

Two Tombs

In 1922, Howard Carter made one of the greatest archeological discoveries in history. He found the ancient tomb of the Pharaoh known as Tutankhamun. Most know this Pharaoh as King Tut. Buried in the Valley of Kings, Tutankhamun's tomb, unlike other tombs that had been emptied by grave robbers, was full of priceless artifacts. It even contained the body of King Tut himself. It took eight years to remove and document the contents of the tomb. Some of the mummified remains and his treasures were sent in exhibitions around the world. Thousands of people lined up to see the remains of a dead king and his tomb. *

There is another tomb outside of Jerusalem, the location of which is not known for certain. One thing is known, however: that tomb is empty. It is the tomb of Jesus, the King of Kings. He rose from the grave on the third day after His death.

Bill Thomas writes: "It's a tale of two tombs. One is full of priceless treasure. The other is empty. Which is most valuable?" *

The answer is the empty tomb of Jesus is the most valuable. Here are some reasons why:

The empty tomb shows that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4).

The empty tomb means that Jesus conquered sin and death. "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14-15). Jesus' resurrection won the victory over sin, Satan, and death.

The empty tomb guarantees the resurrection to come. "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep (died)" (1 Corinthians 15:20). "Firstfruits" indicates that Jesus' resurrection from the dead is the first of many more to come. Jesus said, "The hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28-29).

We can share in Jesus' victory over sin and death when we accept His offer of salvation and eternal life on His terms.

God will save and give eternal life to those who place their faith and trust in Jesus (Acts 16:30-31), turn from their sins in repentance (Acts 17:30-31), confess Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10), and are baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). He will continue to cleanse from sin and prepare an eternal home for those who continue to walk in the light of His Word (1 John 1:7-9).

The contents of King Tut's tomb will ultimately perish (see 2 Peter 3:10). But the empty tomb of Jesus promises eternal life to those who will believe and obey (Hebrews 5:9).

-- David A. Sargent

* From Bill Thomas' entry in "Sermon Illustrations For Easter Sunday," www.sermonsuite.com.