



BETWEEN 6:00 AM—9:00 AM: A DEATH CONFIRMED

Last week in Joel Moment, Pastor Jaime talked briefly about his dad. They shared a strong love, despite his father's troubles and weaknesses. Jaime also said something that caught my attention and changed my calendar for the week. He shared that when he visited his dad's grave, he lost control of his emotions. He wept and couldn't stop. I guess there's something about being face to face with a grave marker that strips away our defenses. The truth is that death is as unyielding as a granite stone. Standing at a burial site makes that fact clear and undeniable.

Now for the change in my calendar. Jaime's experience prompted me to visit my grandmother's grave at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Los Gatos. I did so last Friday. The stone my mother bought for Helen Louise Sled (1922-2012) is pictured to the right. When I drove up to the plot, there was a graveside service going on 15 feet from my grandmother's plot. I didn't want to disturb the gathering so I sat in my car until it was over. I watched the mourners file past the casket as each left a rose. Then the Gate of Heaven staff lowered it into the ground. I was moved as I saw their fresh grief.

However, what struck me the most about the scene was the body language of the officiating pastor. I couldn't hear him, but I could tell he was preaching. What impressed me was how he held the Bible. It was a large, leather-bound copy and it rested open on his two palms, like in the stock photo to the right. He held it with true reverence. I could tell that the words meant much to him.

Death is only manageable if we interpret it from the perspective of an open Bible, which talks about how the bleakness of death can be transformed. In the Bible reading today, we'll learn about Jesus' own death and burial. It's an aspect of his successful mission that we don't want to skip over as we rush to the third-day surprise. We want to feel the sharp pinch of separation — a sting like that felt by those who prepared his body and laid it in the tomb.

In Kierra's depiction of Gospel Event #5 on the following page, we see what happened after Jesus gave up his spirit. Read the Scriptures and identify the people and the actions they took.

Top left, middle and right — a man goes to another man dressed in purple (Matt. 27:57-58; Mark 15:44) _____

Middle left and right — a man wraps a body in linen and carries it to a dark opening (Matt. 27:59-60) _____

Bottom right — two women look on and mourn (Matt. 27:61) _____

Bottom left — a military man stands with arms crossed in front of a large stone (Matt. 27:62-66) _____



Gospel Event #5: Jesus the Saving King was buried.



BETWEEN 9:00 AM-12:00 PM: CHISELING NAMES ON STONES AND INTERCEDING ONCE AGAIN

Last week we talked about how God commanded Aaron to inscribe the names of the sons of Israel on the two shoulder stones mounted on his special priestly clothing. By doing so, he literally carried them into the Lord’s presence. As New Covenant priests, we have a similar ministry. If you didn’t have a chance last week, please write down the names of church family members that you want to support through prayer and phone contact during the pandemic. Then pray for each person.



Left Shoulder

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Right Shoulder

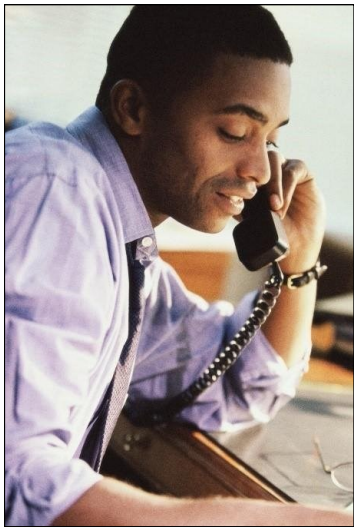
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

BETWEEN 12:00 PM-3:00 PM: THREE HOURS TO MAKE A CALL

1Th. 5:11 *Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.*

There’s a German proverb that goes like this: “Wer fürchete, er tue zu viel, tut immer zu wenig.” Here’s a translation: “Anyone who feared doing too much is always doing too little.”

This reminds me to shift into high gear and get God’s important tasks done first, especially when those tasks relate to the needs of his people. After all, he has resources aplenty for us. So please go ahead and make a call with the time that you don’t *think* you have to spend. God will take care of other tasks. Our priestly duties should come first.



BETWEEN 3:00 PM—4:00 PM: Join the Joel Moment Prayer Gathering. Go to Zoom.com and enter Meeting ID and Password.



MARTIN AND ANITA LEE [\[Scripture reading regarding the burial of Jesus.\]](#)

Matt. 27:57 *When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus.*

Matt. 27:58 *He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.*

Mark 15:44 *Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead.*

Matt. 27:59 *And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud*

Matt. 27:60 *and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away.*

Matt. 27:61 *Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.*

Matt. 27:62 *The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate*

Matt. 27:63 *and said, “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise.’*

Matt. 27:64 *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.”*

Matt. 27:65 *Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.”*

Matt. 27:66 *So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.*

MARK CARSON [\[A reflection on Jesus’ burial and why it’s a gospel event that shouldn’t be overlooked.\]](#)

*Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone cold tomb*

—Verse 3 of “We Three Kings”

JAIME BURNETT [\[He’ll lead our church family in communion.\]](#)



GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #1 (7 min.): *Psa. 116:3 The snares of death encompassed me;*

We reflected today on how our Lord Jesus lay lifeless behind an enormous stone. We were cut off from him and he was cut off from life. Let's express to him what's in our hearts as we think about his very real death and burial.

GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #2 (7 min.): *Heb. 2:15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*

Let's lift up those who are sick and afraid this afternoon. Ask the Lord to draw near to needy people everywhere and particularly those in our own church family.

GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #3 (7 min.): *Mal. 3:16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them,*

Let's pause and let each person share a concern with the rest of the group. It can be a personal matter or something related to our church, community or nation. But listen to each other and then cast those concerns on the strong arms of the Lord.

BETWEEN 5:00 PM-10:00 PM: *[Priests in repose — sipping and reading.]*

Can I invite you to make some decaf, tea or hot chocolate and enjoy some rest? Maybe you would like to open up a book? As I read the other day, "A book does not beep at you, spy on you, sell you out to marketers, interrupt with breaking news, suck you into a doomscrolling vortex, cease to function in a nor'easter, flood your eyes with melatonin-suppressing blue light or otherwise interrupt your already troubled sleep." And those are just the things a book *doesn't* do. The benefits of great reading are manifold.

Here are two books that Becky and I are reading to our kids. We'd love to know what's on your nightstand.

