

Jesus Burial & Resurrection

Joseph of Arimathia asked Pontius Pilate for the body of Jesus after it was taken down from the cross. Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but he kept it a secret because he feared the Jews. Matthew 27:60 tells us that this tomb belonged to Joseph and he along with Nicodemus took the body and prepared it for burial. Nicodemus was a Pharisee who had met with Jesus in the middle of the night earlier in Jesus' ministry. He came at night due to fear from being seen by the other Pharisees and because Jesus was always surrounded by so many people. He was the one in John chapter three who asked Jesus about being born again. He said, "How can a man be born when he is old? Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered him by saying, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Nicodemus brought about 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes. This was used to fill the body and then they put spices on the body and wrapped it with strips of cloth. They then wrapped the head in a thick linen cloth. The dead had a right to ceremonial care according to Jewish custom. As soon as a person was dead, his eyes were to be closed, he was to be kissed with love, and his body was to be washed (Genesis 50:1; Acts 9:37). In this washing, the body was anointed with perfumes. Nard was the most usual of these, but myrrh and aloes were also used.

By the time of Christ, the custom was that the body was elaborately wrapped in a shroud and the face was covered with a special cloth called a sudarium. The hands and feet were tied with strips of cloth.

The tomb that was used for Jesus body had a very large stone rolled in front of the entrance. It would take several strong men to roll it aside. Matthew 27:62 – 66 says that the chief priests of the Pharisees asked Pilate to post a guard on the entrance to the tomb and put a seal on the stone so that no one could move it and enter the tomb to steal the body of Jesus. In Matthew 28: 2 it says that there was a violent earthquake on the third day after Jesus' burial. This entire action caused a great stir.

This is called the resurrection. Jesus rose from the dead and left the tomb. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary found the tomb empty and the stone rolled away. They met an angel from heaven who told them to look and see where Jesus had been lain. Jesus rose from the dead to go to heaven to be with the father after spending time meeting with disciples, apostles and others.

Scripture: Matthew 27:57-28:10 New International Version (NIV)

The Burial of Jesus

⁵⁷As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. ⁵⁹Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. ⁶¹Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.

The Guard at the Tomb

⁶²The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³"Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.'" ⁶⁴So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

⁶⁵"Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

Jesus Has Risen

28 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

²There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

⁵The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

⁸So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Question Time:

- 1. Jesus died on the cross at Calvary and two men took his body to be buried. Who were they?**
- 2. What did they use to anoint Jesus' body?**
- 3. What did they wrap around Jesus body and head?**
- 4. Where did they lay him?**

Next Steps: Ask your mother to spread out several types of spices on a piece of wax paper or a paper towel. Ask her if you can smell them and then taste them. This will give you an idea about the spices they used to preserve bodies at the time of Jesus.