

Matthew 27:65

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.

Analysis

Ye have a watch (ἔχετε κουστωδίαν)—Pilate granted their request, assigning Roman temple guards (koustodia, a Latin loanword). His dismissive **go your way, make it as sure as ye can** (ὕπάγετε ἀσφαλίσασθε ὡς οἴδατε) drips with irony: 'secure it as best you know how.' Pilate saw through their fear—a dead man needs no guard.

The phrase 'as ye can' acknowledges human limitation. They would deploy maximum security: stone, seal, soldiers. Yet all human safeguards proved powerless against divine power. The secured tomb became God's set stage: when Jesus rose despite every precaution, only supernatural resurrection could explain it. The guard's testimony (28:11-15) confirmed they couldn't stop him—they could only be bribed to lie about it. Human effort cannot prevent God's purposes.

Historical Context

Temple guards were crack Roman troops. Their assignment to tomb duty was unusual—showing the leaders' influence with Pilate and their genuine fear. The seal and guard remained until Sunday morning when the earthquake and angel appeared (28:2-4). The soldiers' later testimony of being bribed (28:11-15) appears in Matthew alone, exposing the cover-up.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What 'security measures' do we try to erect against God's will for our lives?
2. How does the failure of maximum human security to prevent resurrection strengthen your faith?

Interlinear Text

ἔφη	δὲ	αὐτοῖς	ὁ	Πιλάτος	ἔχετε	κουστωδίαν·
said	G1161	unto them	G3588	Pilate	Ye have	a watch
G5346		G846		G4091	G2192	G2892

ὑπάγετε	ἀσφαλίσασθε	ὥς	οἶδατε
go your way	make it as sure	as	ye can
G5217	G805	G5613	G1492

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 27:66 (Parallel theme): So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.