

Happy Easter!
Steven, Sara, Ethan,
Liz & Pastor Ben Mote



Easter Sunday, April 9, 2023

Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:1-10

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing. His cross stands empty to the sky. Let streets and homes with praises ring. His love in death shall never die. —Brian Wren

Throughout history, erroneous reports of people's deaths have popped up with exasperating regularity, most notably, the humorist Mark Twain, who remarked that "reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated."

On Friday of Holy Week, all the acquaintances of Jesus, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a safe distance from the cross and watched Jesus die (Luke 23:44-49). A righteous man named Joseph of Arimathea took the body of Jesus off the cross, wrapped it in a linen cloth and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb. The women saw the tomb, and then they prepared spices and ointments to put on the body (23:50-56).

They wondered whether Jesus was dead.

Yes, he was. No doubt about it. Jesus died on a Roman cross. And when he was placed in a tomb, he was dead. Historically, the church has always considered any belief to the contrary to be heresy. Jesus had not fainted on the cross. He had not swooned. He was not in a state of suspended animation.

Jesus was dead. Jesus did not have a pulse. No brain wave activity. Nothing. Jesus was dead. He was so dead that the soldiers who were about to break his legs to hasten a death by suffocation, decided not to waste their time and energy on a dead man.

And remember, the people of Jesus' day lived with death. These were rough times. They knew what "dead" looked like. They weren't fooled.

His death was not just a rumor. This was not fake news. Jesus was quite emphatically dead, wrapped in a linen cloth and laid in a tomb.

Then they rolled a massive stone over the entrance to the tomb, effectively sealing it. Even if there were a strong, alive man inside, that stone was going nowhere.

Jesus was dead.

And then he wasn't!

Christ is risen! Christ is risen, indeed!

*Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia! Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia! Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!*

—Adapted from HomileticsOnline.com; used with permission.

Prayer: May my life, O God, be a living witness to your love, grace and mercy. Help me to act out the good news so that both my words and my life are in harmony. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Luke 5-9
- Monday:** Joshua 8-16
- Tuesday:** Joshua 17-24
- Wednesday:** Judges 1-4
- Thursday:** Judges 5-8
- Friday:** Ruth 1-4
- Saturday:** Psalms 36-39

The Bible Code

If D=A and E=B, etc., decode this advice from Joshua 1:8 (NIV):
 GR QRW OHW WKLV ERRN RI WKH ODZ GHSDUW IURP BRXU PRXWK;
 PHGLWDWH RQ LW GDB DQG QLJKW.

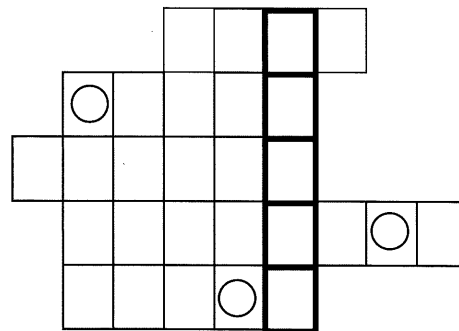
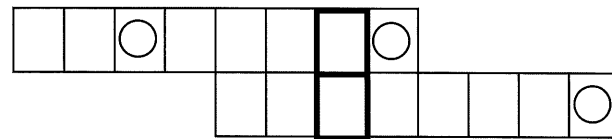
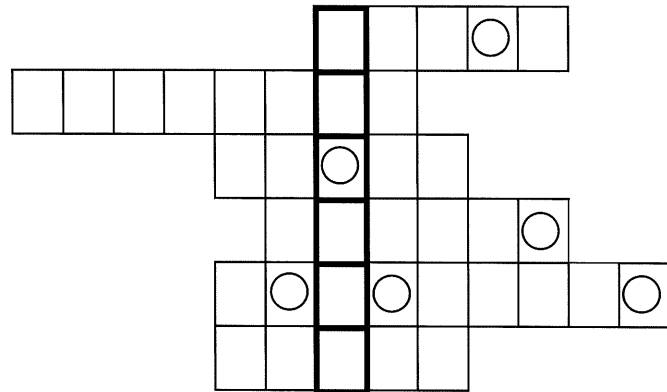
Write the Bible Code answer here: _____

TODAY IS EASTER SUNDAY! Let Us Rejoice!

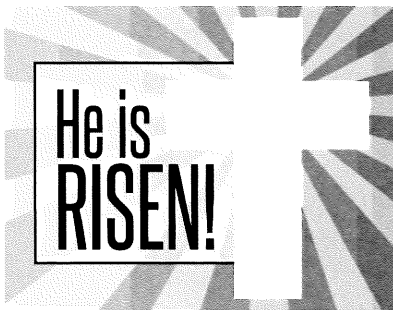
1. What Jesus was wrapped in
2. The site of the crucifixion
3. The king
4. He washed his hands of Jesus
5. Followers of Jesus
6. He denied Christ

7. A large hill
8. The feast celebrating escape from Egypt

9. Mother of Jesus
10. A Jewish religious teacher
11. The doubting disciple
12. Jesus was mistaken for this
13. One of Peter's names



Unscramble the circled letters to reveal secret word.



- Answers:**
1. cloth
 2. Golgotha
 3. Herod
 4. Pilate
 5. disciples
 6. Peter
 7. mountain
 8. Passover
 9. Mary
 10. rabbi
 11. Thomas
 12. gardener
 13. Simon
- Secret word:**
resurrection