events took place at the time of Christ's death. First, it was immediately preceded by three hours of unnatural darkness. This is the second one. The veil in the temple was massive – thirty feet tall and about four to six inches thick. It would be humanly impossible to tear.

The fact that it was torn from top to bottom is very symbolic. The veil represents the separation between God, who is perfectly holy, and mankind, who is desperately wicked. God reached down from heaven to open the way for mankind to approach Him based on Christ's death on the cross ([Hebrews 4:15-16](#)).

Scriptures:

52 and the graves were opened; and many

G455 -

bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep

G2837 -

Notes:  
'fallen asleep' – Idiom for dying. In the New Testament, it is only used for believers.

This reminds us of Lazarus who was raised from the dead after being dead for four days. How long had these people been dead?

were raised;

G1453 -

Scriptures:

1 Corinthians 15:54-57 - So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

55 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:21-26 - For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. 24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. 25 And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, 26 that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

53 and coming out of the graves after His

G1831 -

G3326 - With.

resurrection, they went into the holy city and

G1454 -

appeared to many.

G1718 -

Notes:

Only Matthew mentions this miracle. What happened to them after they were raised? How long did they live? Did they ascend to heaven with Jesus? We don't know!

I have so many questions about this.

The spiritual message this miracle expresses is that Christ's death and subsequent resurrection have forever destroyed the power of death over humanity. No longer is death something to be terrified about (1 Corinthians 15:54-57). As our faith grows, our desire to be with Jesus grows and our desire to remain on this earth diminishes (Philippians 1:21-26). This is coupled with a diminishing desire for self and a growing desire to serve Christ by serving others.

54 So when the centurion and those with him,

Notes:

This centurion had probably presided over many crucifixions. He could see something unique had happened when Jesus died.

'feared greatly' – Crucifixions had probably become routine for them. This was not normal and so it was alarming to them.

What did they mean when they said, "Truly this was the Son of God!" Did they become believers? We can't say with any certainty but if they did, they are the first Gentiles saved by the death of Christ.

who were guarding Jesus, saw the

earthquake and the things that had

happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly

G5399 – "to fear  
v. – to be afraid  
or feel anxious or  
apprehensive  
about a situation  
or event."

this was the Son of God!"

Scriptures:

55 And many women who followed Jesus

Notes:

from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there

looking on from afar,

Scriptures:

56 among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary

Notes:  
Of the disciples, only John is recorded as being present when John died, but many women were there.

the mother of James and Joses, and the

mother of Zebedee's sons.

Scriptures:

57 Now when evening had come, there came a

Notes:

Joseph was also joined by Nicodemus. These are prominent men in the Sanhedrin. To do this publicly was a bold and risky thing to do. They had come to believe that Jesus was who He said He was, and they disagreed with what the other religious leaders did to Jesus.

rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph,

who himself had also become a disciple of

Jesus.

Scriptures:

Deuteronomy 21:22-23 - If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, 23 his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.

58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the

Notes:

Unclaimed bodies were not treated with much dignity. It was customary for the Jews to bury people who executed on the same day they died (Deuteronomy 21:22-23). The Romans had no such laws. They would sometimes leave the body on the cross until the cross was needed again. This added to the humiliation and as a warning not to break Roman law.

body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the

body to be given to him.

Scriptures:

59 When Joseph had taken the body, he

Notes:

wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

Scriptures:

Isaiah 53:9a - And they made His grave with the wicked—

But with the rich at His death...

60 and laid it in his new tomb which he had

Notes:

This was predicted more than 700 years earlier (Isaiah 53:9).

It is interesting that God appointed a Joseph to care for Jesus' body in the virgin womb and then another Joseph to care for Christ's body in a virgin tomb.

hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large

It is probable that Joseph had been preparing for Passover just like every other Jew in Jerusalem. Touching a dead body would make him and everyone who helped him ceremonially unclean and forbidden from participating in Passover. This makes this act of caring for Christ's body that much more poignant.

stone against the door of the tomb, and

There are many other details included in the other gospels. For Matthew, the main point is the King is dead! He will move quickly in his narrative to the wonder of the resurrection.

departed.

Scriptures:

61 And Mary Magdalene was there, and the

Notes:

other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.

Scriptures:

62 On the next day, <sup>Ⓟ</sup> which followed the Day of

Notes:

Preparation, the chief <sup>cP</sup> priests and Pharisees

gathered together to Pilate,

Scriptures:

63 saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was

still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three

G4108 -

days I will rise.’

G1453 -

Notes:

They didn't believe that Jesus would rise from the dead, but they believed that Christ's disciples would try to make it look like He had.

The enemies of God remember what the disciples of Christ seem to have forgotten. Jesus told them He was going to be killed but then on the third day He would rise again. Why weren't they at the tomb on Sunday morning expecting Him to come out of the tomb? Why were they surprised when they saw Him raised from the dead? It is one thing to say you believe what God says, it is quite another to live like you believe what God says.

The Bible teaches us to forgive ([Ephesians 4:32](#)). We are to forgive just as God has forgiven us. But if we don't forgive, we are not living what we say we believe. In fact, to withhold forgiveness is sin and will create a barrier between you and God.



## 64 Therefore command

that the tomb be made secure until the third

G805 -

day, lest His disciples come by night and

steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He

has risen from the dead.' So the last

deception will be worse than the first."

Scriptures:

65 Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go

your way, make *it* as secure as you know

how.”

Notes:

‘as secure as you know how’ – Their ignorance about who Jesus was made it so that they believed they could hold Jesus in the tomb. Nothing in the universe could keep Jesus in the tomb. On the third day He would be raised from the dead. That is important for us because Jesus has promised to raise all His people from the dead. If nothing could keep Jesus in the tomb, then nothing can keep Him from keep His promise to raise us in the last days.

Scriptures:

66 So they went and made the tomb

secure, sealing the stone and setting the

guard.

Notes:

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