



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

The Sinister Leaders Secure the Tomb

MAY 2-4, 2012

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Matthew 27:62-66

“Now on the next day, which is the one after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, 63) and said, ‘Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I am to rise again.’ 64) Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, lest the disciples come and steal him away and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last deception will be worse than the first.’ 65) Pilate said to them, ‘You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how.’ 66) And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone” (NASB)

“EVEN THOUGH THE CHIEF PRIESTS, BEING SADDUCEES, DID NOT BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION, THE ISSUE AT PRESENT IS NOT REALLY ANY QUESTION REGARDING THE FACTUALITY OF THAT ARTICLE OF FAITH. THE POINT IS: NEITHER THE CHIEF PRIESTS NOR THE PHARISEES WANT TO LOOSE THEIR HOLD ON THE PEOPLE!”

WILLIAM HENDRIKSEN

Do these wicked leaders commit what they have dogmatically been against to secure this tomb? How many violations of the Law do they commit? What was the “first” that they think this “last deception” will be worse? Is Pilate scoffing them when he said “make it as secure as you know how?” How do their actions make the coming resurrection undisputable?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- MAY 9-11: MATTHEW 28:1-10 *THE RESURRECTION OF KING JESUS!*
- MAY 16-18: MATTHEW 28:11-15 *THE LEADERS LIE PROVING THE RESURRECTION*

There is one disguised word used in their address to Pilate that screams with revelation regarding the idolatry of these legislators’ hearts. Though the word “Lord” is used 80 times in Matthew and almost everyone addresses Jesus with that title, these hypocritical leaders prove that they are unbelievers by never addressing Jesus as “Lord.” These wicked legislators are willing to address Him as “teacher” (Mt. 12:38, 22:24, 36) and their disciples and the Herodians do the same (Mt. 22:16). Of course, Judas Iscariot will not address Jesus as “Lord” either, but he uses a greater word of respect, “Rabbi” (Mt. 26:25, 49). Their delight to crucify Christ proved their desire to render Him “accursed.” Paul later provided clear proof from what people say as to whether they are believers and have God’s Spirit or not: “Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus is accursed’; and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit” (I Cor. 12:3). This title as “Lord” is so important in emphasizing power and authority, meaning “Master, owner;” it was commonly used by the Jews for Deity.¹ This word “Lord” as referring to God was the critical issue in the last question Jesus asked on the Temple Mount before He left it for the last time (Mt. 22:41-46) and its use is still necessary for salvation (Romans 10:9-13). These wicked religious leaders, in their last desperate request from Pilate, only on this one occasion, address their evil Gentile Governor with this name “Lord” (“*Sir*”), in order to acquire this most desired security!

THEIR JOB HAD BECOME THEIR GOD!

I. THE DENYING DECEIVERS MT. 27:62-63

These Pharisees had always condemned Jesus for eating hand-picked food or healing people on the Sabbath (Mt. 12:1-15). They, who were so angrily indignant at His care for others on that day of worship (Lk. 13:14), now, not

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – FREDERICKSBURG – BOB EVANS ON RT. 3, 11:30AM – WOODBRIDGE – BOB EVANS AT NOBLEWOOD PLAZA

THURSDAY @ 7:30AM –BIBLE STUDY – RT. 10&301 SHONEYS, NOON – NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER – VA CAPITOL

FRIDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – IN THE TIDEWATER AREA (CALL 804-683-2285 FOR SPECIFICS)

Virginia

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only violate the law regarding this “*high*” day (Jn. 19:31) of the Jewish year (Ex. 12:16), but they especially require the soldiers to work, guarding the tomb, both on that feast day as well as the Sabbath to follow (Mt. 28:1 – “Sabbaths”). Thus, as religious leaders, they are denying any obligation to the Sabbath rest, required in the Law. This is why they must use Pilate’s soldiers, rather than their own, because, not only would their soldiers object; they would also let everyone know that such a flagrant violation of the Sabbath was requested of them. Also, Pilate does not go “*out*” to meet with them as on the previous day (Jn. 18:28-29, 32), instead they seem now willing to violate their own rule about defiling themselves by entering the dwelling of a Gentile. Additionally, it was highly unusual to have the “*chief priests*” who were liberal, unbelieving Sadducees, united with the unbiblically strict “Pharisees” on any occasion. But here they unite in disobeying a law both parties agree on, in a bi-partisan effort to prevent any possible hint of a resurrection! Worst of all, these habitual liars call Jesus a “*deceiver*” in front of Pilate, who was just forced by them to kill Jesus because He claimed to be a King. And Pilate has heard from Jesus Himself that He is the king of truth (Jn. 18:37)! Then, to add insult to injury, they use the same statement which they had previously perverted during His trial (Mt. 26:61), used to mock Him at His crucifixion (Mt. 27:40), and are now violating almost everything they have scrupulously followed, to keep it from occurring!

“WHATEVER CONSCIENCE THEY HAD, MADE GREAT COWARDS OF THEM; SO THEY BEGGED PILATE TO DO WHAT HE COULD TO PREVENT THE RISING OF THEIR VICTIM.”
CHARLES SPURGEON

II. THEIR DESPERATE DEMAND MT. 27:64

Because they have stroked Pilate’s authority, addressing him as Deity, they now feel comfortable to demand with an imperative, “*Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day.*” The word for “be made secure” literally means “to guard, to safeguard, to watch over someone” and “here, ‘to watch over someone so he cannot escape’ (BAGD).”² They mask their request with, “*lest the disciples come and steal Him away and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last deception will be worse than the first.*” What they call a “*deception*” is the reality, which has been embraced publicly by Pilate’s leader of the execution team, a centurion of His own protection unit, that Jesus is who He claimed to be—the Messiah and the Son of God! They fear His resurrection would prove such, and would be disastrous to their hypocritical leadership. True to nature, they think that the disciples would be willing to steal and lie just like them!

“EVIDENTLY THESE EVIL MEN JUDGED THE LORD’S DISCIPLES TO BE AS DEVIIOUS AND CRAFTY AS THEY WERE.” JOHN PHILLIPS

III. THEIR DETERMINED DEMISE MT. 27:65-66

Pilate seems to be quite irritated with this unexpected interruption and commands them, “*You have a guard.*” His next imperative is the same verb Jesus used to Peter when He said, “*Get behind Me, Satan!*”, when Pilate says “*Go!*” This verb has a sense of urgency and could be translated, “Get out of here!” Then, with a smile of irony, “*Make it as sure as you know how.*” They rejoice in their disobedience and demise as they secure the grave, set the guard, and seal the stone! Providing resurrection proof!

¹ W. E. Vine, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1996), 379.

² Cleon L. Rogers, Jr. and Cleon L. Rogers, III, *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 65.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Have you received Jesus Christ so that you call Him Lord of your life?
- 2) Do the extents you are willing to go against your conscience prove that your job has become your God?
- 3) Do you live a transformed life in the light of the resurrection or do all that you can to somehow prove it is not true?