

REACHING OUT FOR CHRIST

5 **PROBLEM - MORAL NEED**
THE PRESSURE OF PROCRASTINATION
NICODEMUS & JOSEPH
"Secretly for fear of the Jews... came to Jesus by night" Jn 19:38-42

Result - Identified with Christ
Christ as - The True Messiah
"Then took they the body"

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Cracks in the Sanhedrin!

The chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

There arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build ~~another made without hands~~. But neither so did their witness agree together. Mark 14:55-59.



Cracks in the Sanhedrin!

*And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced...
 and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem... (Zech 12:10-11)*



Joseph of Arimathea

Mat 27:57-60, Mk 15:43-46, Lk 23:50-53, Jn 19:38-42

A man of great wealth, who constructed his own sepulchre in an exclusive part of Jerusalem

"A rich man of Arimathea" Mat 27:57
Possibly Ramah the hometown of Samuel

Had importance, prestige, high status as a member of the Sanhedrin

"Honourable counsellor"
Mk 15:43, Lk 23:50

Deeply perceptive, had ability to evaluate Truth in a difficult environment of extreme hatred

"Who also himself was Jesus disciple" Mat 27:57

Cautious, careful, sensitive

"Secretly for fear of the Jews" Jn 19:38

A man of great integrity & fairness

"A good man and a just" Lk 23:50

Nicodemus

Conception Jn 3:1-21, Quickening 7:50, Birth 19:39-42

• He had the ability to teach, lead and disciple others

"A ruler of the Jews" Jn 3:1

• A man of great prominence, holding a very high position in Israel after Caiphus and Annas

"Art thou a master (Diag the teacher) of Israel and knowest not these things?" Jn 3:10

• Extremely cautious in his approach, and aware of the repercussions of his activity

"Came to Jesus by night" Jn 3:2

• Honest in his evaluation of Christ

"We know thou art a teacher from God" Jn 3:2

• Perceptive in discerning genuine miracles

"No man can do these miracles except God be with him" Jn 3:2

• Did not forget the Lord's words about his manner of death

"As Moses lifted up the serpent, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" Jn 3:14

Nicodemus

Conception Jn 3:1-21, Quickening 7:50, Birth 19:39-42

• Accepted the strong criticism of the Lord

"Men loved darkness rather than light" Jn 3:19

• Responded to Christ's appeal to show his true colours & have the courage to openly identify with him

"He that doeth the truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest" Jn 3:21

• A man of fairness, proper justice & procedures

"Doth our law judge any man before it hear him" Jn 7:51

• Had the fortitude to stand up against the Sanhedrin & their vehemence

"Art thou also of Galilee! Search and look..." Jn 7:52

• Saw an opportunity & responded immediately in support of his friend

"There came also Nicodemus" Jn 19:39

• Was extremely generous

"Brought mixture, 100lbs weight" Jn 19:39

Numbers 9:12 – **FULFILLED**
by Joseph of Arimathea
and Nicodemus in a most
remarkable way!

The Passover Law

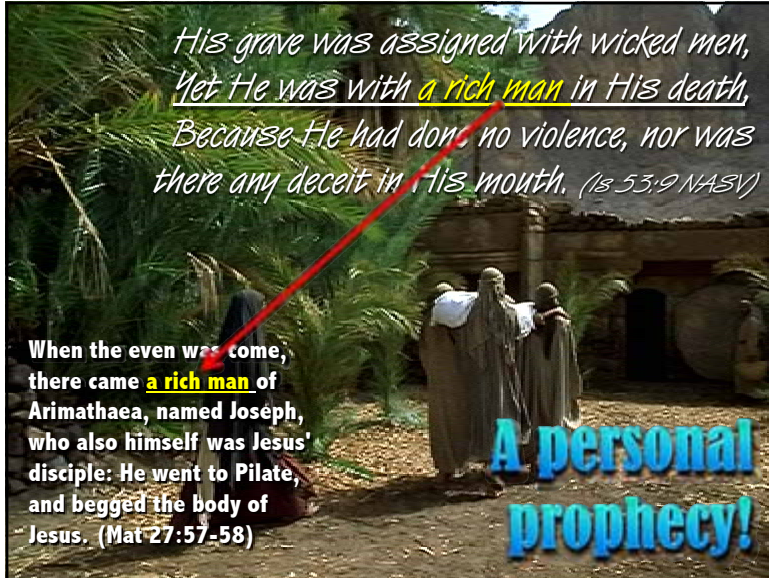
There were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day: And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man ... Num 9:6-8

