



At Golgotha, outside the city walls, they nailed Jesus' hands and feet to the cross.

There was a notice above Jesus' head:

'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.'

The hot sun beat down and Jesus hung there, in great pain. Yet he did not hate his executioners.

'Forgive them, Father,' he prayed. 'They don't know what they are doing.'

'If you really are the Son of God,' jeered the people standing by, 'save yourself!'

Two thieves were crucified with Jesus, one on either side. The first thief sneered at him. But the second thief said: 'We deserve to die, but this man has done nothing wrong. Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King.'

Jesus answered, 'Today you will be with me in paradise—I promise.'

Jesus' mother and some of his friends stood near. Jesus spoke to John: 'Take my mother home,' he said, 'and look after her for me.'

At midday a shadow passed across the sun, and for three hours it was strangely dark.

'O God, why have you left me?' Jesus whispered.

Then he gave a great cry—'It is finished!'—and died.



At that moment the curtain in the Temple split from top to bottom. And the earth shook beneath the soldiers' feet. They had been tossing up for Jesus' clothes. Now they were terrified.

'This man really was the Son of God!' they said.

To make sure that Jesus was dead, one of the soldiers thrust his sword into Jesus' side. Then they took his body down from the cross.

A man called Joseph, from Arimathaea—a follower of Jesus—went to Pilate and asked if he could take Jesus' body away for burial. Pilate agreed. Joseph and Nicodemus (Jesus' secret visitor) wrapped the body in long strips of cloth, with myrrh and other spices.

Mary Magdalene and the other women who had followed Jesus from Galilee went with Joseph and saw him put the body in a new grave, a large cave dug out of rock. A heavy stone was rolled across the entrance. It was Friday, and the Sabbath began at sunset. So the women went away to prepare ointments and spices to put on the body when the Sabbath was over.

The Jewish authorities asked Pilate for a guard. They put a seal on the stone. And the guards settled down to keep watch.