

Jesus Christ has risen!

April 16, 2017

The Bible is an amazing book. It doesn't censor truth in any circumstance. The stories of the great men of faith include the temptations, failures as well as the successes. The secrets of men's hearts are exposed and Satan's schemes are brought out into the light for the world to see that he is a liar, a murderer, and his plan is to destroy, kill and wipe out goodness and faith wherever it appears. The wonderful truth is that God takes the negative acts of Satan and makes something good come from it.

If you read the book of Genesis Satan gave his best to destroy humanity and destroy God's creation using deception and spreading wickedness among the inhabitants of the earth. In Genesis chapter 35, we are introduced to Jacob's twelve sons, one of whom was named Joseph. Joseph was Jacob's favorite and he doted on the lad for he was a son of his beloved wife Rachel who had died giving birth to his younger son Benjamin. Joseph was hated by his older brothers because of their father's favoritism towards him and it intensified when their father made Joseph a special coat of many colors. Joseph was a dreamer and he told his brothers and his father that he dreamed of them bowing down to him and this irritated all of them. The day came when Joseph was sent to check on his brothers to find out where they were tending sheep and he was told to come back and report to him. Joseph went to Dothan and there the brothers plotted to kill Joseph and see what would become of his silly dreams then. Reuben, an older brother tried to protect Joseph so suggested that his life be spared and they would throw him into a dry well there in the desert. He planned to rescue him and send him back to his father. However, a caravan came by heading for Egypt and the brothers sold Joseph to them as a slave. They stripped him of his coat and they lied to their father and told him that Joseph had been devoured by a wild beast and they brought the tattered robe with blood stains back to Jacob to make their story believable. Joseph stayed true to his godly convictions and though he was sold as a slave, had lies told about him to discredit his honorable character and once again his coat was used as evidence for a false story, yet he served time in a jail, and continued to believe God. Later he became the ruler next to the king because of his wisdom and ability to interpret dreams through the power of the living God. He was used by God to save his whole family from starvation during a prolonged famine in the land. He forgave his brothers and understood that God had allowed these things to come his way and he gave glory and honor to God for using him to save his family and to preserve the resources of the land of Egypt during oppressive times. The last few verses of Genesis tell of Joseph's last wishes. He lived to be 110 years old and he said this to his brothers: "I won't live much longer but God will take care of you and lead you out of Egypt to the land that he has promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Promise me that you will take my body with you when God leads you to that land." Joseph had a hope of being resurrected and he wanted to be in the Promised Land. Years later, when the Children of Israel left Egypt

and entered the Land of Promise, Moses made sure that Joseph's bones were taken also. The resurrection of the dead was promised to the Children of God throughout the Old Testament and the prophets and Patriarchs had faith and wrote about the plan of God to take away the sin of the world at a future time.

Prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, and Ezekiel wrote about the coming Messiah.

Jesus fulfilled the prophecies sprinkled throughout the Old Testament and he proclaimed himself to be the One sent from Heaven to take away the sins of the world.

In John 2:17-21, the disciples witnessed Jesus using a whip to cleanse the temple of animals and money changers telling them to get the doves out of the temple and stop making his Father's house a marketplace. The disciples remembered the Scripture that says, "My love for your house burns in me like a fire." Psalms 69:9.

The Jews asked Jesus what miracle he would work to show them why he had done this. Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will build it up again." The leaders didn't understand what Jesus was referring to so they told him that it took 46 years to build the temple. They wondered what made him think he could rebuild it in three days.

But Jesus was talking about his body as a temple and when he was raised, his disciples remembered what he had told them and they believed the Scriptures and the words of Jesus.

In John 12:32, Jesus said these words: "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me." Jesus was referring to the manner in which he would be put to death.

In Matthew 16:21 it tells us that from that time moving forward that Jesus taught his disciples concerning his death. He told them that the nation's leaders, the chief priests and the teachers of the Law of Moses would inflict suffering onto him and then cause him to be killed. He promised that three days later, he would rise from the dead.

Peter told him to stop talking that way for that would never happen to him. Jesus said to him, "Get behind me Satan for you are an offense unto me; for you speak not the things that are of God but those that are of men." In Matthew 17:11, Jesus told his disciples that Elijah had come (John the Baptist) and the people had killed him for they didn't recognize him. They would soon make the Son of Man suffer in the same way.

In Matthew 21 Jesus told his disciples to go into the next village and there they would find two donkeys that were tied. They were to untie them and bring them to him. If anyone asked why they were taking the donkeys they were to simply say, "The Lord (the master of the donkeys) has need of them." The owners would then let them be taken.