They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it; according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it. Num 9:12

*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. (Is 53:9 NASV)*

When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. (Mat 27:57-58)

A personal prophecy!



Extreme Courage

"I consider this was one of the sublimest, grandest acts that any man ever did. In that darkness and gloom, his disciples having all forsaken him; Judas having sold him for thirty pieces of silver; the chief apostle Peter having denied him with a curse, swearing that he never knew him; the chief priests having found him guilty of blasphemy; the council having condemned him to death; and when there was a hiss going up to heaven over all Jerusalem - Joseph went right against the current, right against the influence of all his friends, and begged the body of Jesus."

("Bible Characters" by Dwight L. Moody, p. 116)

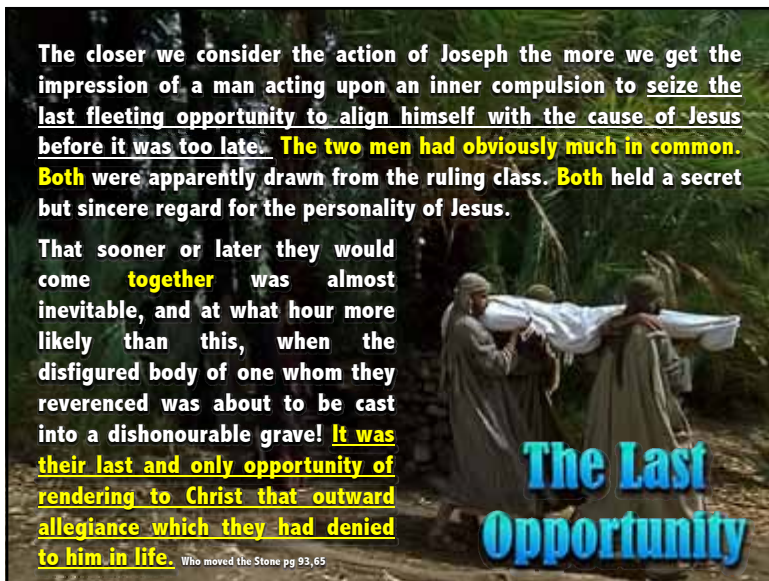


The closer we consider the action of Joseph the more we get the impression of a man acting upon an inner compulsion to seize the last fleeting opportunity to align himself with the cause of Jesus before it was too late. The two men had obviously much in common. Both were apparently drawn from the ruling class. Both held a secret but sincere regard for the personality of Jesus.

That sooner or later they would come together was almost inevitable, and at what hour more likely than this, when the disfigured body of one whom they revered was about to be cast into a dishonourable grave! It was their last and only opportunity of rendering to Christ that outward allegiance which they had denied to him in life.

