

***PRECEPTS FOR LIFE***  
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**Precept Ministries International**  
P.O. Box 182218, Chattanooga, TN 37422-7218  
1-888-734-7707/ [www.preceptsforlife.com](http://www.preceptsforlife.com)

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**SERIES: Matthew (The King, His Kingdom And Me)**

**TITLE: Program 53 – He Is Risen!**

**WEDNESDAY**

**OPEN**

Every Easter people, around the world, celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Many of them come to the Garden Tomb, where I'm standing, in Jerusalem. The question is: why? What is so special about the resurrection of Jesus Christ? What can it mean to you personally? And what if you don't believe that Jesus was raised from the dead? We'll talk about it today as we look at God's precepts for life.

**PART ONE**

We've been studying the death of Jesus Christ and yet there's another important element that we have to see. And that is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because, Precious One, if there's no resurrection then Jesus Christ's death is absolutely in vain. I want us to go to Matthew chapter 27 and I want to start with verse 50. It says, **“And Jesus cried out... with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.” (Matthew 27:50)** John tells us that He shouted

“Tetelestai.” **“...It is finished...!” (John 19:30)** The debt for our sins had been paid. The question is: would God receive that debt? Would a holy God be satisfied with the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God? Well the resurrection proves His satisfaction and that’s why it’s so important. And it says in verse 51, **“And behold, the veil [in] the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. [And] the tombs were opened....” (Matthew 27:51-52)** This is a very significant phrase, and **“The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised.” (Matthew 27:52)** They were raised from the dead. Now watch, though, what it says. **“And coming out of the tombs after His resurrection...,” (Matthew 27:53)** after his resurrection. What I want you to see and I want you to mark in your Bible, because remember, it’s so important to ask who, and what, and when and where, and why, and how, so when we ask those five W’s and an H, one of the things we want to mark is time phrases. And what he’s saying is that when Jesus Christ cried, **“...It is finished...!” (John 19:30)** when He died, when He **“...Gave up His Spirit,” (John 19:30)** then **“the tombs were opened....” (Matthew 27:52)** Now you can understand that in those days, in Bible times, that they were in a sarcophagus and it was just like a big clay box. And so those lids came off. If they were buried in tombs like the one behind me then the stones were rolled away. But it’s saying many were **“...Coming out of the tombs...,”** but it says, **“...after His resurrection....” (Matthew 27:53).** So what you want to do is you want to put a clock over “after” because it’s very important. Jesus Christ had to be the first one that was raised from the dead. So it says, **“...After His resurrection they entered the holy city and [they] appeared to many.” (Matthew 27:53)** Now can you imagine what it would be like? I mean maybe you’re in your little shop and a friend walks in and you know the friend and he says, “Hello.” And you look at him and you say, “Hey, Abe!” And then all of a sudden you put your head down and you put your head back up because Abe had died. And now, here is Abe standing

before you after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. What is going on? What is God doing? Because He's the one that raised Him from the dead. Well let's keep reading and we'll discover the importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And it says, **"Now the centurion, and those who were with him..."** with Jesus, **"...keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, 'Truly this was the Son of God!'"** (Matthew 27:54) Because they realized at the death of Jesus Christ, with the earthquake and with the rocks being split, that this was a divine action, it was not an action of man. And it says, **"Many women were there looking... from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee while ministering to [them]. Among them was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee."** (Matthew 27:55-56) These were the ones that tended to Jesus. These were the ones that cooked for them. This is the ones that followed them and helped care for them. And it says, **"When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus."** (Matthew 27:57) Now remember what a disciple is. Remember what we've learned in the Gospel of Matthew. A disciple is a follower. A disciple is a follower of a teacher. A disciple is one that comes to another person and says, "Teach me what you know." And, "Show me how to live according to the way that you live." And so Joseph of Arimathea—and Arimathea is where he is from—Joseph of Arimathea had become a disciple, a follower of Jesus Christ. And it says, **"This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus [Christ]. Then Pilate ordered it... be given to him."** (Matthew 27:58) He must have been a man with some "chutzpa" because he goes right up to the governor and he says, "I want the body of Jesus Christ." They take the body off the cross. Remember, as they take the body off the cross, they have not broken His legs because He's already dead. The soldier has stuck a spear in His side, blood and water comes out showing that He died of a ruptured heart. He died

