

WHERE HAVE YOU LAID CHRIST?

Luke 2:1-7

Introduction:

As we go through this Christmas season, we should be thinking about the Christ child who was laid in the manger. This was only the first place Christ was laid, and often we forget about the other places where Christ was laid—which are of great significance. The Bible speaks of 4 distinct places where Christ has been laid.

I. (Luke 2:7) **CHRIST'S MOTHER LAID HIM IN A MANGER.**

1. Christ was not born in the beauty of the lilies as is sung today in **The Battle Hymn of the Republic**.
2. Why was Jesus laid in a manger?
 - A. It was of necessity due to human and divine reasons.
 - 1) From a human perspective, there was no room in the inn.
 - a. I've heard folks give the inn keeper grief.
 - b. The inn keeper gave the best he had.
 - c. Some folks don't give Jesus that much.
 - d. Joseph and Mary provided as best they could.
 - 2) From divine perspective, Jesus had to be born in Bethlehem.
 - a. Micah 5:2 states that Bethlehem was little, but out of her would come a ruler in Israel who is from everlasting to everlasting.
 - b. His birth was a sign to the shepherds there.
 - c. God chose this way so Jesus would identify with all humanity.
 - B. II Corinthians 8 :9 – ***You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich.***

II. (Luke 23:33) **CHRIST'S ENEMIES LAID HIM ON A CROSS.**

And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him.

1. Jesus had the power to lay down or take up His life, because that was settled in Gethsemane.

2. Jesus laid on the cross because it was the fulfillment of . . .
 - A. Bible prophecy (Ps. 22; 34; Isa. 53).
 - B. Man's hatred – ***They hated me without a cause*** (Jn 15:25).
 - C. Man's ignorance – ***Father, forgive them for they know not what they do*** (Luke 23:34).
 - D. Jesus bearing our sin
 - 1) ***For He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*** (II Corinthians 5:21).
 - 2) ***Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree*** (Galatians 3:13).

III. **CHRIST'S FRIENDS LAID HIM IN A TOMB.**

When the evening was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus's disciple; he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered (Matt. 27:57-58).

And there came also Nicodemus, who at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then they took the body of Jesus and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury (Jn 19:39-40).

1. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took the body of Jesus, anointed it, and placed it in Joseph of Arimathea's own tomb.
2. Why was Jesus laid in a tomb?
3. From a human perspective, it was due to . . .
 - A. Guilt—Joseph & Nicodemus waited too long to acknowledge Christ.
 - B. Love – The truth of their hearts came out after Jesus's death.
 - C. Reverence – They knew what had to be done for Jesus.
4. From a divine perspective, it was because Jesus was the Resurrection and the Life (eternal).
 - A. ***For as Jonah was 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be 3 days and 3 nights in the heart of the earth*** (Matthew 12:40).
 - B. ***Jesus answered, and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*** (John 2:19).

IV. (Isa. 28:16) **CHRIST'S FATHER LAID HIM IN ZION.**

Therefore, thus says the Lord God, behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; he that believes shall not make haste.

1. Zion is synonymous with Jerusalem.
2. Today, we reference this to the New Jerusalem.
3. Jesus's resurrection by God set the stage for these events.
4. Today, Jesus is laid in Zion to establish His church.
5. He is the tried stone, the precious cornerstone, and sure foundation.

Conclusion:

Where are you going to lay Jesus this Christmas? I hope you lay Him in your heart to both save and control your life. Today, Jesus lives in heaven, but on the earth, He lives in the hearts and lives of true Christians.