



Audacity of Faith!
Burial of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathea!
Matthew 27:57-61

Matthew 27:57-61, *Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. ⁵⁹When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. ⁶¹And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.*

These verses probably never were the subject of a sermon you heard in the past or a Sunday school lesson or a Bible study. Nobody ever took their life verse out of this portion.

It seems to be a rather routine portion which discusses the burial of Jesus Christ.

But it is an amazing passage of Scripture.

Looking at the burial of Jesus Christ, we are face to face with some astounding truth.

We as Christians are aware of the significance of the cross of Christ. We have and should have made much about the cross.

For weeks we have been studying the elements of the cross described by Matthew and the other gospel writers.

We are almost ready for the resurrection. We are anxious to get to chapter 28 and see Jesus risen from the dead.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the single greatest miracle the world will ever know, because it is that miracle of resurrection which demonstrated His accomplished work on the cross which redeems us and His power over death which brings us to glory.

We do glory in the crucifixion, where our sins were borne by the Lord Jesus Christ to free us from their guilt and penalty.

Rightly so we extol, celebrate, exalt the miracle of the resurrection.

But between the crucifixion and the resurrection there is the burial of Jesus.

At first thought it would seem to be anything but miraculous, a rather mundane and necessary act except for what happens on both ends of it. But that's not the case at all. The burial of Jesus Christ is as supernatural and as miraculous in many ways as was His death and as will be His resurrection.

Thrilling account of supernatural intervention in every detail in the life of Christ. From His birth to His burial to His resurrection, everything is controlled by God the Father for the fulfilment of divine purpose and prophecy.

Even His burial then becomes a testimony to His kingliness, a testimony to His deity. Even His burial is proof in fact that He is none other than the Son of God who He claimed to be.

God is giving evidence as to the deity of Christ even in His being buried.

Matthew 27:57-66 comes with **three features**.

1. The first testimony really comes through Joseph of Arimathea.
2. The second through Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.
3. The third through the chief priests and Pharisees.

Joseph, two Marys and then the chief priests and Pharisees each play a very important role in the burial of Jesus. Ultimately speaks to the truthfulness of Christ's claim to be the Son of God.

God is giving testimony to His Son even in this.

Joseph of Arimathea.

Joseph of Arimathea is the first focal point of the burial of Christ. We don't know much about the man but enough to really see some marvellous things.

Background.

There are two key prophecies that must be fulfilled in the burial of Jesus.

Two very explicit ones.

One is an Old Testament one given by Isaiah.

The other is a New Testament one given by Jesus Himself.

Isaiah 53 is devoted to the death of Christ. It talks about that He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, He bore our griefs, carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. It talks about Him being taken from prison unto judgment. It describes the meaning of His death.

Isaiah 53:9, *And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.*

Now the Holy Spirit through the prophet of Isaiah says it was an assignment for Him to be placed with criminals in a criminal grave.

Yet that didn't happen but rather He was with a rich man in His death.

Now that rather strange and obscure prophecy would be very difficult to understand until one arrives at the burial scene of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was to have been buried or He was to have been put in a grave for criminals, but instead He is buried with a rich man in His death.

The second prophecy is one in the New Testament given by Jesus Christ Himself.

Matthew 12:39-40, *But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

Jesus here predicts then that there will be three days and three nights between His death and resurrection. Not only that, that He will be in the earth three days. He will be buried for three days.

Jesus calls them three days and three nights, or three day and nights, as the Jewish colloquial expression was.

There are two major prophecies very explicit, very easily recognized that must relate to the burial of Christ.

He must be buried with the rich and He must be buried for a period of three days.

Now God uses Joseph of Arimathea to fulfil these prophecies as the human instrument.

Joseph then gives testimony to the deity of Christ through being used in fulfilled prophecy.

V 57, *Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus.*

"When the evening had come"

This evening is the early evening of the Jewish day which is 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., the closing out of the day.

The Annual Sabbath will begin around 6:00 pm. To 6.00 pm.

Day is from evening to evening.

It is 3:00 pm in the afternoon on Wednesday.

It is the early evening.

By 3:00 p.m. Jesus was dead. That in itself is amazing because usually those who were crucified lingered longer than that. Some lingered for many days.

In this particular case Jesus was nailed to the cross at 9:00 am in the morning and dead by 3:00 in the afternoon.

