

We are all Witnesses

**“THIS JESUS GOD RAISED UP,
AND OF THAT WE ARE ALL
WITNESSES.”**

ACTS 2:32

PREPARATION DAY – THE DAY HE DIED

- The day they slaughtered the lambs for Passover.
- The next day was a high day and they needed to get the bodies down.
- They broke the legs of the thieves but not Christ.
- They tore open his side with a spear – out came blood and water.
 - John makes a point of saying - I witnessed that.

BURIED BY JOSEPH AND NICODEMUS

- What we know about Joseph:
 - He was rich
 - He was a secret disciple of Jesus
 - A prominent/respected member of the Council. He had not consented to their decision.
 - Looking for the kingdom of God.
 - He had to muster courage to ask for the body from Pilate.
 - He had cut this tomb recently (no one ever laid in it).
 - He bought the linen shroud to bury Jesus in.
- Nicodemus brings the embalming materials

The Tomb of Jesus

The Gospel writers tell us that after his death, Jesus' body was taken to a garden and laid in a newly hewn tomb (Matt. 27:60; Luke 23:53; John 19:41). This is important archaeological information. Tombs from this period usually consisted of several burial chambers, which had *loculi* (burial niches) cut in the side walls in which to place the body of the deceased, and also *arcosolia* (arched niches) where ossuaries (chests for bones) were placed.

The fact that some women saw where the body of Jesus was laid (Mark 15:47) and that also, after the resurrection of Jesus, the disciple John could see the grave clothes lying and the face cloth folded (John 20:5–6), indicates that the body of Jesus was laid on a bench opposite the tomb opening.

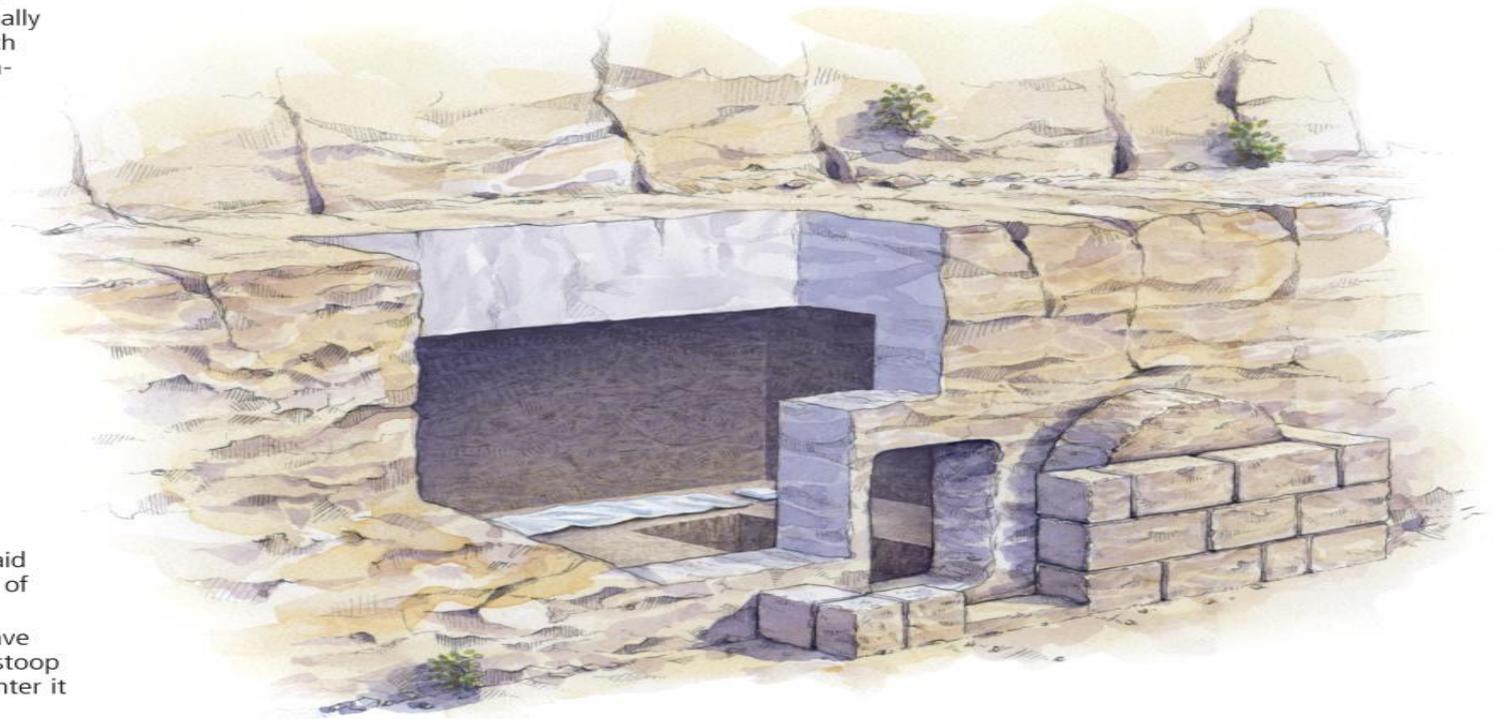
The truth of this information can be confirmed by archaeology, in particular by tomb architecture. Newly hewn tombs usually consisted of a simple chamber which had three benches around an excavated pit. This pit allowed the workmen to stand upright while working.

Additional chambers with *loculi* and *arcosolia* were added later after the initial benches were removed. A newly hewn tomb could be used for the "primary burial," which is the first part of the ritual of ossilegium. (This simply means that the body of the deceased, after having been wrapped in linen grave clothes, was placed on a shelf, a bench, or in a niche. About a year later, after the soft tissues had decomposed, the bones were placed in an ossuary. This is called the "secondary burial.") It would appear, therefore, that the body of Jesus was indeed laid in a tomb that was newly hewn out of the rock.

The entrance to the tomb would have been low, causing the disciples to stoop down in order to look inside and enter it

(cf. Luke 24:12; John 20:5). Only very few of the almost 1,000 excavated tombs of this period in and around Jerusalem had rolling stones to close off the entrance to the tomb. This luxury was restricted to the wealthy. Usually, tomb entrances had square or rectangular closing stones. These stones fit like a cork in a bottle in the tomb opening. The narrow part fit exactly in the inner opening, while the wider part closed off the outer opening.

However, the biblical record does say that the stone was rolled away (Matt. 27:60; Mark 15:46; Luke 24:2), and therefore a massive rolling stone (4.5 feet/1.4 m in diameter) is shown in this reconstruction drawing. The rare rolling stone entrance would be consistent with the idea that Joseph of Arimathea was "a rich man" (cf. Matt. 27:57).



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**“And they made His grave with the wicked and with a rich man in His death...”
Isaiah 53:9**



Death never had a chance...

**“GOD RAISED HIM UP, LOOSING
THE PANGS OF DEATH, BECAUSE
IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR HIM
TO BE HELD BY IT.”**

Acts 2:24

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5 TESTS GIVEN TO EYE WITNESSES

- Moral integrity – do they have an incentive to deceive?
- Ability to recall events – are they insane?
- Consistency with other witnesses. Do the core facts agree?
- Does their testimony conform with human experience?
Could His resurrection be tested with human experience?
- Is there a hostile witness to back up at least some of the facts?

IMAGE USED FROM:

- ESV study bible