The prophecy of Zachariah 9:9 was fulfilled that day as Jesus rode the donkey into the city. This Scripture said to "announce to the people of Jerusalem: Your king is coming to you! He is humble and rides on a donkey. He comes on the colt of a donkey."

The people as well as children shouted "Hooray for the Son of David! God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hooray for God in heaven above." When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people of the city asked, "Who can this be?" The crowd answered,

“This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth in Galilee. “The chief priest and the teachers of the Law of Moses tried to get Jesus to stop the children from shouting praises to the Son of David, but he answered, “Don’t you know that the Scriptures say, Children and infants will sing praises?” Jesus was not deceived by his apparent reception as King for he wept over Jerusalem and announced its impending destruction fulfilled in A.D 70. The same multitude that cried “Hosanna” later cried “Crucify Him!” Luke 19:38, Matthew 23:37, Matthew 27:22-24

In Matthew 27:31-55 gives the details of the torture, mockery, and death by crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The curtain in the temple tore from the top to the bottom and a great earthquake shook the earth. The sun refused to shine and Jesus cried, “It is finished!” and gave up his spirit to God the Father.

When people saw what had taken place, they were frightened and declared, “This man really was the Son of God!”

Matthew 27:57-65 tells us that a rich disciple named Joseph from Arimathea went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. He took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and placed it in his own tomb that had been cut into solid rock and had never been used. He rolled a big stone against the entrance to the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting across from the tomb. The next day the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate and having recalled that Jesus had said that in three days he would rise from the dead, they asked that the tomb be secured and that soldiers be placed there so no one would disturb the body of Jesus. They wanted to make sure that the disciples didn’t come and steal the body and claim Jesus had risen from the dead. The news of a resurrected body would be worse than having him alive and working miracles among the people. Pilate told them to seal the tomb and put guards there as best as they could.

It was Sunday and Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. Suddenly a strong earthquake struck and the Lord’s angel came down from heaven and rolled the stone away and sat on it. He looked as bright as lightening and his clothes were white as snow. The guards shook from fear and fell down as though they were dead. The angel spoke to the women: “Don’t be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus who was nailed to a cross. He isn’t here! God has raised him to life, just as Jesus said he would. Come see the place where his body was lying. Now hurry! Tell his disciples that he has been raised to life and is on his way to Galilee. Go there and you will see him. That is what I came to tell you.”

The women were frightened but happy and they hurried to relay the message to his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and greeted them. They went near him. Jesus told them not to be afraid but tell his disciples to go to Galilee and there they would see him.

While the women were on their way to spread the news of the resurrection of Jesus, the soldiers that were guarding the tomb went into the city. They told the chief priests

everything that had happened. The chief priests met with the leaders and decided to bribe the soldiers with a lot of money. They told the soldiers to tell everyone that Jesus' disciples came during the night and stole his body while the soldiers were asleep. If the governor hears about this, they promised to speak on their behalf to the governor. The soldiers would not have to worry about anything coming back on them. The soldiers took the money and did as they were told. People of Judea still tell each other this story.

In Acts 1:6-11, the disciples asked Jesus if he was going to set up his kingdom now that he had risen from the dead. Jesus told them that they didn't need to know the time or the season of this event for the Father in heaven had set the time for this to happen. They needed to wait for the Holy Ghost to fall upon them and then they would be empowered to spread the good news in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria and everywhere in the world. After Jesus had said this and while they were watching, he was taken up in a cloud. They could not see him. As he went up, they kept looking into the sky. Suddenly two angels dressed in white clothes stood beside them. They said, "Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking up into the sky? Jesus has been taken into heaven. But he will come back in the same way that you have seen him go."

In Revelation 1:7, John the Revelator wrote these words, "Jesus was the first to conquer death, and he is the ruler of all earthly kings. Christ loves us and by his blood he set us free from our sins. He lets us rule as kings and serve God his Father as priests. To him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen!"

Look! He is coming with the clouds. Everyone will see him even the ones who stuck a sword through him. All people of the earth will weep because of him. Yes, it will happen! Amen!"

Revelation 3:5 and Revelation 13:8 tell us that there is a Lamb's Book of Life with people's names written who will enter the Kingdom of God. Those who worship the Beast will not enter into heaven for their names are not in this book.

Everyone who wins the victory will wear white clothes. Their names will not be erased from the Book of life and Jesus will tell his Father and the angels that they are his followers. Is your name written in the Book of Life? Do you believe that He lives and will return to this earth one day? Are you looking for him?

Hebrews 9:28 says that Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.