

Matthew 27 - Jesus Before Pilate, Herod; Barabbas; The Crucifixion

VI. Passion of the King (Matt 26:1—28:20)

- (1) Events leading to the crucifixion (Matt 26:1—27:32)
 - (L) Judas' remorse (27:1-10)
 - (M) Christ before Pilate (27:11-26)
 - (N) Soldiers mock Christ (27:27-31)
 - (O) Simon of Cyrene carries Christ's cross (27:32)
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Matthew 27

- (L) Judas' remorse (27:1-10)

Jesus' Trial Before the Sanhedrin (Cf. Mark 15:1a; Luke 22:66-71)

1 Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death;

1 Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death;

1 When morning came, all the high priests and elders of the people conspired against Jesus to put him to death.

1 When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:

- The scene turns now from Peter's denials back to the Sanhedrin's council chamber (26:68)

— Josephus wrote that the Jews' law forbade them from putting to death anyone without a condemnation by the Sanhedrin

— So, the chief priests and elders had to decide how they would present Jesus' case to Pilate to secure the verdict they wanted from him

The Roman Trials

Jesus Delivered to Pilate (Cf. Mark 15:1b; Luke 23:1; John 18:28)

2 and they bound Him and led Him away, and handed Him over to Pilate the governor.

2 and they bound Him, and led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate the governor.

2 They bound him with chains, led him away, and handed him over to Pontius Pilate, the governor.

2 And when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor

- The Sanhedrin wanted to put Jesus to death, but had no legal authority to do so. They had to politic their way to get the sentence they wanted.

— In Lev 24 the punishment for blasphemy is death, but they still have a problem: they needed the Roman authority to condemn a man to death

- Pilate's home was in Caesarea, but at this festival time, he was in his Jerusalem palace

Pontius Pilate

Pontius Pilate served as 6th Roman procurator of Judea from 26 AD-36 AD, after which he was deposed by Vitellius and sent to Rome, tried under Caligula, and passed out of official history. He was hated by the orthodox Jews and never really understood them. He once aroused their fury by putting up pagan banners in the Jewish Temple and was not hesitant to send armed spies into the Temple to silence Jewish protesters (Luke 13:1). A plaque was found in Caesarea bearing his name, which is now in the Israel Museum. [Tradition: Pilate killed himself. Josephus, *Ant.* 18:4, sec 1,2; Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II, ii. 7. The Coptic church came to believe that he became a Christian.]

Judas' Remorse and Suicide (Cf. Acts 1:18-19)

3 Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he **felt remorse** and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

3 Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

3 Then Judas, who had betrayed him, regretted what had happened when he saw that Jesus was condemned. He brought the 30 pieces of silver back to the high priests and elders,

3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

- "...felt remorse" - *metamelomai*, to regret, to care after the fact

— Judas felt remorse for condemning an innocent Man to death, but he never repented

— It falls short of repentance; rather, it portrays an "annoyance at the consequences of an act or course of acts, and chagrin for not having known better"

— Judas was sorry for what he had done, and tried to make amends, but he never believed that Jesus was the Son of God (Cf. John 6:64,71; Acts 1:16-19)

4 saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What *is that* to us? You shall see *to it* yourself!"

4 saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See *to that* yourself!"

4 saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they replied, "What do we care? Attend to that yourself."

4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*.

- Judas' testimony to Jesus' innocence is an important testimony to the fact that Jesus was the Messiah

- The response of the Sanhedrin likewise proved their guilt

— It should have meant something to them that Judas said Jesus was innocent

— Judas betrayed innocent blood and the Sanhedrin condemned innocent blood

— They were wrong for thinking they could avoid responsibility for Jesus' death because of Judas' guilt in betraying Him

5 And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and left; and he went away and hanged himself.

5 And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself.

5 Then he flung the pieces of silver into the sanctuary, went outside, ran away, and hanged himself.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

- Perhaps Judas thought he could atone for betraying Jesus to some extent with this gift. Then he went out and hanged himself (Cf. 2 Sam 17:23 [LXX]).

