

Exegetical Notes, Matthew 28:1-10
“Death Lost”

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen, Pastor, Cornerstone Fellowship
101 Kylies Road, Coatesville, PA 19329
610-384-1375
charleshjensen@aol.com

Matthew 28:1-10

Verse 1

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

- Since the Jewish Sabbath is Saturday, these events took place at dawn on Sunday morning.
- The “other Mary” is not the mother of Jesus but the wife of Clopas (see Matthew 27:56).
- Apparently, their concern was to make sure that everything was right at the tomb. They may have wanted to enter the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus, but the heavy stone would have made entrance to the tomb impossible for them since they were not strong enough to move it. Thus, all they could hope to do was look at the tomb.

Verse 2

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.

- The proper translation of the Greek text is, “Now there had been an earthquake.” The earthquake and the accompanying events did not occur as the women approached the tomb but before they started to go there.
- Apparently, the earthquake was the angelic force used to move the stone.
- By sitting on the stone, the angel indicates his intention to prevent it from being moved back into place by any agent. The angel, not the Roman soldiers, then becomes the true guardian of the tomb.

Verse 3

His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.

- The angel was an impressive fellow. He has a startlingly bright appearance.

Verse 4

The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

- The Roman soldiers were so overwhelmed by the sight of the angel that they were powerless to do anything.

Verse 5

The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.”

- The women are also frightened by the appearance of the angel. However, while he ignores the guards who are not seeking Jesus, he tells the women who are seeking him not to be afraid. The intention of the women seems to be the difference. They are not rendered helpless in the presence of the angel.

Verse 6

“He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.”

- The angel tells the women three truths: First, Jesus is not there. Second, he has risen from the dead. Third, all this was in perfect accord with what Jesus had told his disciples (see Matthew 16:21; 17:22; and 20:18-19).
- He then invites them to confirm the news for themselves by seeing that the tomb is empty.

Verse 7

“Then go quickly and tell his disciples; ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”

- Having given the women the basic facts and confirming the news to them by showing them where Jesus’ body had been, the angel commissions them to share the news with others. Specifically, they are commissioned to go and tell the disciples the news that they have received.
- They are given a threefold message for the disciples: First, they are to tell that Jesus is raised. Second, they are to tell the disciples that Jesus

is going ahead of them into Galilee. Third, they are to explain that there they will see him.

- The final phrase indicates that the angel has completed his assignment.

Verse 8

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

- The sight of the angel and the news of Jesus' resurrection left the women emotionally confused. They were afraid and filled with joy.
- They hurried to fulfill the commission that they were given.

Verse 9

Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.

- As the women were hurrying away from the tomb Jesus, himself, appeared to them.
- His greeting to them is the usual greeting that friends would exchange.
- They know him and fall down in homage to worship him.

Verse 10

Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

- Jesus extends the same commission to the women as they had received from the angel. They are to go and tell the disciples that they will meet with him in Galilee.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *Death Lost*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Senior Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by Dr. Jensen and *Cornerstone Fellowship*.)