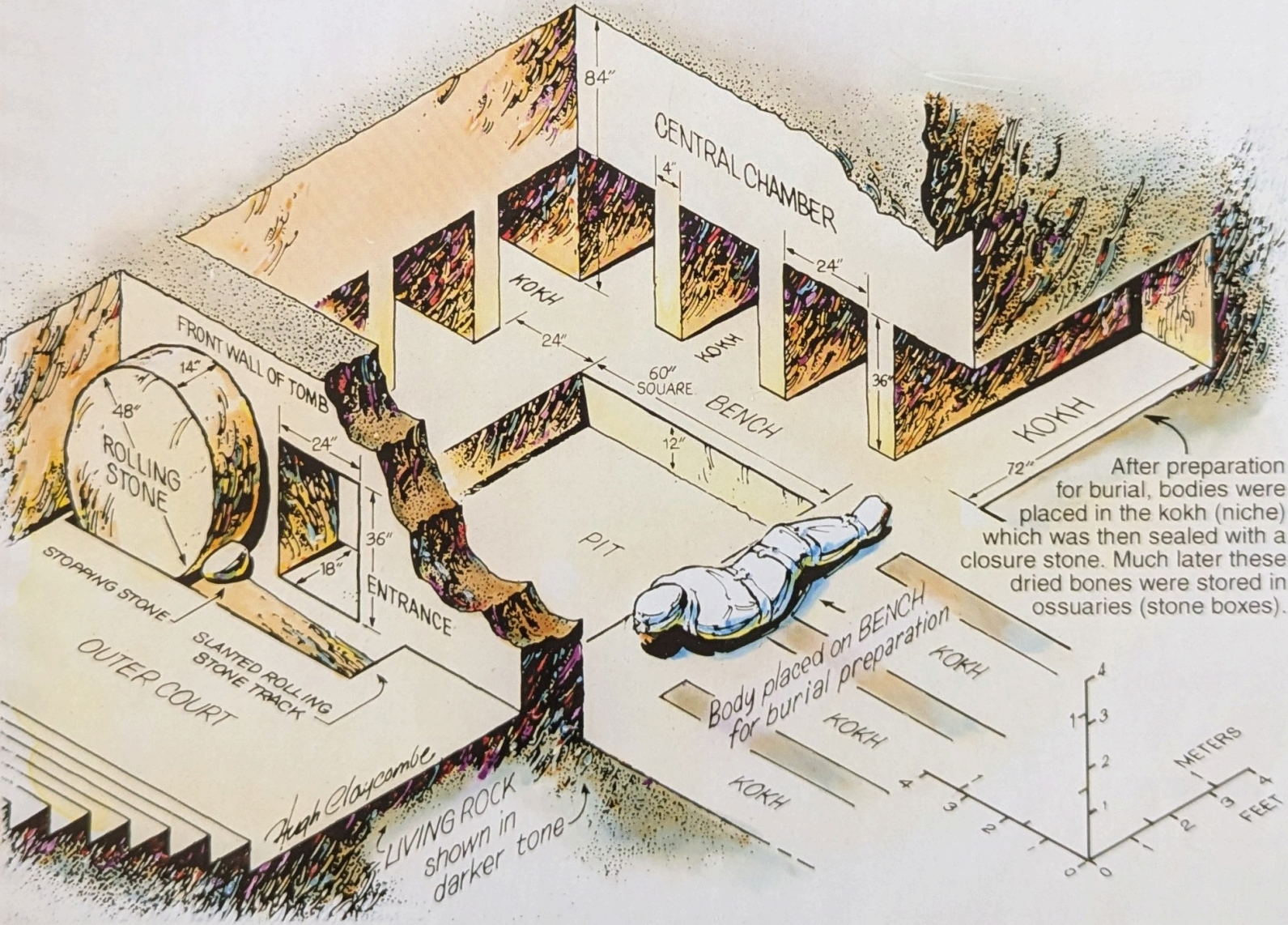


# The Tomb of Jesus

According to John 19:41, Jesus was buried in a new tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent man who was one of his followers. This fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah 53:9 that the Messiah would be among the rich in his death.

The tomb that early Christians identified as belonging to Joseph of Arimathea was destroyed by the Roman emperor Hadrian after AD 135. This drawing is based on the average measurements of sixty-one other "rolling stone" tombs found in the Near East, as documented by Dr. E. L. Nitowski.

Tombs such as these were carved out of solid rock and could be afforded only by wealthy families, and were used for as long as two hundred years. The body of the deceased was placed on the "bench" for preparation and later slid into a niche called a *kokh*. At a later time when nature transformed the body into a skeleton, the bones were placed into small stone boxes called ossuaries.



After preparation for burial, bodies were placed in the *kokh* (niche) which was then sealed with a closure stone. Much later these dried bones were stored in ossuaries (stone boxes).