6 The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them in the temple treasury, since it is money paid for blood."

6 The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood."

6 The high priests picked up the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put this into the Temple treasury, because it is blood money."

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

- The chief priests rightly refused to receive the silver into the temple treasury (Cf. Deut 23:18)

— They appear scrupulous about ritual observance to the Law, while at the same time they failed to defend what is more important, namely the innocence of Jesus (Cf. 12:9-14; 15:1-9; 23:23; 28:12-13)

7 And they conferred together and with the money bought the Potter's Field as a burial place for strangers.

7 And they conferred together and with the money bought the Potter's Field as a burial place for strangers.

7 So they decided to use the money to buy the Potter's Field as a burial ground for foreigners.

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

- They decided to use the money for a public works project: a graveyard for foreigners who happened to die in Jerusalem

8 For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

8 For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

8 That is why that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

- The location they purchased evidently had been an area of land from which potters obtained their clay, but which by this time had been depleted

Acts 1:18-19:

18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

19 And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.

9 Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "AND THEY TOOK THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, THE PRICE OF THE ONE WHOSE PRICE HAD BEEN SET by the sons of Israel;

9 Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one whose price had been set by the sons of Israel;

9 Then what had been declared through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled when he said, "They took the 30 pieces of silver, the value of the man on whom a price had been set by the Israelis,

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;

- Seemingly quoted from Zech 11:12-13, but Matthew attributes the quote to Jeremiah — Matthew merged Jer 18:2; 19:2,11; 32:6-9 and Zech 11:12-13 in his quote here. Matthew merges four different passages (3 in Jeremiah, 1 in Zechariah), and attributes it to the better-known prophet Jeremiah.

— Joining multiple quotations from two OT books and assigning them to one (in the case of v9, to Jeremiah) was also done in Mark 1:2-3, in which Is 40:3 and Mal 3:1 are quoted, but assigned to Isaiah. This follows the custom of mentioning the more notable prophet first.

- In Jesus' day Jeremiah was the first of the books of the prophets, and that section (the prophets) was typically identified by the name of the first book. The Jews organized Hebrew Bible differently than we do today. Their organization followed the **Tanakh**:

- **Torah** - the Law of Moses
- **Nevi'im** - the Prophets
- **Ketuvim** - the Writings (Psalms, wisdom books)

— So T+N+K is where we get **Tanakh**, meaning the entire Hebrew Bible (OT)

— Jeremiah was the first book of the *Nevi'im*, thus "Jeremiah" would include all of the prophetic books by reference

10 AND THEY GAVE THEM FOR THE POTTER'S FIELD, JUST AS THE LORD DIRECTED ME."

10 and they gave them for the Potter's Field, as the Lord directed me."

10 and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

- Jeremiah was placed first among the prophets, and often represented all the other prophetic books. — Babylonian Talmud [*Baba Bathra* 14b]

Zech 11:12-13:

12 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.

13 And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

In Jer 19, Israel's rulers had forsaken God and made Jerusalem a place for foreign gods. The valley where the prophet delivered his prophecy and where he smashed the vessel, received the name "Valley of Slaughter," symbolic of Judah and Jerusalem's ruin. Similarly,

in Matt 26-27, the rejection of Jesus led to the polluting of a field that is symbolic of death and the destruction of Israel, which foreigners were about to "bury." In Zech 11, and in Matt 26-27, the people of Israel reject God's Shepherd and value Him at the price of a slave. In both passages, someone throws the money into the temple, and eventually someone else uses it to buy something that pollutes. Matthew saw in Jer 19 and Zech 11, not just several verbal parallels, but a pattern of apostasy and rejection that found its ultimate fulfillment in Judas.

