William B. Kessel

2018

**BE PREPARED FOR JUDGMENT DAY: THE VOICES OF SINEW RILEY AND HIS GRANDMOTHER**

 Jesus said, *In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am* (John 14:2-3).

 Sinew Riley was an Apache Scout stationed at Fort Huachuca. One day while on furlough in Whiteriver, he visited his friend, Missionary E. E. Guenther. Riley shared this story.

 **You remember my grandmother? Yes? Well she died the other day…**

 **Something funny happened in her life once. She went up on the mountains**

 **one day about ten years ago to pack wood as she was accustomed to do.**

 **She believed in Jesus and she liked to pray. She would pray right out there**

 **in the woods or anywhere. She had learned that Jesus was coming back some**

 **day to judgment. That did not frighten her in the least. She thought much**

 **about that and always wanted to be ready when he called for her. Kneeling**

 **down to shoulder her wood she prayed again along these lines.**

 **Then before she was able to get up with the bundle on her shoulders she**

 **heard a whirring up in the sky that sounded like the noise of a harvesting**

 **machine. The sound would come nearer and grow into a roar and then grow**

 **fainter again. That happened several times. At last the thing that the sound**

 **came from circled over her head like a large bird. “It’s Jesus coming to get**

 **me,” she cried joyfully. “How soon He has answered my prayers.” But now the**

 **object dropped gradually away from her and came to ground on the flat at**

 **Fort Apache. “Now I must hurry to Him,” she said eagerly to herself. “You**

 **bundle of wood stay where you are. I don’t need you where I am going.”**

 **Arriving at camp she was told of the flying machine that had alighted at**

 **Fort Apache, the first one in these parts. This news did not disappoint her**

 **nearly as much as one would have expected. “That’s alright,” she said.**

 **“He’ll come back after me some other day.”**

 **Not long ago my grandmother died. You know sometimes when Indians**

 **are about to die they threaten to send evil spirits from the other side to**

 **make trouble for their enemies. When my grandmother knew that her end**

 **was near, she said, “I am going to Jesus now. I have no hard feelings towards**

 **anyone. There are no evil spirits where Jesus lives. Therefore, nobody need**

 **be afraid that I will send any back from there”** (E. Guenther 1927).

And THE WORD OF THE LORD GROWS.

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

1. Why wasn’t this Apache woman afraid of Judgment Day?

2. Were her prayers for Judgment Day appropriate?

3. Why wasn’t this Apache woman embarrassed when Jesus didn’t return?

4. Why wasn’t this Apache woman disappointed when Jesus didn’t return?

5. Did this Apache woman experience her own Judgment Day?

**JUDGMENT DAY, AN OVERVIEW**

The Apostles’ Creed states, “He [Jesus] ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.”

1. Read Acts 1:8-9. What did Jesus do after his earthly mission was accomplished? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Read Ephesians 1:20, 22 and Romans 8:34. Where is Jesus positioned now? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. And what is Jesus doing? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Read John 14:2-3. What did Jesus promise to do one day? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Read Matthew 24:36. When will Judgment Day occur? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. How will Jesus return on Judgment Day?

 a. Read Acts 1:11 and Revelation 1:7. How will Jesus return? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 b. Read Matthew 25:31. How would you describe the scene? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. Read Acts 17:31. Why is the day of Jesus’ return called Judgment Day? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. What verdict will Jesus announce on Judgment Day?

 a. Read John 3:18a and Matthew 25:34. To the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_he will say \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 b. Read John 3:18b and Matthew 25:41. To the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ he will say \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

8. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:17. What will happen to the believers who are alive? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

9. The believer need not fear Judgment Day.

 a. Read Titus 2:13. On that day the believer expects to see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 b. Read Luke 21:27-28. Jesus will come bringing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Redemption means being made free from three foes.

 1) Read 1 John 1:7. One foe is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 2) Read John 11:25-26. Another foe is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 3) Read 1 John 3:8. The final foe is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 c. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. On that day the believer will be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

1. Question. Why wasn’t this Apache woman afraid of Judgment Day? Reread the first paragraph of her story.

2. Question. Were her prayers for Judgment Day appropriate?

 a. Read Revelation 22:20. Isn’t this the prayer of the whole Christian Church? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 “Forever with the Lord! Amen! So let it be. Life from the dead is in that word, my

 immortality.” (Christian Worship, Hymn 213)

 b. Read Matthew 25:1-13. Would this Apache woman be considered a wise or a foolish

 virgin? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why wasn’t this Apache woman embarrassed when Jesus didn’t return?

 a. Was the sound she heard coming from the same direction from which Jesus promised to

 return? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 b. Read Matthew 24:42-44 and 25:13. Was she in danger of being caught off guard by Jesus’ return? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 c. Was she living in a state of eager expectation for Christ’s return? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Why wasn’t this Apache woman disappointed when Jesus didn’t return? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. Did this Apache woman experience her own Judgment Day?

 a. Read Hebrews 9:27. Was her death her private Judgment Day? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 b. Review #9 above. Was she “cheated out” of the blessings of Judgment Day because she died beforehand? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 c. Read Job 19:25-26 and John 15:28-29. One day, will she experience the resurrection

 from the dead? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 d. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. One day will she experience her bodily ascent into

 heaven? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bonus Question. What part of her story drives home the point that “you can’t take it with you?”

CLOSING THOUGHT

 Jerusalem, my happy home, When shall I come to thee?

 When shall my sorrows have an end? And joys when shall I see?

 When shall these eyes thy heav’n built walls And pearly gates behold,

 Thy bulwark with salvation strong And streets of shining gold?

 (Christian Worship, Hymn 215).

REFERENCE CITED

Guenther, E. Edgar

 1927 “The Still Small Voice.” *Northwestern Lutheran.* Vol. 14, No. 16, p. 250.