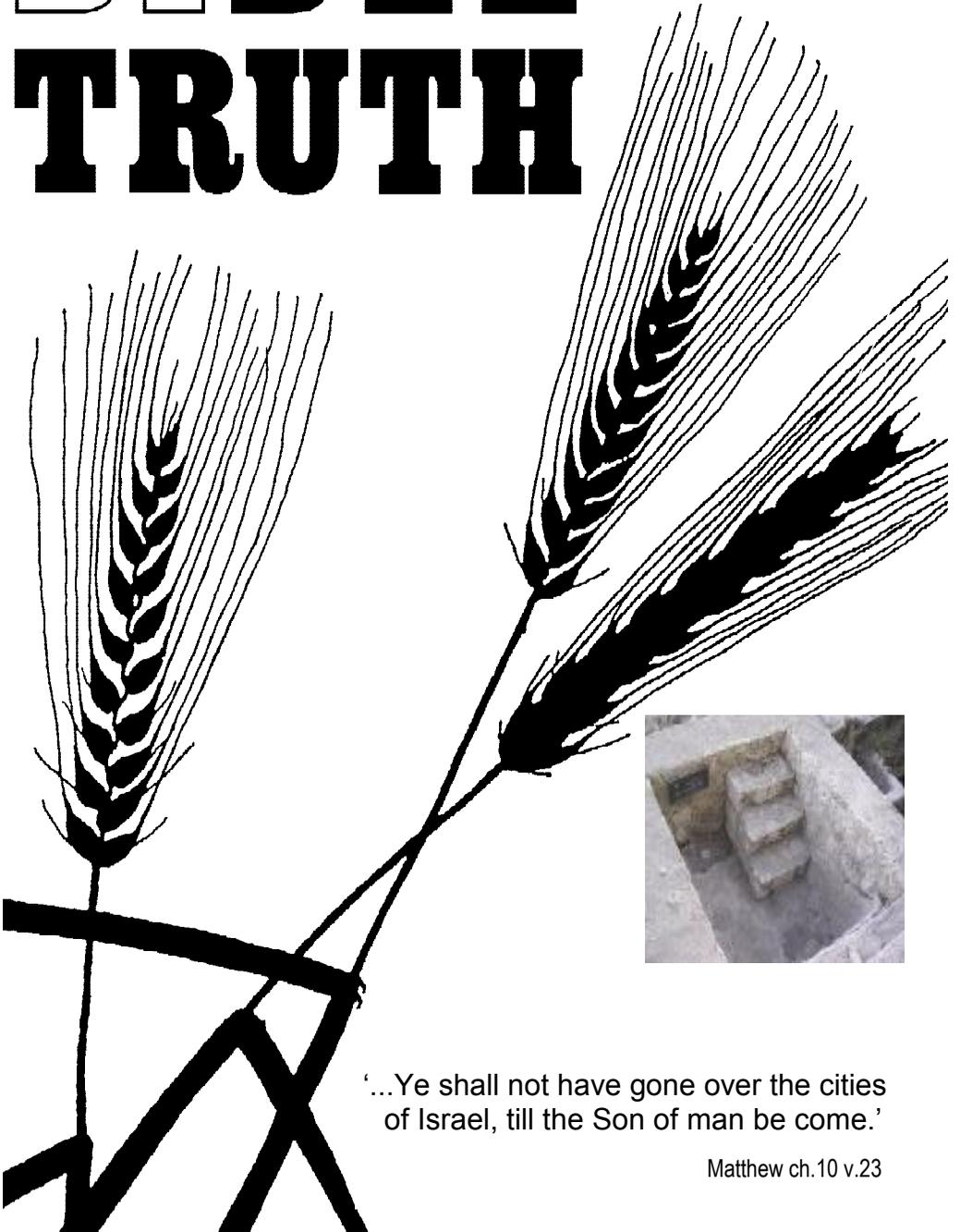


BIBLE TRUTH

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'...Ye shall not have gone over the cities
of Israel, till the Son of man be come.'

Matthew ch.10 v.23

Holidaying in Somerset - Joseph of Arimathaea



Looking east towards Glastonbury Tor from Wearyall Hill.
Here Joseph is said to have planted his staff to claim the land

There is much evidence to support that Joseph of Arimathaea travelled to Somerset in England and was likely to be the first to bring with him the Good News of the resurrected Lord Jesus.

It is remarkable that every Gospel account includes mention of Joseph of Arimathaea's bold act after the crucifixion in procuring Jesus' body from Pilate.

‘And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.’

Luke ch.23 vv 50-52

From the Gospel accounts we learn that Joseph was a member of the Council that decided Jesus' fate, but more importantly ‘had not consented to the counsel and deed of them’. For a person in his position, ‘rich’, ‘an honourable counsellor’ (i.e. Member of the Sanhedrin), and ‘a disciple of Jesus’, it was an exceedingly bold thing to do. Yet remarkably, his request was granted and Jesus is said to have been laid in Joseph of Arimathaea's tomb.

At Glastonbury its abbey ruins commemorate Joseph setting up his wattle church there, the first of its kind in Britain. The actual site is said to be covered by St Mary's chapel through the arch in the background.



In the area surrounding Glastonbury there are several churches depicting Joseph in their stained glass windows.

'When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.'

Matthew ch.27 vv 57-58

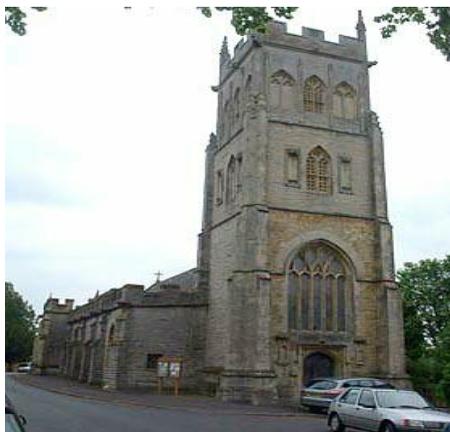


St Andrew's church, Blagdon on the A368 near Burrington Coombe where Revd Augustus Toplady, when sheltering from a storm in a cleft of the rock, composed his hymn 'Rock of Ages'.

Joseph is found in a triple window in the aisle on the right of the tower from the inside.

'Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.'

Mark ch.15 v.43



All Saints Church Langport on the A372 south-west of Glastonbury. This 'Joseph' glass is the right hand panel of five in the large window behind the altar. Though the church is usually closed a key may be obtained from the Information Office in the High Street.

'And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.'

John ch.19 v.38



St John the Baptist Pilton, seven miles due east of Glastonbury on the A361 and is in the vicinity of where the Glastonbury Festival is held, so will be difficult to access during the last week of June.

The church, with its outstanding gargoyles, is just above a creek which at one time was navigable to the sea. Here it is thought that Joseph landed with the child Jesus. This is described on the church information boards. Against the south wall bordering the churchyard is a boundary stone believed to delineate 12 hides of land granted to Joseph.



Compiled by Paul Boyd-Lee