

# BURIAL BY JOSEPH

(How The Burial of Jesus Encourages Every Heart)  
John 19:28-42



## The Burial Reveals

- ◆ God's Promises
- ◆ God's Providence
- ◆ God's Principles

**"Joseph took the body down from the cross, wrapped it in a long linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb." (Luke 23:53)**

**Bill Kirk**

# "THE BURIAL"

**Text:** John 19:18-42

**Subject:** "How the Burial of Jesus Inspires Great Faith"

## **Introduction**

**Fact:** Two groups of people were involved in the burial of Jesus:

1. The Roman Soldiers (Vs. 27-31) and
2. The Jewish believers (Vs. 38-42)

**Fact:** The Roman soldiers were permitted by Pilate to set a guard at the tomb:

- ◆ The guard would put an official Roman seal on the stone.

**Fact:** The two believers were led by God to give Jesus a decent burial (in fulfillment of prophecy)

- ◆ The two believers were Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.

### **(Every Evangelist Adds to This Account)**

1. Matthew says:

"When the evening was come **a rich man** of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was Jesus' disciple went to Pilate and begged for the body of Jesus...and laid it in his own (Joseph's) tomb." (Matthew 27:57-60)

2. Mark says:

"Joseph of Arimathea, an **honorable counselor**, which also **waited for the kingdom of God**, came and **went boldly** unto Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus...and Pilate gave the body to Joseph." (Mark 15:42-46)

3. Luke says:

"And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counselor; and he was a **good man** and just (righteous). The same was a member of the Jewish high council and **did not agree with the decision and action of the other religious leaders**. Joseph took the body down from the cross, wrapped it in a long linen cloth and laid it in **his new tomb**." (Luke 23:50-53)

4. John says:

"And after this (the crucifixion) Joseph of Arimathea, being a **disciple of Jesus**, but **secretly for fear** of the Jews, asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes...there they laid Jesus in a new tomb, never used before." (John 19:38-42)

## **I. The Promises of God to Your Heart**

**Question:** How does Jesus' burial reveal the truthfulness of God's promises to you?

**Answer:** Because the burial of Jesus reveals that what God promised *would* happen to Jesus actually *did* happen.

1. The **unbroken bones** of Jesus

"The soldiers broke the legs of the first and of the other which was crucified, but when they came to Jesus, **they did not break his legs.**"  
(John 19:32-33)

**Question:** Why is this so incredible?

**Answer:** Because the Roman soldiers **did not do** what they were commanded to do which was to break the victim's legs.

"The Jewish leaders didn't want the victims hanging there the next day which was the Sabbath, so they asked Pilate to hasten their deaths **by ordering that their legs be broken** (so their bodies could be taken down)" (V.31)

**(In Other Words)**

**Question:** Why didn't the Roman soldiers do what they were supposed to do?

**Answer:** Because God is always true to His promises. He had said:

- ◆ "Neither shall you break a bone thereof." (Exodus 12:46)
- ◆ "They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it, according to all the ordinances of the Passover." (Numbers 9:12)
- ◆ "He keeps all His bones, not one of them is broken." (Psalm 34:20)

2. The **pierced side** of Jesus

"But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water." (John 19:34)

**Fact:** The Roman soldiers were not supposed to pierce the side of Jesus.

**Fact:** The soldiers (at crucifixions) would hasten the death of the crucified by smashing their legs with an iron mallet.

**Fact:** This would make it impossible for the victim to push up with the legs to get air for breathing (and the victim quickly expired).

**Question:** So why did the soldiers pierce the side of Jesus?

**Answer:** Because God is always true to His promises. (He had said)

- ◆ "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one who mourns for his only son." (Zechariah 12:10)

- ◆ “Behold, He comes with clouds and every eye shall see Him and they also which pierced Him.” (Revelation 1:7)

### 3. The place of burial.

“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.” (John 19:41)

**Question:** Why is this verse so incredible?

**Answer:** Because bodies of crucified people were normally thrown in to a trench in a field.

**Question:** Then why was Jesus buried in a rich man’s tomb (Joseph’s with 75 pounds of spices provided by Nicodemus?

**Answer:** Because God is always true to His promise (He had said)

“The suffering Servant will be assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death.” (Isaiah 53:9)

**Question:** Why is there such incredible faith building in the burial of Jesus?

**Answer:** John 19:36 & 37 give the answer:

“For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, a bone of Him shall not be broken.”

“And again, another Scripture says, they shall look on Him whom they pierced.”

#### **(In Other Words)**

The bones, piercing and grave site speak to your heart in a wonderful way!

#### **(They are saying to you)**

1. That God will always keep His Word to you!
2. That God is worthy to be trusted with every area of your life!
3. That God cannot lie and will do what He has promised you!
4. That faith still moves mountains, so believe the Lord for the impossible!

## **II. The Providence of God in Your Life**

**Question:** What is the providence of God?

**Answer:** The English word “**providence**” comes from two Latin words:

1. “**Pro**” which means “before”.
2. “**Video**” which means “to see”.