(M) Christ before Pilate (27:11-26) (Cf. Mark 15:2-15; Luke 23:2-25; John 18:33—19:16)

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, "So You are the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, *"It is as you say."*

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, *"It is as you say."*

11 Meanwhile, Jesus was made to stand in front of the governor. The governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus said, *"You say so."*

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, *Thou sayest.*

- The location of this trial is uncertain, but probably took place in Herod's former palace (v2), where Caesar lived during Jewish feasts

- Pilate's question grew out of Jesus' claim to be Israel's Messiah (26:64), which the Sanhedrin undoubtedly reported to Pilate

— This was a political charge, compared to the religious charge leveled against Him by Caiaphas (26:61,63)

12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He did not offer any answer.

12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He did not answer.

12 While Jesus was being accused by the high priests and elders, he made no reply.

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.

- After responding to the question about His identity, Jesus made no further attempt to defend Himself or clear His name (Cf. 26:63)

13 Then Pilate *said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they are testifying against You?"

13 Then Pilate *said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?"

13 Then Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear how many charges they're bringing against you?"

13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?

14 And *still* He did not answer him in regard to even a single charge, so the governor was greatly amazed.

14 And He did not answer him with regard to even a *single* charge, so the governor was quite amazed.

14 But Jesus did not reply at all, so that the governor was very surprised.

14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marveled greatly.

- Pilate could hardly believe that Jesus did not try to defend Himself

— Obviously, Jesus was not trying to avoid the Cross (Is 53:7)

— His attitude led Pilate to conclude that Jesus was either foolish or crazy

At this point, only Luke reported that Pilate now sent Jesus to Herod Antipas for questioning (Luke 23:6-12). Herod then returned Jesus to Pilate.

Jesus' Second Appearance Before Pilate (Cf. Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:13-25; John 18:39-19:16)

Barabbas is Released (Cf. Mark 15:6-14; Luke 23:17-23; John 18:39-40)

15 Now at *the* Passover Feast the governor was accustomed to release for the people *any* one prisoner whom they wanted.

15 Now at *the* feast the governor was accustomed to release for the people *any* one prisoner whom they wanted.

15 At every festival the governor had a custom of releasing to the crowd any prisoner whom they wanted.

15 Now at *that* feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

- This custom was done as an act of goodwill to the Jews each Passover. Pilate probably did this to improve relations with his subjects on a politically important occasion.

16 And at that time they were holding a **notorious** prisoner called Barabbas.

16 At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas.

16 At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner named Barabbas.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

- "...notorious" - *episemos*, eminent or outstanding

— He was a famous prisoner, but not necessarily one that the Jews regarded as an undesirable character

- On the contrary, he had evidently been leading an insurrection against the Roman government as a freedom fighter (Cf. Mark 15:7; Luke 23:19; John 18:40)
- Many Jews would have viewed Barabbas as a hero rather than as a villain. He was a more messianic figure, in the minds of most Jews, than Jesus was.
- It's possible the two men crucified with Jesus were Barabbas' partners. Matthew used the same Greek word (*Iestes*, rebels or insurrectionists, v38) to describe them as the other evangelists used to describe Barabbas.

17 So when **thepeople** gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or **Jesus who is called Christ?**"

17 So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?"

17 So when the people had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which man do you want me to release for you—Barabbas, or Jesus who is called 'the Messiah'?"

17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?

- "...the people" - the multitude of common people

- "...Jesus who is called Christ" - Barabbas was also called Jesus. Some very old versions of the NT (ancient Syriac and Armenian versions) call him Jesus Barabbas

— Both Origen and Jerome knew of that reading

— This may be why twice (v17,22) Pilate appends "who is called Christ" to Jesus' name.

- Pilate undoubtedly thought the crowd would request Jesus, due to His notoriety with the people in Jerusalem. However it was actually the Galileans who were Jesus' main supporters. The people of Jerusalem seem to have willingly followed the lead of the Sanhedrin in willfully rejecting Jesus.