Remember in our study last time, Jesus was dead not because someone took His life but because He gave His life. No one took His life from Him. He yielded up of Himself.

Pilate was astounded that how He could be dead so soon. But it was imperative that Christ be dead by 3:00.

Once Jesus buried then Jesus would spend in the earth as He had prophesied that He would.

John 19.

We will see how this scene begins to unfold.

By **3:00 in the afternoon, Jesus is dead.** He has yielded up His own life.

John 19:30, *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

Jesus who controlled life also controlled death.

He who could raise Himself from the dead could also cause Himself to be dead by the expression of His own divine will. He willed Himself then into the Father's presence in death at 3:00 in the afternoon.

Jesus is dead on the cross.

John 19:31, *Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*

"The Jews" whenever John uses the term Jews, he has reference not to the multiplicity of people but to the leaders who are hostile to Christ.

John explains that there was urgency in removing the bodies from the crosses because the next day was a 'high day', but what is meant by a 'high day'?

The Greek word translated 'high' or 'great' is found in **John 7:37** and **John 19:31**, both of which refer to the more important days of the Hebrew feasts. For example, the last day of a feast would be designated a 'great day'.

There were 'holy convocations' observed as Sabbaths, at the beginning and end of the Passover week.

Exodus 12:3, Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household.

10th Day of Nisan you should get the lamb.

Exodus 12:6, *Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

14th Day of Nisan you should kill the lamb.

Which called **Passover**.

Exodus 12:11, *And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover.*

Lord God Pass over the house which the blood on its door post.

15th Day of Nisan is the **Feast of unleavened Bread** for 7 days.

Exodus 12:15-17, *Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you. ¹⁷ So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance.*

Feast of unleavened Bread for 7 days in which first day and last day of the festival is an annual Sabbath.

15th Day of Nisan

21st Day of Nisan

Both are Annual Sabbath.

Leaven often represents sin, pride, or malice. Removing it symbolizes a commitment to living in sincerity, truth, and obedience, leaving behind the "leaven" of the old life.

Jesus was crucified on the 14th Day of Nisan month.

The next day is annual Sabbath.

Leviticus 23:5-8, *On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. ⁶ And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. ⁷ On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. ⁸ But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.' "*

Numbers 28:16-18, *'On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord. ¹⁷ And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. ¹⁸ On the first day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work.*

John 19:31, *Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*

They were concerned that the bodies would hang on the cross on the Sabbath.

Not just any Sabbath but a high day.

They were very concerned that these dead bodies are not suspended in the air right outside their city just north of the temple area on the Passover.

Deuteronomy 21:22-23, *"If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³ his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.*

Now they weren't necessarily always attending to this issue. There were many other days when they didn't mind someone hanging on a cross over night.

But here was the Passover and they were very concerned to carry their legalistic, traditional, and even scriptural injunctions to the limit.

Because of this, they come to Pilate and they said we don't want these bodies hanging there.

Now the only basis for taking them down would be that they were dead. Normally this wouldn't happen in that brief a time.

It would be necessary then that as they request their legs be broken. The word broken literally means to shiver to pieces.

What the Romans did was take a large wooden mallet like a huge hammer and they would smash the legs until the bones were disintegrated. The effect of that was to cause the body then to slump on the two wounds in the wrists and suffocate the internal organs.

Prior to that when there was still structure in the legs, the victim could push himself alternately up and back, sometimes hanging on the wounds of his hands and sometimes hanging on the wounds or being literally propped up by the wounds in his feet. But at least there was a little bit of relief.

Once the legs were smashed to pieces, the body would then slump, suffocate the internal organs. The pain would be excruciating.

They would ram a spear into the heart.

Couple of reasons.

One, the pain and excruciation of the shattered legs would put the victim into a traumatized state where the piercing of the heart could be almost like a relief kind of thing rather than a severe mortal wound as be given to a victim not in that kind of extreme pain.

Others have suggested that they crushed the legs as sort of a momentary penalty for the fact that the victim was going to die too soon, as if to say you are not going to be able to stay there and suffer the full pain. So, we are going to intensify the pain that you have right now.

Maybe there was an interval of a few minutes between the crushing of the legs and the jamming of the spear.

But the idea was to cause the victim to die immediately.

Therefore, take the body down off the cross and maintain the sacredness of the Sabbath.