of a broken heart. That's what sin does. It breaks the heart of God. And so it says, **“And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and [he] laid it in his own... tomb....” (Matthew 27:59-60)** I'm standing in front of a tomb. A tomb that may be authentic and may not be authentic; and I don't think God really wants us to know the exact place of the burial of Jesus Christ, because then we might venerate the place and we might forget the person and we don't want to do that. Because it's not about a place, it's about what happened. It's about a resurrection from the dead. But we're in a garden that could be the garden because it meets a lot of the qualifications. Now others say, “No, it's the Holy Sepulcher in the center of Jerusalem.” A big church has been built over the Holy Sepulcher, the sepulcher where they believe that Jesus Christ was buried. And people will come from all over the world there, and they will get down and they will kiss the stone and they will rub the stone. But the thing is that we are not worshipping a dead man. That tomb, behind me, is absolutely empty. Let's find out what happened. Well it says that **“This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered [that] it be given to him. And Joseph took the body... wrapped it in a clean... cloth, and laid it in [a] new tomb, which... had [been] hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.” (Matthew 27:58-60)** Now when you come back to the tomb what you see in front of that tomb is you see like a trough. And that trough is there because there was a huge stone there that they could roll in front of the door to the tomb. And that's what Joseph did. He took that body, laid it in there and as he laid it in there, wrapped in linen cloths, then he rolled the stone and he walked away. Jesus was dead. You only bury a dead man. We know that He was dead. They had put a spear in His side, blood and water had come out. The soldiers knew that He was dead and that's why they did not break His legs, because they would break the legs. Remember? Because then He could not lift Himself and do the process of inhaling and exhaling. And so they knew He was dead. And so they did

not even break His legs. You have the testimony of the soldiers. You have the testimony that Pilate knows He's dead. Joseph of Arimathea knows He's dead. He's wrapped Him up and he's put Him in the tomb. **"And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the grave."** (Matthew 27:61) So it's as if, right now, I'm sitting here where maybe Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sat, and I'm opposite the grave. And, of course, I'm grieved. This was the man like no other man on the face of this earth. This is a man that when you looked at Him, there was absolute purity, there was absolute holiness. This was a man that if you wanted to honor God you would follow because He always and only did those things that pleased the Father. This is the man that turned water into wine. (See John 2:9) This is the man that made the lame to walk. This is the man that made the blind to see. This is the man that made the deaf to hear. This is the man that took away leprosy. This is the man that raised a child and others from the dead. (See Luke 7:22) This was The Christ. And you can imagine their grief. And it says, **"Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, and said, 'Sir, we remember... when He was still alive that [the] deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.'"** (Matthew 27:62-63) You can imagine what it was like. They go to Pilate. They want to make sure that their case is absolutely secure. They have plotted His death. They have brought Him to death. They have succeeded. But this deceiver said that on the third day He would rise again. And we don't want any hanky panky is what I would say today. They wouldn't say it then. But we don't want anything to spoil our plot. **"Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day...."** (Matthew 27:64) What do you know? You know that, in a sense, there is a doubt. In a sense, there is a fear. And so this is what they say, **"...Otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception [Pilate would] be worse than the first.'** [And] Pilate said to

**them, ‘You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how.’ And they went and [they] made the grave secure....” (Matthew 27:64-66)**

Now remember there’s a stone over that door. So what do they do? They seal the door. They seal the door so that if that stone is rolled the seal is broken and they know and understand that someone has taken Him away. So it says, **“...With the guard they set a seal on the stone.” (Matthew 27:66)** And what is about to happen? O Beloved, it is the difference between life and death, because if He doesn’t rise again on the third day, first of all, He’s told a lie. Second of all, the sign of Jonah the Prophet does not come true. And third, you and I are dead in our sins. We’ll talk about it in just a minute.

## **PART TWO**

What a privilege it is, my friend, to stand here in Jerusalem, in front of the Garden Tomb and open my Bible to Matthew chapter 28 and to read about the resurrection of Jesus Christ and know that that tomb behind me and His tomb, wherever it might be; that might be it or it might be another place, but you would never find the body of Jesus Christ. Though you dug up every tomb in all the world, you would not find the body of Jesus Christ. Why? Because **“...He [is] risen....” (Matthew 28:6)** Let’s read about it. In chapter 28 it says in verse 1, **“Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week....” (Matthew 28:1)** As I teach this, it’s a Sabbath here in Jerusalem, and it’s a different day than all the other days of the week. It is a day of rest. It’s a day of family gatherings and the Sabbath is a holy day. It was a day of rest. On the Sabbath they could not do anything. They could not do any kind of work. They couldn’t go near a dead body. So **“Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week...,”** which would be a Sunday, **“...Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat [on] it.” (Matthew**

**28:1-2)** Now can you imagine? I mean here the chief priests and the scribes have it all sealed up. And they think they've got it sealed up and they think they've got their case made, and all of a sudden there's an earthquake and that stone is rolled away and the angel is perched on top of that. And remember now, angels didn't have wings, okay, that was the cherubim and the seraphim. But when angels came to earth they appeared as men. So it's like here's this angel, this man, sitting on top of the stone. **"And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing [was] as white as snow. [And] the guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men."**

