

Below are some of the most frequently asked questions about the books.

### *General Questions*

**Is Jim available to speak to our group?** Sure! There are a few guidelines, however, we like to follow. Distance, scheduling and expenses are all factors that come into play. To discuss details and make arrangements, please send an e-mail to Autumn Chase at [autumnc@ejamesharrison.com](mailto:autumnc@ejamesharrison.com)

### *The Tomb Builder*

**Was Joseph of Arimethea a real person?** Yes! Although biblical scholars can't agree where the city or town of Arimethea was actually located, we do know from both the Bible and also the Jewish historian Josephus, that he lived.

**Your description of the crucifixion made it sound terrible. Was it really like that?** No, it wasn't as I describe it--it was much, much worse! It could be a very slow, painful and agonizing death. In the Bible when Joseph goes to Pilate to beg Christ's body, Pilate asks one of his centurions, "Is he dead?" Pilate was literally surprised to learn that Christ was dead. Christ had only hung on the cross for hours, many people would hang for days before they finally died, usually of asphyxiation--their internal organs simply compressed their lungs to the point they could no longer breath.

**I'm confused about the "Sanhedrin" and a "synagogue." Can you explain the difference?** The Sanhedrin was the supreme judicial court among the Jews at the time of Christ. It interpreted and enforced the laws that Moses received from God. A synagogue was a place where people from a local community would meet to be taught Jewish religious beliefs and worship. Being expelled or excommunicated from a synagogue resulted in being totally shunned by not only society, but your family. The fear of being excommunicated was so powerful that it kept most people "in line."

**Which characters were real and which did you make up?** The first part of your question is easy to answer. Jesus Christ, Joseph of Arimathea, Pontius Pilate, Nicodemus, Caiaphas, Annas and Judas Iscariot were all people who actually lived. Which characters are made up is

a little more difficult to answer, so let me begin with this: the names of every other character in the book were made up by me based on Jewish names that existed at the time of Christ. However, most--but not all--of these characters are based on either fact or supposition. For instance, Nicodemus actually lived and we know he was married, but we don't know his wife's name, so I chose to name her Anna.

**I've read in other places that Joseph of Arimathea was a tin merchant in England who owned a fleet of ships. What can you tell me about that?** Over the years, countless legends have grown up around Joseph and someday one of two of them may actually be shown to have some basis in fact! Alas, the notion of him being a tin merchant who moved to modern day England is one of the more widespread but highly suspect claims that is popular on the Internet. Another popular legend claims he took the boy Jesus to Glastonbury England on one of his tin trading trips. Similar claims of ties to England (originating entirely with Englishmen) are also made about Mary, Christ's mother, and some of the Apostles. A few of the legends about Joseph that persist today can be traced to obscure passages in ancient historical documents that were written hundreds of years after Christ's death and which were inaccurately translated. Others are much more recent--originating in the 1800's--and some as recent as the mid 1950's. The reality is that virtually every aspect of Joseph's life before and after he removed Christ's body from the tomb is unknown.