Is that not inconceivable that they would slaughter the Lord of the Sabbath to keep the Sabbath?

But that was the twisted thinking of their system.

John 19:32, *Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him.*

Even in His death, prophecy is now fulfilled.

Psalm 34:20, *He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken.*

How do you know that that prophecy is intended to be for Jesus Christ?

The testimony of Scripture makes it clear.

John 19:36, *For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken."*

The Romans wouldn't even have known Psalm 34. The Romans did it because God brought them to that.

In other words, they passed by breaking Jesus' legs because that's exactly what God wanted them to do to fulfil a prophecy that would demonstrate that God indeed was certifying this as the Son of God.

They didn't break His legs because He was dead.

John 19:33-34, *But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

If they knew He was dead, why did they offer the death stroke into His heart which revealed the fluid, the serum in the pericardium as well as the blood gushing out of His heart?

Why did they do that if He was already dead?

John 19:37, *And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."*

Zechariah 12:10, *"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

The prophet said they won't break His legs.

The other prophet says they will pierce Him.

That does not make sense that they would do one and not the other and that is the point. They did exactly what God intended them to do to certify that this is indeed the one of whom the prophet spoke.

Even in His death, prophecy is being fulfilled.

John 19:34, *But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

Psalms 69 talks about the cross.

Psalms 69:20, *Reproach has broken my heart, And I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none.*

Under extreme intense pressure and trauma – the heart, which is a muscle, could in fact rupture and therefore spill its blood into the pericardium with the limp serum and create the blood and water that flowed out of the side of Jesus Christ.

The heart does react to the emotions of the mind.

Your heart beginning to beat faster when something happens to stimulate your emotions. Under the intense and unbelievable weight of all the sins, it is not inconceivable that a human heart could literally rupture. Therein another prophecy be fulfilled.

Christ is dead on the cross. Even in being dead on the cross the things that are going on explicitly and to the very detail fulfil what the prophetic promise was.

- ✓ His legs will not be broken,
- ✓ His side will be pierced, and
- ✓ He will have a broken heart.

The spear wound was so deep in Him that He could say to **Thomas** at a later time, *“Put your hand into My side and be not faithless but believing,”* when Thomas needed assurance that this indeed was the risen Christ.

The blood and water show that He was truly human and they also show that He was truly dead.

Now once this happened the body had to be taken off the cross.

When taken off the cross it would be thrown into a common criminal’s grave.

Very likely that that would be a pit somewhere where they threw the criminals or it might be Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, where the city dump in Jerusalem was. They might have just throw the bodies there to be consumed by the always smouldering fire or to be ripped and shredded and eaten by wild animals.

The Romans customarily did nothing more than throw the bodies of criminals into pits to be burned or eaten by scavengers.

This was what would have been assigned to Jesus.

Isaiah 53:9, *And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.*

Jesus would be assigned with the wicked in His death, but He would wind up with the rich.

How would this happen?

Who would care for His body?

The disciples were all fled.

Even John doesn’t seem to be around at this time.

The women don’t have any resource to bury Jesus Christ. They are from Galilee. They don’t have any grave in the city of Jerusalem.

How fast it must be cared for so that Jesus should be in the grave by 6:00 so that He can be there part of Wednesday because by His own prophecy He has to be in the ground three days.

God the Father in a miraculous and marvellous way moves on the heart of a man.

V 57, *Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus.*

“a rich man.”

How interesting.

A rich man from Arimathea. Now he was more than just a rich man.

Mark 15:43, *Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.*

Joseph was a Sanhedrin member. He was a member of the ruling body that convicted Jesus Christ of the crime of being the Son of God, or claiming to be the Son of God, and sentenced Him to death. He was a member of the Sanhedrin.

- He was a knowledgeable counsellor. He was a man who had great knowledge and wisdom as a counsellor.
- He was one who waited for the kingdom of God, that is he had a heart that really sought God and God's truth.

Luke 23:50, *Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man.*

- He was a good man.
- He was a just man.

Luke 23:51, *He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God.*

He had not consented to condemn Jesus to death. Though he was a member of the Sanhedrin, he had not consented to the condemnation of Jesus.

- A good and a just man,
- A man would not condemn an innocent person to death,
- A knowledgeable counsellor,
- Waiting for the kingdom of God,
- A member of the Sanhedrin.

But above all things, he was a rich man.