Jesus really took the place of one rebel, Barabbas, because the people preferred the one who tried to overthrow Rome's power to the Messiah that God had provided for them. This shows their insistence on having a "messiah" of their own design (Cf. 1 Sam 8:5,19-20).

18 For he knew that *it was* because of envy *that* they had handed Him over.

18 For he knew that because of envy they had handed Him over.

18 He did this because he knew that they had handed him over out of jealousy.

18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

- Pilate saw that the Sanhedrin was trying to get him to eliminate someone they saw as a threat to their own authority, namely, Jesus

— He knew the Sanhedrin had no special desire to advance the welfare of Rome

19 And while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him *a message*, saying, "See *that you have* nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him."

19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him *a message*, saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him."

19 While he was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him a message that said, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, because today I have suffered terribly due to a dream I had about him."

19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

- Pilate's wife is Claudia Procula; he is said to have been a Jewish proselyte at the time of the death of Jesus, and afterward to have become a Christian

- Pilate is interrupted with the message from his wife while he sat on the *bema* seat about to render a verdict

20 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas, and to put Jesus to death.

20 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death.

20 But the high priests and elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to demand that Jesus be put to death.

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

- The Sanhedrin persuaded the crowd to insist that Pilate release Barabbas and crucify Jesus (Cf. Mark 15:11)

21 And the governor said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas."

21 But the governor said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas."

21 So the governor asked them, "Which of the two men do you want me to release for you?" "Barabbas!" they replied.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

- Pilate seemed to favor Jesus' release, but their religious leaders favored Barabbas' release. It was natural that the people of Jerusalem would side with their leaders over

Pilate, if given a choice, especially since Jesus was a “foreign” Galilean.

— Jesus had not even attempted to overthrow Rome’s authority over Israel, as Barabbas did, which was another reason the people chose Barabbas for release over Jesus.

Barabbas

He stood under the righteous condemnation of the law. He knew that the One who was to take his Cross and take his place was innocent. He knew that Jesus Christ was for him a true substitute. He knew that he had done nothing to merit going free while another took his place.

The murderer’s bonds, curse, disgrace, and mortal agony were transferred to the righteous Jesus...while the liberty, innocence, safety, and well-being of the Nazarene became the lot of the murderer. Barabbas is installed in all the rights and privileges of Jesus Christ; while the latter enters upon all the infamy and horror of the rebel’s position. The delinquent’s guilt and cross become the lot of the Just One, and all the civil rights and immunities of the later are now the property of the delinquent. You and I are in Barabbas’ shoes!

22 Pilate *said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all *said, “Crucify Him!”

22 Pilate *said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all *said, “Crucify Him!”

22 Pilate asked them, “Then what should I do with Jesus, who is called the Messiah?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!”

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

- Pilate tried to reverse his tactical error by asking more questions, but the mob sentiment against him became stronger with each question he asked the crowd.

- He offered a milder sentence for Jesus, but the crowd would have none of it

23 But he said, “Why, what evil has He done?” Yet they kept shouting all the more, saying, “Crucify Him!”

23 And he said, “Why, what evil has He done?” But they kept shouting all the more, saying, “Crucify Him!”

23 He asked, “What has he done wrong?” But they kept shouting louder and louder, “Let him be crucified!”

23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

- Pilate attested for Jesus’ innocence, but the crowd’s original decision had become a mob chant that the governor could not change or silence

- The Jews wanted Jesus crucified rather than punished because to them, a person hanging on a tree was under God's curse (Deut 21:23)

24 Now when Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and **washed his hands** in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; you yourselves shall see."

24 When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see *to that* yourselves."

24 Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that a riot was about to break out instead. So he took some water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood. Attend to that yourselves."

24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and *washed his hands* before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see *ye to it*.

