

Saturday: The Tomb

Matthew 27:62-66, Mark 16:1, Luke 23:56, John 19:40

Jesus' body lay in its tomb, guarded by Roman soldiers throughout the Sabbath day on Saturday. When Sabbath ended at 6 PM, Christ's body was ceremonially treated for burial by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, both members of the Sanhedrin, the court that had condemned Jesus to death. For a time, both men had lived as secret followers of Jesus, afraid to make a public profession of faith because of their positions in the Jewish community. Similarly, both were deeply affected by Christ's death. They boldly came out of hiding, risking their reputations and their lives because they had come to realize that Jesus was, indeed, the long-awaited Messiah.

Lord God, on the Sabbath, Jesus rested. He was in the grave. He had finished His work. To most people's eyes, it looked as if it was all over. He was dead and buried, but only as a seed dies when it is planted in the earth, not to decay, but to spring to new life. Teach us to take refuge in You when we are afraid, that death is not our end and to hope always in You and in the resurrection, the making of all things new. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.