The Last Opportunity

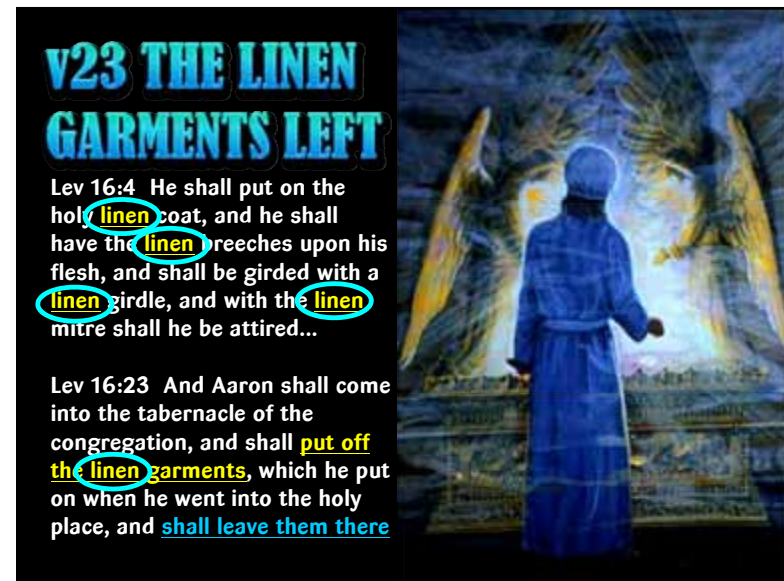
Who moved the Stone pg 93,65



V23 THE LINEN GARMENTS LEFT

Lev 16:4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired...

Lev 16:23 And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there



v23 THE LINEN GARMENTS LEFT

Jn 19:40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in **linen** clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

Jn 20:5 And he stooping down, and **looking in, saw the linen clothes lying**; yet went he not in.

v6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and **seeth the linen clothes lie**,

v7 And the napkin, that was about his head, **not lying with the linen clothes**, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

v8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he **saw**, and believed.

Jn 11:44 He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and **his face was bound about with a napkin.**



Nicodemus in Leviticus 16

Lev 16:21 ...putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send **him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness**

v26 And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat **shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.**

Mg "a man of opportunity", Heb. **itly only occurrence** - "timely, ready." "In the care of a man who will be **waiting there**" BBE. "By the hand of a man **standing ready**" NET. "By the hand of a man who is **in readiness**" ESV. The only task not performed by the HP was done by a man who happened to be there at the right moment...

Jn 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be **born of water** and of the Spirit, he cannot **enter** into the kingdom of God.



"There was a Garden"

Compromise Courage

A few hours before in a garden the Lord received a betrayal Kiss of hypocritical affection

A desperate Judas roughly seized Jesus with a "band of men" resulting later in his suicide

All the other disciples **"forsook him and fled"**

In Gethsemane the disciples were unsure and unknowing of the future

In the garden the disciples fell asleep from sheer exhaustion

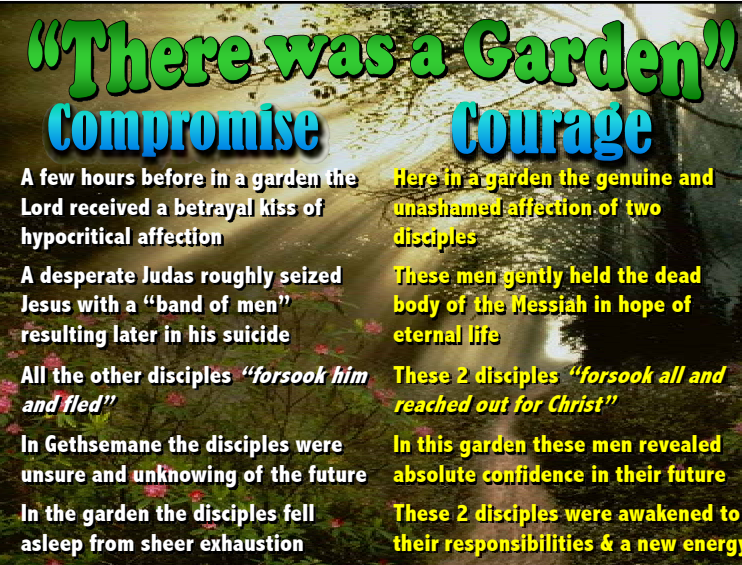
Here in a garden the genuine and unashamed affection of two disciples

These men gently held the dead body of the Messiah in hope of eternal life

These 2 disciples "forsook all and reached out for Christ"