- "...washed his hands" - washing one's hand to symbolize innocence was a Jewish custom, not a Roman one (Cf. Deut 21:6; Ps 26:6)

— Pilate likely did this to relieve his own conscience, as well as to show contempt for the Jews

— Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified out of cowardice and fear of the Jews, whom he despised

25 And **all the people** replied, "His blood *shall be* on us and on our children!"

25 And all the people said, "His blood shall be on us and on our children!"

25 All the people answered, "Let his blood be on us and our children!"

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

- "...all the people" - the crowd who was present at the time; this cry would echo through all of history (and be widely misunderstood and exploited by anti-Semites...)

— This phrase did not cover the Jews who believed in Jesus, only unbelieving Israel, thus it cannot be used to justify anti-Semitism.

— The people's response was not new (Cf. 2 Sam 1:16; 3:28; Cf. Acts 18:6; 20:26)

The viciousness of their anger could hardly be described more graphically than by this horrible utterance. [Toussaint]

Jesus is Beaten (Cf. Mark 15:15; Luke 23:24-25; John 19:1-5)

26 Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus flogged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

26 Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

26 Then he released Barabbas for them, but he had Jesus whipped and handed over to be crucified.

26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified.

- The Mosaic Law prohibited scourging someone with more than 40 lashes (Deut 25:3; Cf. 2 Cor 11:24). However, with Jesus, the Romans were scourging Him, not the Jews, and they had no limit on the number of lashes they could impose on a prisoner.

— They typically used a leather whip with pieces of bone or metal embedded in the thongs. It often exposed the bones and internal organs, and often people died.

— This scourging fulfilled Jesus' words in 20:19

Judas yielded to *the devil* in his great sin (John 13:2,27) Peter yielded to *the flesh* when he denied his Lord; but Pilate yielded to *the world* and listened to the crowd. [Wiersbe]

(N) Soldiers mock Christ (27:27-31) (Cf. Mark 15:16-22; Luke 23:26-32; John 19:17)

Jesus is Led to Golgotha

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into **the Praetorium** and gathered the whole *Roman* cohort to Him.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole *Roman* cohort around Him.

27 Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the imperial headquarters and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band *of soldiers*.

- "...the Praetorium" - a courtyard of Herod's palace (where Pilate lived during Jewish feasts)

28 And they stripped Him and put a **red cloak** on Him.

28 They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.

28 They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him.

28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

- "...red cloak" - probably a reddish purple cloak that Roman military and civil officials wore

29 And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and *put* a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the

Jews!"

29 And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

29 Twisting some thorns into a victor's crown, they placed it on his head and put a stick in his right hand. They knelt down in front of him and began making fun of him, saying, "Long live the king of the Jews!"

29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

- The crown of thorns resembled the one on Tiberius Caesar's head, which consisted of palm branches; however for Jesus, they turned the palm fronds around and put the thorns on the inside instead of the outside

30 And they spit on Him, and took the reed and **beat** Him on the head.

30 They spat on Him, and took the reed and *began* to beat Him on the head.

30 Then they spit on him and took the stick and hit him repeatedly on his head.

30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

- "...beat" - the imperfect tense of the Greek verb means they beat Jesus on the head repeatedly (Cf. Is 52:14)

31 And after they had mocked Him, they took the cloak off Him and put His *own* garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify *Him*.

31 After they had mocked Him, they took the *scarlet* robe off Him and put His *own* garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

31 When they had finished making fun of him, they stripped him of the robe, put his own clothes back on him, and led him away to crucify him.

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him*.

- Typically, four soldiers plus a centurion would accompany a condemned prisoner to his crucifixion. The criminal normally carried the crossbeam, to which the soldiers would later nail His hands (Cf. John 19:17,23).