**(Matthew 28:3-4)** I mean they were just dead. And it says, **"[And] the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. He is not here, for He [is] risen....' "****(Matthew 28:5-6)** If I were to close the door to the tomb behind me you would find out that the priests from England had put on the door, **"He is not here, He is risen."** And it goes on to say, **"...Just as He said...."**

**(Matthew 28:6)** That's a very important phrase and, Precious One, that's why we're studying the Bible. That's why we're discovering truth for ourselves. And that's why I want you to see the text and mark the text and work with the text and understand the text. I want you to observe it; I want you to interpret it. I want you to apply it. I want you to live it. And that's what application is. You say, "How do I live in the light of the resurrection?" Well you hold on and we're going to talk about it. But I want you to see it is **"...Just as He said...."** **(Matthew 28:6)** This is a book of pure, unadulterated truth, because this is God's book. God has spoken. [Holy men moved by the Holy Spirit wrote the very words of God.]

**(PARAPHRASE, 2 Peter 1:21)** And he says, **"He is not here, ...He has risen, just as He said. Come, [and] see the place where He was lying."**

**(Matthew 28:6)** Come in and see the place where He was lying. It's empty, absolutely empty. Now if we would go to the other Gospels we would get the fuller picture of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We would see the head

cloth wrapped one place, we would see the grave clothes laid aside another, but we would not see a body there. **“He is not here...He has risen....”** (Matthew 28:6) And then he says, **“Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold I have told you. And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to [the] disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them....”** (Matthew 28:7-9) You can imagine, they’re taking off, the tomb is empty, they’re running and they want to tell the disciples the good news, **“He is not here, ...He [is] risen, just as he [says]....”** (Matthew 28:6) It’s the third day and all of a sudden, who do they run into? They run into the One who is risen from the dead. “Rabboni, Rabboni.” They see Jesus. Can you imagine the ecstasy? Can you imagine the joy? Can you imagine the affirmation? They know that He lives just as He said. And it says, **“And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and [they] took hold of His feet and [they] worshiped Him.”** (Matthew 28:9) Now the word worship means to bow down. And so they were bowed down. They were prostrate. They were holding on to his feet. And it says, **“Then Jesus said to them, ‘Do not be afraid....’”** (Matthew 28:10) And you know what, Beloved? Because Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, you and I do not have to be afraid if we believe that Jesus is the Christ. If we believe that He is the Son of God we never have to fear facing God. Because Jesus Christ, when He died on that cross and shed His blood, redeemed you. It means He bought you out of the slave market of sin. It means that He paid for your sins in full, in full, absolutely, totally, completely. You don’t have to be afraid. You don’t have to shrink back in shame at the coming of Jesus Christ. You don’t have to do that. When you see Him face to face, you don’t have to drop your eyes. You can look at Him and you can take in all of His beauty. Why? Because your sins have been paid for in full. And do you know what? It’s the resurrection that proves that your sins have been paid for in full. Because



if that tomb still had the body of Jesus Christ, if any tomb in the whole wide world had the body of Jesus Christ, then your faith and my faith would be absolutely in vain, absolutely in vain, Precious One. Because He died and He died just like every other human being did. And so if there's no resurrection, then your faith and my faith is in vain. And we are of all people to be pitied. But because there is a resurrection you and I do not have to be afraid. You may be facing death. You may have gotten the word from the doctor that you have a terminal disease and you may have been afraid. But I want to tell you something, if you believe in Jesus Christ, if you acknowledge that He is the Son of God, that He is the only way to God and you believe in Him, you receive Him as your Lord, as your Savior, as your God. If you bow down, if you worship Him, then I can promise you that when you die, you pass from death to life. It's **"...Absent from the body, and [it's] present with the Lord."** (2 Corinthians 5:8, KJV) And it's present with the Lord, Precious One, because Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead. God's word to you and God's word to me today is **"He is not here ...He [is] risen...."** (Matthew 28:6) The tomb is empty. And because the tomb is empty and because He was raised the third day, **"...Just as He said..., (Matthew 28:6)** you and I do not have to be afraid of God. Because the minute that you believe in Jesus, He puts His Spirit inside of you, and when He puts his Spirit inside of you, Jew or Gentile, and there's only two categories of men and those are Jews and those are Gentiles, "Goyim" of the nations, whoever receive Jesus then they can cry because God puts His Spirit within, Abba Father. And His Spirit, [God's Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.] (PARAPHRASE, Romans 8:16) And He loves us with a perfect love and **"...Perfect love casts out [all] fear...."** (1 John 4:18) **"He is not here, ...He [is] risen...."** (Matthew 28:6) Do not be afraid, if He's your Savior. But if He's not, then you need to fear.