

John 19:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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 (ἔλαβον οὖν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸ ὄθονίοις μετὰ τῶν ἀρωμάτων, καθὼς ἔθος ἐστὶν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἐνταφιάζειν, elabon oun to sōma tou Iēsou kai edēsan auto othoniois meta tōn arōmatōn, kathōs ethos estin tois Ioudaiois entaphiazein)—They wrapped Jesus's body in ὄθονια (othonia, 'linen strips/cloths') μετὰ τῶν ἀρωμάτων (meta tōn arōmatōn, 'with the spices'), following Jewish burial customs. The verb ἔδησαν (edēsan, 'bound, wrapped') indicates tight binding. This detail becomes significant in resurrection accounts: the grave clothes remained intact yet empty (John 20:6-7), indicating Jesus passed through them rather than unwrapping.

This proper burial fulfilled prophecy (Isaiah 53:9) and validated Jesus's true death against later claims He merely swooned. The care taken by Joseph and Nicodemus—wealthy men risking defilement before Passover—demonstrates costly love. Their 'burial rites' prepared the tomb Jesus would vacate three days later, making the resurrection undeniable: sealed tomb, wrapped body, Roman guard, yet empty grave.

Historical Context

Jewish burial required washing the body, anointing with spices, and wrapping in linen strips—process taking several hours. They had to complete this before 6pm

when Sabbath began. The haste partly explains the women's intention to return Sunday with additional spices (Mark 16:1), though they found the tomb empty.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the detailed burial account validate Jesus's real death against swoon theories?
2. What does the care and expense of Jesus's burial by Joseph and Nicodemus teach about properly honoring Christ?
3. How do the burial details—wrapped body in sealed tomb—make the resurrection evidence more compelling?

Interlinear Text

ἔλαβον	οὖν	τὸ	σῶμα	τοῦ	Ἰησοῦ	καὶ	ἔδησαν	αὐτὸ
took they	Then	G3588	the body	G3588	of Jesus	and	wound	it
G2983	G3767		G4983		G2424	G2532	G1210	G846
ἀθονίοις	μετὰ	τῶν	ἀρωμάτων	καθὼς	ἔθος	ἐστὶν		
in linen clothes	with	G3588	the spices	as	the manner	is		
G3608	G3326		G759	G2531	G1485	G2076		
τοῖς	Ἰουδαίοις	ἐνταφιάζειν						
G3588	of the Jews	to bury						
	G2453	G1779						

Additional Cross-References

John 11:44 (References Jesus): And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Acts 5:6 (Parallel theme): And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

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