

JOSEPH of Arimathea

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By Jill Kemp

Illustrated by Richard Gunther



Joseph was an important member of the Jewish council and a secret disciple of Jesus. He didn't want other Jewish leaders to know he was a believer, or he would lose his job, or worse.



In his spare time Joseph dug out a cave in a large rock, making a tomb to be buried in when he died. As he worked he thought about God's promised Messiah.



He believed that Jesus was the promised one. From a distance Joseph and his friends watched sadly, as Jesus died on the cross. Joseph had an idea! Jesus could be buried in the new tomb!



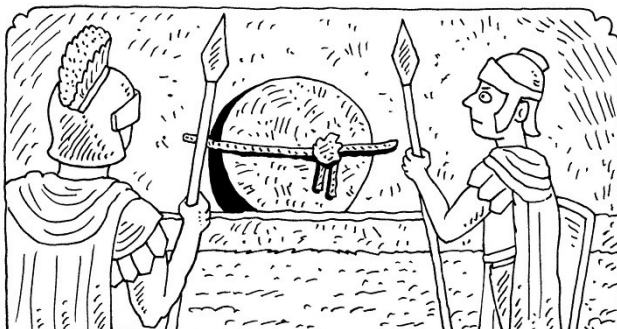
Knowing he would need to hurry because the Sabbath day of rest would start soon, he bravely went to ask Pilate if he could lay Jesus in his new tomb nearby. Pilate agreed.



Joseph and Nicodemus took the body of Jesus and gently wrapped it in linen cloths with the fragrant myrrh and aloe spices that Nicodemus had brought, as that was the burial custom of the Jews.



Mary watched as the two men rolled a heavy stone over the door to seal it shut. She and the other Mary would come after the Sabbath rest, to wash the body of Jesus.



Jesus had said he would rise from the dead on the third day, so the Pharisees begged Pilate to have the tomb guarded until then. He agreed. Soldiers put a seal on the door and stood guard.



On the third day there was a big earthquake and Jesus rose from the dead. Because He had never sinned death had no power over Him. Whoever believes in the risen Jesus is forgiven.