



Lesson 27

The Enemies Guard the Tomb

Matthew 27:62-66; 28:2-4, 11-15

Matthew 27:62-66

The next day, that is, after the day

of Preparation, the **chief priests** and the **Pharisees** gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, '**After three days I will rise.**'"



John 2:18-22

So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Matthew 26:60-62

. . . many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.'" And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?"

Therefore, order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first."

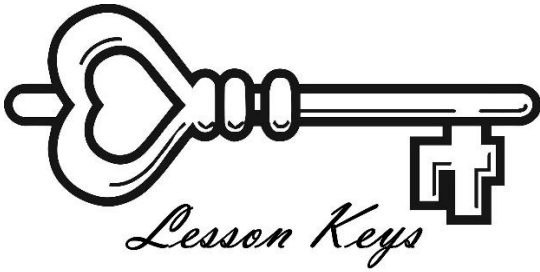
Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can." So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

Matthew 28:2-4

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And **behold**, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and **behold**, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." ⁸ So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ And **behold**, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

Matthew 28:11-15

While [the women] were going, **behold**, some of the guard went into the city and told the **chief priests** all that had taken place. And when they had assembled with the **elders** and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' And if this **comes to the governor's ears**, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story (saying) has been spread (reported/repeated) among the Jews to this day.



1. Jesus' enemies were not ignorant of what He said, nor were they without fear that something could happen. (cf. Nicodemus comments in John 3, the frustration of the enemies after Lazarus was raised, etc.)
2. No guard and no seal could stop what was going to happen.
3. Guards squandered their opportunity as eye-witnesses of Jesus' resurrection (cf. the Christmas shepherds by contrast)
4. In the pay-off after the resurrection, the enemies of Jesus heard the miraculous truth, but did not believe. (cf. Jesus, "They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them...")
5. In the pay-off of the soldiers we see the unchanging nature of Jesus' enemies—something that would carry into the coming months and years against the apostles.
6. On one hand, this lesson is one of disappointment and "what could have been" but the what ifs and what could have beens don't change the Gospel and didn't stop the Word from going forth.