

Message #100**Matthew 27:57-66**

The book of Matthew is designed to teach that Jesus Christ was Israel's Messiah, King and Savior. The book begins with Jesus' kingly lineage. It develops with Jesus' kingly life. In the 27th chapter we see Jesus' kingly death and, as we near the end of the chapter, we see Jesus' kingly burial.

THE BURIAL OF JESUS CHRIST'S BODY IS A FULFILLMENT OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY, WHICH CLEARLY PROVES JESUS CHRIST IS THE GOD / KING / SAVIOR.

Approximately 700 years before these events occurred, Isaiah, God's prophet, predicted this: "His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet **He was with a rich man in His death** because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth." Isaiah predicts that somehow Jesus' death and grave will be connected to a rich man. Here in Matthew is the literal fulfillment of that prediction.

PART #1 – The burial of Jesus' body by Joseph of Arimathea. 27:57-61

When it was evening, there was a man who went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. According to Mark (15:44-45), Pilate was shocked that Jesus had died so soon. But the moment of Christ's death was sovereignly controlled by Him. There are several facts we want to observe:

(Fact #1) - His name was Joseph. 27:57

(Fact #2) - He was from Arimathea. 27:57

(Fact #3) - He was rich. 27:57

The word "rich" means that he was abundantly rich. He was a very wealthy man.

(Fact #4) - He had become a disciple. 27:57

This is critical because according to Luke 23:50-51, Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin council, and he was a good and righteous man who had not consented with decisions which were being made to crucify Jesus.

(Fact #5) - He went to Pilate and asked for Christ's body. 27:58

This is a real risk for him. Joseph had been a secret disciple because he feared the Jews (John 19:38), but at this point he boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body. Also according to John, Nicodemus went with him (John 19:39). This is the same Nicodemus found in John 3. Two high-ranking religious leaders from the Sanhedrin were believers in Christ, even though they were part of the powerful phony religious leaders. We must be careful not to prejudge someone just because they don't do what we think they should do, or aren't the way we think they should be. The impact of Christ's life was not seen until after Christ was gone.

It is true at times for us. We may not know the impact our faithfulness is making on others until we are gone.

(Fact #6) - He took the body and cared for it. **27:59**

John tells us that Joseph and Nicodemus brought about 100 pounds of myrrh and aloes (John 19:39) and they wrapped the body in a clean linen cloth. Normally, the bodies of thieves were just discarded. But carefully notice how Christ's body is being cared for here. He is being treated as a king.

(Fact #7) - He put the body in his own tomb. **27:60**

The tomb was a new tomb which Joseph had cut in a rock. He was from Arimathea, but this tomb is just outside Jerusalem. He put Jesus in a special, brand new tomb and rolled a large stone against the entrance of it and left. This must have cost Joseph a great sum of money.

(Fact #8) - Some women just sat a while by the grave. **27:61**

There were no disciples anywhere to be found, but there were some faithful women. They couldn't do much, but they could faithfully be there and they are honored forever in Scripture.

PART #2 – The religious leader's request for protection of the dead body. **27:62-66**

(Fact #1) - The religious leaders get together with Pilate. **27:62**

Pilate seems to cater to these leaders, which suggests they did have some political power.

(Fact #2) - The religious leaders remember what Christ said. **27:63**

First of all, we may remember that the trumped up charge that gets Jesus killed is one that had to do with destroying a temple that Christ claimed in three days He could restore (26:61; 27:40), which was a prediction of His resurrection (John 2:19-21). What is also amazing about this is that these unbelieving religious frauds remember Christ said He would rise again and apparently His own believing disciples forgot.

(Fact #3) - The religious leaders ask Pilate to secure Christ's tomb for three days. **27:64-65**

It is stated three times in this context that the tomb is to be "secure" (v. **64-66**).

(Fact #4) - Pilate grants them their request. **27:65**

He sends a guard and he tells them to make the tomb secure.

(Fact #5) - The religious leaders secure the tomb. **27:66**

The grave is made secure three ways: 1) large stone; 2) stationed guard; 3) sealed tomb.

The only way that body would get out of that tomb would be through a miraculous resurrection.