All this for the sake of the fulfilment of the prophecy.

He was from Arimathea. The only thing we know about Arimathea was a city of the Jews.

Now that destination puts it in Judea.

Galilee was known as Galilee of the Gentiles because it had been populated by so many Gentiles from other surrounding areas.

But Judea, the southern part, was distinctively Jewish.

When it says it was a city of the Jews it is to say it was in Judea.

Now we assume that it was in great proximity to the city of Jerusalem because the fact is that Joseph of Arimathea had his own grave right outside the city of Jerusalem where he would put Christ eventually.

We assume that he wouldn't have lived very far from there. Arimathea is just a form of the old word Ramah, which is the city from which Samuel came approximately three or four miles north of Jerusalem, which is very likely.

Some say 20 miles north to a place known as Ramathaim-Zophim and feel that that was the place.

It was probably somewhere very near Jerusalem, because that's where his tomb also was.

V 57, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus.

He had become a follower of Jesus. He was disciplined by Jesus.

The word disciplined means to be a learner.

- He was learning from Jesus.
- He was listening to Jesus.
- He was believing what Jesus said.
- He was following Jesus.
- He was a disciple.

Perhaps he had been at the trial before Annas and Caiaphas because his Sanhedrin membership would give him access. Maybe he was even there at the trial before Pilate.

But since that time he has been doing some things in his heart to do, to provide for the burial of Christ.

Now we don't know what his involvement is in the past.

John 19:38, *After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.*

Up to this point he had been a secretive disciple because he was afraid of what it would cost him. He was afraid of the leaders.

If Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin and they found out he was following Jesus,

- it would be the end of his Sanhedrin rights.
- It would be the end of his wealth, because he wouldn't be able to do business with anybody.
- It would be the end of his social status. He and his family would be alienated and ostracized.
- It would be the end of everything.

The price would be very high. This man was not going to take a step of boldness and identify with Jesus until he was certain that Jesus was in fact worth the effort.

But God moves on his heart.

Supernaturally, the secret disciple must act fast.

How many secret disciples do you think there were in Jerusalem who happened to have an empty tomb right near Calvary?

Probably one and sovereignly does God move on his heart.

Mark 15:43, *Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.*

He summoned up courage. He had to move fast, because God had to have somebody get Jesus in the ground while it was still Wednesday.

So far, the Jews had cooperated. They were in a hurry to get Him down. They cooperated and Pilate who could have just left Him there hanging, corrupting and decaying, honoured their request because he was not about to offend them.

They had gotten enough into him with their blackmailing, forcing, intimidating approach. He wasn't going to carry it any further. The Jews had cooperated, Pilate had cooperated, now the Lord needed somebody who could get Jesus in the ground before the day ended.

Jesus body is got to be in the grave before 6:00.

The Lord has gotten the Jews to get their part done,

Pilate's done his thing, and

Joseph to bury Him.

The person must be rich who has a tomb near enough so that Jesus can be carried from the cross after being let down by the soldiers to the tomb, properly prepared with the linens and the spices, put in the grave.

This must be done by a group of people who don't know they have to do it really before evening comes.

They wouldn't want to violate the Sabbath.

Joseph had already done that in terms of the tradition because when he went into Pilate's praetorium to ask for the body, he had defiled himself. That's what the Jews earlier wouldn't do.

Secondly, when he himself carried the dead body of Jesus from the cross to the tomb, he would have defiled himself with a dead body. So that was not a big issue to him. He would have gotten Jesus in the grave even if it had been after the beginning of the Sabbath.

Joseph was operating with speed and haste not because he was concerned about his own observance of the Sabbath, but because God was very concerned that Jesus be in there before the Sabbath began.

V 58, *This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him.*

Can't imagine the price Joseph of Arimathea paid when he did that.

In the first place, he didn't know what Pilate would do to him. Pilate had had enough of Sanhedrin's. Pilate had enough of those intimidating blackmailers who were going to tell Caesar on him if he didn't do what they wanted.

The Sanhedrin had forced him to kill an innocent man.

The Sanhedrin has forced him to violate his conscience.

The Sanhedrin had even given nightmares to his wife.

The Sanhedrin had put him in a humiliating position for a haughty Roman.

Pilate didn't like them. We can be sure of that.

Why would Pilate be generous to a member of the Sanhedrin and give him the body?