#### **(The Providence of God in your life means)**

1. That God “**goes before**” you to prepare the path for you to walk in.

2. That God “**sees ahead**” and orchestrates events that you don’t even know about.

**Question:** How does the burial of Jesus reveal the providence of God to you?

**Answer:** In the who, what and how of His burial:

1. **The Who** (was Joseph and Nicodemus)
  - ◆ Joseph was a wealthy member of the Sanhedrin (the 71 member Jewish council).
  - ◆ Nicodemus was a wealthy member of the council as well.
2. **The What** (was what these two men did)
  - ◆ Joseph furnished the linen bandages and his own new tomb. (Matthew 27:60)
  - ◆ Nicodemus provided the spices of myrrh and aloes.
3. **The How** (reveals the providence of God)
  - Fact:** God had to prepare these two men (in advance) for their burial service.
  - Fact:** God had to direct their paths because of how Jesus was buried.

**(This was not a sudden decision of the moment)**

1. Joseph had to prepare the garden tomb **beforehand**.
2. Joseph had to prepare the tomb **near** where Jesus would die.
3. Joseph and Nicodemus would have to obtain a large quantity of spices beforehand, because the shops were **closed** for Passover.
4. The entire preparatory work had to be done with skill and **secrecy** without the council’s knowledge.
5. The two men had to be hiding **nearby** when Jesus died (so Joseph could appeal to Pilate and Nicodemus could guard the body until the official release of it).

**Question:** Why did the burial have to be a calculated plan?

**Answer:** Because there was only a three hour window of opportunity.

**Fact:** Jesus died at 3 pm on Friday.

**Fact:** Friday was the preparation day for the Sabbath day.

**Fact:** The Jewish Sabbath began at 6 pm on Friday and went to 6 pm on Saturday.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ These two disciples had only three hours to work because work was forbidden on the Sabbath.
- ◆ Jewish law also stated that no burial of the dead could take place on the Sabbath.

- ◆ Thus, if Jesus was not buried quickly (within these three hours) the Romans would have dumped His body on the trash heaps and prophecy would not have come true.

**(But praise be to God that)**

1. God is always working **behind** the **scenes** of your life.
  2. God will always have a way to **provide** for your needs.
  3. God will always **“go ahead” to prepare** for what is unknown to you.
  4. God will always be at **work** to complete His plan that He has in store for you.
- ◆ Not even a crucifixion by evil men can thwart the will of God in your life!!!

**(Why Not?)**

- ◆ Because God is always **one step ahead** of evil intention that may come your way!

### **III. The Principles of God to Live by From Joseph**

**Question:** Who was Joseph of Arimathea?

**Answer:** “A secret disciple for fear of the Jews.” (John 19:38)

**Question:** How was Joseph changed from a secret fearful disciple?

**Answer:** By the phenomenal events surrounding the cross:

**(What did Joseph experience?)**

1. The words of Jesus upon the cross.
2. The darkness that came over the land.
3. The earthquake that shook the ground.
4. The veil that was supernaturally torn.
5. The prophecies that were fulfilled before his eyes.

**Question:** How can embracing the cross change you and me for the better?

**(Let’s covet the character of Joseph of Arimathea)**

1. Joseph was a **responsible** man:
  - ◆ He was a counselor, senator and member of the Sanhedrin (the ruling body of Israel).
  - ◆ He was esteemed and responsible as a leader.
2. Joseph was a **good** man:
  - ◆ He was moral in his character (and)
  - ◆ He was esteemed and responsible as a leader.
3. Joseph was a **spiritual** man:
 

Mark records that Joseph “waited for the kingdom of God.” (15:42-46) which means:

  - ◆ Joseph experienced a spiritual, life-changing blessing.

◆ Joseph accepted God's rule, reign and authority in his life as a believer.

4. Joseph was a **giving** man:

- ◆ He had not purchased the tomb for himself (since a wealthy man would not chose to be buried near a place of execution).
- ◆ He had purchased and prepared the tomb ahead of time out of love for the Savior to fulfill Bible prophecy.

5. Joseph was a **decisive** man:

- ◆ He "consented not to the counsel and deed of them" (Luke 23:51)
- ◆ In other words, Joseph voted against the Sanhedrin's plan to condemn Jesus before He was crucified.

6. Joseph was a **courageous** man:

- ◆ He actually braved the threat of Pilate's reaction in asking for the body of Jesus.
- ◆ Joseph even risked the discipline of the Sanhedrin who could have expelled him (a harsh reaction from his closest friends).
- ◆ Yet, Joseph openly took the body of Jesus from the cross and openly cared for His body at the risk of great danger.

7. Joseph was a **faith-filled** man:

- ◆ When Joseph heard the words "It is finished Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit" he went to work by securing Jesus' body.
- ◆ He then wrapped the body in linen, covered it with spices and laid it in his own tomb.
- ◆ He even forfeited his participation in the Passover feast because no one could do so after being defiled by touching a dead body.

**Question:** Why such courage and dedication from the disciple?

**Question:** Why such change and determination from a former "secret disciple"?

- ◆ Because Joseph believed that Jesus was truly the Lamb of God and would keep His word and rise again!

### **(Life Application)**

1. You can rest assured that what God has promised you He will fulfill on time!
2. You can rest assured that the providence of God is at work behind the scenes of your life right now!
3. You can rest assured that your faith and dedication will be rewarded one day, because all believers will see the risen Savior face to face!

AMEN!  
Bill Kirk