In this garden these men revealed absolute confidence in their future

These 2 disciples were awakened to their responsibilities & a new energy



"There was a Garden"

In another garden two individuals (Adam & Eve) **disobeyed & received the sentence of death**

They listened to lies of the serpent

Reached out for fig leaves

Covered, hid themselves

Scene of a curse, sentence of death, separation from God

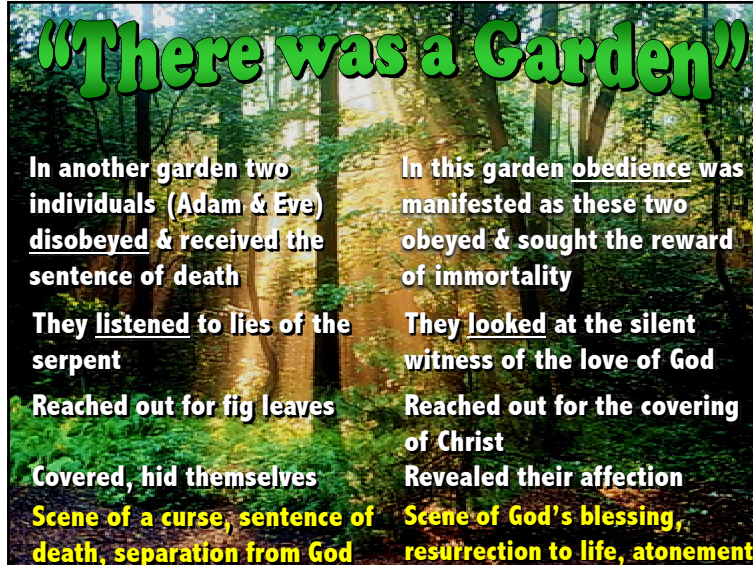
In this garden **obedience** was manifested as these two obeyed & sought the reward of immortality

They looked at the silent witness of the love of God

Reached out for the covering of Christ

Revealed their affection

Scene of God's blessing, resurrection to life, atonement



Joseph in Numbers 19!

Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke: 3 And ye shall give her unto Eleazar the priest, that he may bring her forth without the camp, and slay her before his face: 4 And he shall take of her blood, and sprinkle of it upon the water: 5 And ye shall do as the Lord hath commanded Moses. 6 And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp, in a clean place, and it shall be for the congregation of the children of Israel for a washing: 7 And the ashes of the heifer shall be for a washing unto the congregation of the children of Israel: and the water shall be for a washing: and the water shall be for a washing: 8 And the water shall be for a washing: and the water shall be for a washing: 9 And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp, in a clean place, and it shall be for the congregation of the children of Israel for a washing: 10 And the ashes of the heifer shall be for a washing unto the congregation of the children of Israel: and the water shall be for a washing: and the water shall be for a washing: 11 He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days. 12 He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean Numbers 19.

He was not the existing officiating High Priest, but High Priest elect!

The Priest did not select this sacrifice – the nation did! Fulfilled Acts 2:23

9 And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp, in a clean place, and it shall be for the congregation of the children of Israel for a washing: 10 And the ashes of the heifer shall be for a washing unto the congregation of the children of Israel: and the water shall be for a washing: and the water shall be for a washing: 11 He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days. 12 He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean Numbers 19.

Not performed by an exclusive priest but simply an upright Israelite – fulfilled by Joseph!

Joseph believed in the resurrection of Christ and understood the principles of true salvation!

Joseph understood this exact requirement and buried the Lord in his own "new tomb"!

Christ as the anti-typical Red Heifer

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Heb 9:13,14; 13:12

*This is the beginning of a new day.
God has given me this day to use as I will.
I can waste it - or use it for good.
What I do today is important because
I am exchanging a day of my life for it.*

*When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever,
leaving in its place something that I have traded for it.
I want it to be gain, not loss; good not evil;
success not failure;
So that I will never regret the price I paid for it.*

May it be something good that demonstrates my love for God

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