Matthew 27: Summary of Events

- Jesus arrived at Golgotha (Matt 27:33; Mark 15:22; Luke 23:33; John 19:17)
- He refused the offer of wine, vinegar and myrrh (Matt 27:34; Mark 15:23)
- Nailed to the cross between two thieves (Matt 27:35-38; Mark 15:24-28; Luke 23:33-38; John 19:18)

- First Cry from the cross: "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34)
- Garments allocated (Matt 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:23)
- Jews mocked Jesus (Matt 27:39-43; Mark 15:29-32; Luke 23:35-37)
- Conversated with two thieves (Luke 23:39-43)
- Second Cry: "You will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43)
- Third cry: "Woman, behold your son"; "Behold thy mother" (John 19:26-27)
- Darkness from noon to 3pm (Matt 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44)
- Fourth Cry: "My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me!" (Matt 27:46,47; Mark 15:34-36)
- Fifth Cry: "I am thirsty" (John 19:28)
- He drank wine vinegar (Matt 27:48; Mark 15:36; John 19:29)
- Sixth cry: "It is finished" (John 19:30)
- Seventh cry: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46)
- He dismissed His Spirit (Matt 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30)
- Temple curtain torn in two (Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45)
- Roman soldiers declare, "Surely He was the Son of God" (Matt 27:54; Mark 15:39)

For a more detailed chronology of Jesus' crucifixion and burial, see [Chronology of the Crucifixion](#).

Seven Cries from the Cross

1. "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34)
2. "Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43)
3. "Woman, Behold thy Son! Behold thy mother!" (John 19:26-27)
4. My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Ps 22:1)
5. "I thirst" (John 19:28; Cf. Ps 69:21)
6. "It is finished" *Tetelestai!* Paid in full (John 19:30)
7. "Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46)

(O) Simon of Cyrene carries Christ's cross (27:32)

32 As they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon, whom they compelled to carry His cross.

32 As they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon, whom they pressed into service to bear His cross.

32 As they were leaving, they found a man from Cyrene named Simon, whom they forced to carry Jesus' cross.

32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

- Jesus was able to carry the crossbeam of His cross until He passed through the city gate (Cf. Mark 15:21; John 19:17)
- See note on Simon of Cyrene in Mark 15:21

(2) Crucifixion (27:33-56)

(A) Events involving the crucifixion (27:33-44)

33 And when they came to a place called **Golgotha**, which means Place of a Skull,

33 And when they came to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull,

33 When they came to a place called Golgotha (which means "Skull Place"),

33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of the skull.

- "...Golgotha" - a Greek transliteration of Aramaic *gulgolta*, meaning "skull"

— "Calvary" comes from the Latin *culva*, meaning "skull"

- The exact location is unknown. It was evidently north of the old city wall, probably not far from the site of the present Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Cf. John 19:20).

- The traditional *Via Dolorosa* ("the way of sorrow"), the route from Jesus' trial site to His crucifixion, assumes that Jesus' trial before Pilate took place at Antonia Fortress

34 they gave Him wine mixed with bile to drink; and after tasting *it*, He was unwilling to drink *it*.

34 they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall; and after tasting *it*, He was unwilling to drink.

34 they offered him a drink of wine mixed with gall. But when he tasted it, he refused to drink it.

34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink.

- Someone offered Jesus some wine to drink, spiked with myrrh to reduce the pain (Mark 15:23)

— Jesus refused it after tasting it because He chose to endure the cross fully conscious

Jesus is Crucified (Cf. Mark 15:23-41; Luke 23:33-43; John 19:18-24)

Soldiers Divide Jesus' Garments (Cf. Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:23-24)

35 And when they had crucified Him, they divided His garments among themselves by casting lots.

35 And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves by casting lots.

35 After they had crucified him, they determined who would get his clothes by throwing dice for them.

35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

- Casting lots for His clothes fulfilled Ps 22:18 (Cf. John 19:23-24)

The Romans reserved crucifixion for the worst criminals from the lowest classes of society. Roman citizens were exempt from crucifixion unless Caesar himself ordered it. For the Jews, crucifixion was even more horrible because it symbolized a person dying under God's curse (Deut 21:23). Israel's leaders hung up those who had died under God's curse for others to see and learn from. Jesus bore God's curse for the sins of humankind, so that people would not have to experience that curse.

