

Matthew 27:59

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

Analysis

Wrapped it in a clean linen cloth (ἐντυλίξας αὐτὸ σινδόνι καθαρῷ)—the Greek sindon refers to expensive fine linen, and kathara emphasizes purity/cleanness. Jewish burial customs required washing the body and wrapping in linen strips with aromatic spices (John 19:40). Joseph's care contrasts with the criminal's normal disposal—no washing, no fine cloth, mass burial.

The **clean linen** echoes Christ's purity—he who knew no sin (2 Corinthians 5:21) received burial befitting his spotless life. This wrapping also prepared for resurrection—when the grave clothes would be left behind as evidence of supernatural departure (John 20:6-7). The meticulous care shown by Joseph and Nicodemus honored Christ as both man and Lord.

Historical Context

Jewish burial was rushed before Sabbath but still followed custom: washing, anointing with myrrh and aloes (John used 75 pounds—a king's burial), wrapping in linen strips, and a face cloth. The women planned to complete anointing after Sabbath (Mark 16:1). Wealthy families could afford rock-hewn tombs; the poor used caves or earth graves.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the 'clean linen' symbolize Christ's sinless nature and qualified sacrifice for sin?
2. What does the care shown in burial reveal about how we should honor Christ's body, the church, today?

Interlinear Text

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|--------------------|-------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| καὶ | λαβὼν | τὸ | σῶμα | ό | Ἰωσὴφ | ἐνετύλιξεν | αὐτὸ |
| And | had taken | G3588 | the body | G3588 | when Joseph | he wrapped | it |
| G2532 | G2983 | | G4983 | | G2501 | G1794 | G846 |
| σινδόνι | | | | | | | |
| καθαρῷ | | | | | | | |
| linen cloth | in a clean | | | | | | |
| G4616 | G2513 | | | | | | |