Besides, the only person who had the right to a body would be a family member, otherwise the criminal's body was to be publicly desecrated as part of the testimony of what a criminal act results in.

Joseph had no right to the body and he certainly, as a member of the Sanhedrin, had no favour to expect from Pilate.

Furthermore, he would have had to explain why he wanted the body since he was a member of the Sanhedrin who were desiring Jesus to be dead. Since he was not a member of the family.

What would he say other than that he was a follower of Jesus Christ?

Which would be sort of a joke to Pilate because this poor tortured pathetic individual, Jesus, had just died on the cross without anything very attractive about Him.

The amazing reality is that there was no human reason that Joseph could have expected to receive the body.

Furthermore, Joseph would have known that upon doing this the word would spread like wildfire that he himself was going to bury Jesus Christ, that he was a disciple of Jesus.

- He would have lost his reputation.
- He would have lost his social standing, his status, all that he had.
- He would have been in a situation where he no longer would have been able to do business with people.
- He would have lost his wealth and on and on it goes.
- The price was very high.

He is doing this for a man he believes in, not who has risen from the dead, but who is dead.

That is remarkable commitment!

Joseph was so convinced that this man was a man of great truth that he would step out and be courageous, even though the man was dead and give Him the dignified burial He deserved.

He was drawn by love and attraction to Jesus to do this for Him, who had been so desecrated and dishonoured, even at the loss of all his own benefits in life.

V 58 says he went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus.

The implication here is that he had to beg for it.

Mark 15:44-45, *Pilate marvelled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. ⁴⁵ So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph.*

Then Pilate commanded the body to be given over.

Joseph wanted the body.

- He polluted himself in a traditional ceremonial sense by even going to Pilate.
- He sorts of polluted himself for the Sabbath.
- Further, polluted himself by carrying the dead body of Jesus, which we assume he must have carried himself.

No doubt the soldiers took Him down and then Joseph took Him away.

John 19:39-40, *And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.*

Another man with Joseph whose name was Nicodemus. Nicodemus was the teacher in Israel, no doubt also a member of the Sanhedrin. These two men were very prominent men. These men was a wise counsellor, knowledgeable, man of stature and dignity.

Nicodemus was the teacher in Israel, according to John 3. Here are these two men who are coming to Jesus in His burial.

Nicodemus brought myrrh and aloes, aromatic spices. They didn't embalm. They just anointed the body with a heavy load of spices to keep the wretched smell of death from polluting the area around.

Myrrh was a liquid and aloe's a powder and they mixed it.

V 59, *When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,*

Joseph got the fine linen.

They must have worked out a deal where you buy that and I will buy this. The only time anybody ever got anointed with 72 pounds of that stuff was when they were royalty.

These two dear men are saying that the world may not offer you that kind of respect that a king should have, but we will even in your death.

They bury Him with a burial of a king. The women helped, too. They wrapped each limb, arms and legs, and then the torso and a special napkin for the head.

As they wound those linens around Him, they filled the linen with all the spices and put Him in the grave.

V 59, *When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,*

It is my belief that he carried it himself.

According to the latest archaeological discoveries it's not a long way.

The burial place of Jesus Christ, now called Gordon's Calvary, that area and the Garden Tomb is completely adjacent.

You can stand in the Garden Tomb and be having communion right in front of the open grave where the Lord lay and look to your right and just a stone's throw away is Calvary.

It would have to have been near so that they could transport Him readily and take the time to prepare Him and still get Him in and it still would be Passover day.

Mark 15:41, *Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.*

There was a garden there. They have discovered that, and they have even discovered a winepress in it where no doubt the grapes were crushed or the olives were crushed.

V 60, *and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.*

That tomb there known as the Garden Tomb now is cut by hand out of a wall of rock and a little low cliff.

If that indeed is the place, Joseph could have carried Him just a very few feet away to put Him in his own tomb.

How God superintended every detail to make sure Jesus would indeed be in the ground and it would still be Friday.

Joseph got the linen and Nicodemus got the spices and the ladies all helped. They put Him in the grave.

V 60, *he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.*

They rolled the stone across.

The stone was there because there were grave robbers and many people were buried with things of value. It was a common practice. People wanted to even as they do today.

People in a casket with rings and jewellery and things like that. There were grave robbers. Then with this person there was a great amount of concern.

