

Arimathea

A city in the Judean Hills on the border with Samaria, about 25 miles to the north west of Jerusalem. It was the home of Joseph, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. It was he who asked Pilate for the body of Jesus and had it laid in the new tomb he had made. [Luke 23: 55](#)

Joseph, along with Nicodemus, was a secret disciple of Jesus, and had not consented to the condemnation of Christ by the Sanhedrin. [John 19: 38-42](#)

The Sanhedrin was the highest ruling body and court of justice among the Jews at the time of Christ. It was headed by the high priest of Israel and was permitted certain limited civil, religious and criminal powers by the Romans. In charging Jesus with blasphemy, the Sanhedrin was exercising this limited power. It then sent him to Pilate, the Roman official, for formal trial and sentencing.

The Sanhedrin had 71 members, made up of the main priests and elders, leading aristocrats, the scribes and Pharisees. As Paul was later able to demonstrate and exploit, the council had various factions, and two in particular. [Acts 23: 1-11](#) .

