

Mark 15:45

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

Analysis

And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph—After receiving centurion confirmation, Pilate officially released Jesus's corpse. The Greek verb means to grant, give as a gift—Pilate granted permission without charging fees Roman officials often extracted. The word for corpse emphasizes genuinely lifeless—not a swooned man but a verified corpse. Pilate's cooperation seems pragmatic—he had found no fault in Jesus (Mark 15:14), yielding to Jewish pressure reluctantly. Granting burial to a prominent Sanhedrin member posed no threat. Yet providentially, this ensured Jesus was buried honorably in a known, secure tomb—necessary for resurrection verification. Had Jesus been thrown into a common criminals' grave, the tomb's location would be unknown and resurrection claims unverifiable.

Historical Context

Roman practice typically denied burial to crucified criminals, leaving corpses as carrion. However, governors could grant exceptions during Jewish festivals to prevent unrest. Pilate's agreement avoided potential Jewish outrage at corpses defiling the land during Passover and Sabbath. Joseph's new tomb meant Jesus's body was the only corpse interred there—eliminating confusion about which body was later missing. The tomb's location in a garden near Golgotha was known to multiple witnesses—Joseph, the women, Roman guards—making the empty tomb historically verifiable. God orchestrated circumstances so resurrection would be undeniable to honest inquirers.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Pilate's release demonstrate God's sovereignty working through reluctant authorities?
2. What does fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9 reveal about Scripture's prophetic precision?
3. How do the practical circumstances of Jesus's burial demonstrate that God prepared evidence for resurrection belief?

Interlinear Text

καὶ γνοὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ κεντυρίωνος ἐδωρήσατο τὸ⁵
And when he knew it of the centurion he gave

σῶμα τῷ Ἰωσῆφ

the body to Joseph

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