Furthermore, they had to protect the body from animal, birds, and those that might enter in to do some deed of desecration.

The stone was rolled across.

The amazing burial of Jesus Christ attended to by this secret disciple who now becomes public for the whole world to know throughout all history, Joseph of Arimathea, the whole thing is

orchestrated to fulfil specific prophecy that Jesus would be three days and that He would be with the rich in His death.

He is buried in a wealthy man's grave which the wealthy man made for himself.

What made Joseph of Arimathea from being secret to being public we don't know.

Maybe it was the earthquake, the darkness, the rocks splitting, the graves opening, and the temple veil ripping from top to bottom.

We don't know whether it was the heart of love.

We don't know whether it was the agonizing sympathy he felt when he watched Jesus going through the things He went through.

Whatever it was what we do know is it was God working on his heart. God was bringing to pass the fulfilment of prophecy.

Jesus was with the rich in His death, and He was in the grave for three days.

There was a second group of people who also were used by God to give evidence of the deity of Christ in a wonderful way.

V 61, *And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.*

Mary from the village of Magdala up on the coast, the west coast of the Sea of Galilee.

Other Mary is defined for us in verse 56 as Mary the mother of James the Little or James the Less and Joses. She was also called by the other writers the wife of Cleophas or Alphaeus. She was one of those ladies who served the Lord, who came with Him from Galilee, who attended to His physical needs, who provided food and sustenance and substance.

These two dear ladies remained. There were other ladies there. There were many who attended to the linen and touched His body and handled Him and wrapped Him and placed Him in the grave.

They all left.

Only two ladies were left, Mary of Magdala and Mary this mother of James and Joses and wife of Cleophas.

They are sitting opposite the tomb.

They are just sitting there in deep sorrow, in deep agony.

If Joseph of Arimathea is used by God to confirm the deity of Christ through fulfilled prophecy, these two are used to confirm the deity of Christ through first-hand testimony.

What is the significance of verse 61?

Matthew 28:1, *Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.*

Mary Magdalene and that other Mary to see the tomb.

They have been there. They come to get a closer look.

There was a great earthquake,

Angel of the Lord descended from heaven, came, rolled back the stone from the door and sat on it.

Angel answered and said to the women, 'Don't be afraid.'"

The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I know you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. He is risen. Come and see the place. Now go and tell the disciples He is risen.

They became the priority witnesses.

The first-hand testimony was given by two women to the resurrection of Christ.

They ran to bring the disciples word.

As they went to tell His disciples Jesus met them and they worshiped.

First-hand witnesses.

How marvellous!

How glorious!!

Even in His burial, God had a couple of women who couldn't quite leave the grave.

Mark 16:9, *Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.*

They were the first witnesses.

Not people who had something to gain, not the disciples of Jesus that someone might think must have fabricated it to carry on their program.

These were women.

These weren't the disciples.

They were disciples of Jesus in one sense, but certainly not the ones that the world would assume would be the ones to fabricate the resurrection.

There is a third group, and I can't tell you how unbelievably fascinating this is. God uses now the chief priests and the Pharisees to verify the deity of Jesus Christ.

How does He do that?

Come back after 2 weeks.

Conclusion:

Sir Nicholas Winton

In 1939, as the shadow of **Nazi Germany** began to fall over **Czechoslovakia**, Nicholas Winton—a **young British stockbroker**—did not simply go home after a skiing holiday. Instead, he took an extreme, self-funded risk to rescue children who were destined for concentration camps.



Why the risk was "Extreme":

- **Legal Defiance:** He forged visas and manipulated bureaucracy to bypass strict immigration laws.
- **Logistical Nightmare:** He organized eight trains (the *Kindertransport*) to move **669 children across** hostile borders.
- **Total Anonymity:** Much like Joseph, who performed his act of service without a guarantee of recognition, Winton **told no one** about his actions for 50 years. Even his wife didn't know until she found a scrapbook in their attic in 1988.

Feature	Joseph of Arimathea	Nicholas Winton
The Status	Wealthy Council Member	Successful Stockbroker
The Risk	Social & Political Ostracization	Legal Peril & Financial Ruin

Feature	Joseph of Arimathea	Nicholas Winton
The Act	Claimed a "criminal's" body for honour	Claimed "expendable" lives for safety
The Motivation	Deep conviction and quiet faith	Moral necessity.