

## Was Jesus buried temporarily and then moved perhaps in secret?

Josephus the historian wrote that sometimes bodies were stolen to give them a dignified burial. It would not have been unknown for the likes of Jesus who died in utter disgrace to be stolen from the cross in case he would be thrown away like trash. "Nay they proceeded to that degree of impiety, as to cast away their dead bodies without burial: although the Jews used to take so much care of the burial of men, that they took down those that were condemned and crucified, and buried them before the going down of the sun." Notably Josephus who supposedly wrote that Jesus was the greatest of men and killed because of the Jews blames the death of Ananus for the misfortunes of Jerusalem. "I should not mistake if I said, that the death of Ananus was the beginning of the destruction of the city: and that from this very day may be dated the overthrow of her wall, and the ruin of her affairs; whereon they saw their High-priest, and the procurer of their preservation, slain in the midst of their city. He was on other accounts also a venerable, and a very just man". He writes as if he knew nothing of the core Christian claim that what happened to Jesus was the start of the end of Jerusalem.

Read all about it in Josephus Jewish War 4.

Jesus allegedly died on a cross and was buried in a new tomb. Nothing in the gospel say the tomb was meant to be his final resting place. But it does seem that some people at the time thought it was or could have been. Anyway Jesus disappeared from the tomb. It could look like he was moved to his permanent grave.

The first mention of Jesus' burial appears in Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. The original text according to Jesus' Resurrection: Fact or Fiction is that Paul said that he handed on as having supreme importance that Christ died for sins as the scriptures said, AND THAT he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day as the scriptures said, and that he appeared. The frequent "and that" is important. It is there in the Greek but tends to be left out of English translations to help readability. Why is the AND THAT he was buried so important?

Was Jesus really put in the tomb mentioned by the gospels for good? They never say if he was or wasn't meant to stay there for good.

One possibility is that it was a mark of honour to be buried in the family tomb so Jesus could have been stolen for that reason. The family may have taken him away. If this was theft and not negotiated in secret with the authorities, then they could not own up for execution was the penalty for body-snatching.

Jesus could have been temporarily laid in the tomb. If so there was nothing the Jews or Romans could have done if somebody stole him from it provided the relations had no objection to the body being taken. If they thought disciples or relations of his stole him they would have wanted to forget the affair to keep them out of trouble. The Rabbinical writings said a body could only be moved if it was in a temporary grave ( [www.bib-arch.org/barso99/roll1.html](http://www.bib-arch.org/barso99/roll1.html) Did a Rolling Stone Close Jesus' Tomb by Amos Kloner). There is nothing in the gospels that indicates that Jesus was intended to be buried in Joseph's tomb permanently. It may have been that he was intended to stay there forever and when the body was stolen that Joseph of Arimathea who owned the tomb lied about it being a temporary place. This meant there was no reason for the authorities to hunt down the body or the thieves and then some people started saying Jesus rose. Joseph could not tell the truth and be found out to be a liar.

The Resurrection Stands Firm, A Response to Farrell Till

[www.infidels.org/library/magazines/tsr/1996/6/6stand96.htm](http://www.infidels.org/library/magazines/tsr/1996/6/6stand96.htm)

This gives another case for holding that Jesus was temporarily buried in the tomb which could mean that the thieves would not have been sought by the authorities unless the relatives complained for taking bodies from temporary tombs was legal. It replies against the Christian argument that when the Jewish leaders were saying, according to the Matthew gospel, that Jesus was stolen from the tomb that it was a powerful evidence for the empty tomb. I would back up its reply by adding that Matthew only says that the Jewish leaders made up that story and it was circulating among the Jews to his own day. But it is possible that the leaders decided to say that and didn't and the rumour was not started by them but other people thought of creating the rumour and put it out without having any connection with them. It could have risen independently. In the bizarre commotion at the tomb the panicky guards who told the Jews that the tomb was empty might have made a mistake and the body could have been stolen after they ran off to the Jews.