

Holy Saturday

Read Matthew 27:62-66, Luke 23:55-56

I like to think of Holy Saturday as the day earth held its breath. I imagine the animals poised and the trees leaning toward the tomb. All of heaven focused their gaze on One beloved form as Jesus...rested. That's a new thought for me. Let's explore it.

Jesus was in the tomb during the Sabbath, and the Jewish Sabbath is from Friday's sundown to Saturday's sundown.

Record Genesis 2:2 below.

God the Father rested on the seventh day from all of His work. Jesus, the Son, rested on the seventh day, after all of His work.

Ironically, those who had put Jesus in the grave could find no rest.

Read Luke 13:14 and John 5: 16. What complaint did the Jews lodge against Jesus in these verses?

Despite persecuting Jesus for working on the Sabbath during His ministry, the Jews were sweating it on the Sabbath. They were busy in their schemes while Jesus rested from His labors.

Read Isaiah 48:22 and Isaiah 57:20. In your own words, record what these verses say the wicked can expect?

No rest for the one in opposition to Christ. This thread holds throughout God's Word. Revelation 14:11 describes hell, the place of eternal punishment for the devil, his angels, and all who deny Christ. Find the phrase mentioning rest in this verse and record it below.

Now record Matthew 11:28.

Praise God! There is rest for our weary souls in Christ Jesus!

The religious leaders could find no comfort in their victory. They were anxious that their rule could still be challenged, if somehow Jesus' followers made it look like he had risen from the grave. Read Matthew 27:65. What is Pilate's response to their request that the tomb be sealed and guarded.

"As sure as you know how..." Pilate said. That's interesting.

Do you remember the centurion who watched Jesus die and said, "Surely, this man is God's Son?" (Matthew 27:54) Had this man reported back to Pilate about what he had witnessed at the moment of Jesus' death? And do you recall Pilate's wife begging him not to have anything to do with Jesus' death because she had a bad dream concerning Him? (Matthew 27:19)

Had their stories combined to put the fear of God into the Roman governor? It's possible. Pilate could have also been mocking the Jews. In our vernacular I imagine it sounding something like, "Sure. Seal it, guard it as best you know how. But y'all need to get a grip. The man is dead and still living rent-free in your head."

Regardless of the motives in Pilate's speech, and the desperation of the Jews, the grave is secured. (Matthew 27: 66) Or so, they thought.

Record Psalm 2:4 below.

In doing everything within their power to prevent anyone from getting into the tomb, Jesus' enemies failed to understand that what was coming would be an inside job. No one was going in, but Jesus, the Crucified, was coming out!

Jesus, help us rest with You today, and trust as wholly in the unerring faithfulness of your Father and ours as you did when You bowed Your head on the Cross and said, "It is finished."