36 And sitting down, they *began* to keep watch over Him there.

36 And sitting down, they *began* to keep watch over Him there.

36 Then they sat down there and continued guarding him.

36 And sitting down they watched him there;

- This verse is unique to Matthew's Gospel

- Sometimes people took criminals down from their cross to prevent them from dying

— These soldiers guarded Jesus so that wouldn't happen. Jesus really did die, no one rescued Him.

37 And above His head they put up the charge against Him which read, "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

37 And above His head they put up the charge against Him which read, "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

37 Above his head they placed the charge against him. It read, "This is Jesus, the king of the Jews."

37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

38 At that time two **rebels** *were being crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.

38 At that time two robbers *were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.

38 At that time two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left.

38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

- "...rebels" - *lestai*, those who rebelled against Roman authority; they were guerrilla freedom fighters
- Some English translations called them "thieves" but that is an inaccurate depiction of their crimes; stealing was not punishable by crucifixion under Roman law
- Barabbas was released in place of Jesus, but these two were not so fortunate
- Jesus, the true Messiah, hung between two men who wanted to bring in Israel's kingdom through violent action against Israel's enemies—contrary to God's will

39 And those passing by were speaking abusively to Him, shaking their heads,

39 And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads

39 Those who passed by kept insulting him, shaking their heads,

39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

40 and saying, "You who *are going to* destroy the temple and rebuild *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

40 and saying, "You who *are going to* destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

40 and saying, "You who were going to destroy the sanctuary and rebuild it in three days—save yourself! If you're the Son of God, come down from the cross!"

40 And saying, "Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross."

- Israel's leaders charged Jesus with being a blasphemer because of His claim to be the One they would see seated at God's right hand (26:64).

— The passers-by were really the ones hurling insults and abuse ("blaspheming"), since they charged Jesus unjustly (Cf. 9:3; 12:31; 26:65)

— Their derision fulfilled prophecy (Ps 22:7; 109:25; Lam 2:15)

41 In the same way the **chiefpriests** also, along with the **scribes** and **elders**, were mocking *Him* and saying,

41 In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking *Him* and saying,

41 In the same way the high priests, along with the scribes and elders, were also making fun of him. They kept saying,

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said,

- "...chief priests...scribes...elders" - represent all segments of the Sanhedrin

42 "He saved others; He cannot save Himself! He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him.

42 "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him.

42 "He saved others but can't save himself! He is the king of Israel. Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him.

42 "He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

- They mocked Jesus with words that Jesus had heard before

- Like Satan, they tempted Him to prove who He was by demonstrating His identity in a way contrary to God's will

- The reference to Jesus saving others probably refers to His healing ministry. They attempted to cast doubt on His healing ministry by claiming that He could not even heal His own condition.

- The critics continued to point out Jesus' apparent helplessness. They implied that their failure to believe on Him was his fault. They promised to believe in Him if He would come down off the cross. However, if He would have done so, there wouldn't have been salvation for anyone.

43 HE HAS TRUSTED IN GOD; LET GOD RESCUE *Him* now, IF HE TAKES PLEASURE IN HIM; for He said, '*I am the Son of God.*'"

43 He trusts in God; let God rescue *Him* now, if He delights in Him; for He said, '*I am the Son of God.*'"

43 He trusts in God. Let God rescue him, if he wants to do so now. After all, he said, '*I am the Son of God.*'"

43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, *I am the Son of God.*

- They unwittingly quoted Ps 22:8 (Cf. John 11:51-52). They meant that God's failure to rescue Jesus proved that God did not delight in Him. They viewed Jesus' claims to be the Son of God as pretentious.

44 And the rebels who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him in the same way.

44 The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words.

44 In a similar way, the bandits who were being crucified with him kept insulting him.

44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

- The "rebels" beside Jesus on the cross were the fourth group to mock Him

- Luke 23:39-43 describes one of the rebels, after reflecting on the scene, came to a saving knowledge of Christ

The Mockeries of Jesus

While on the cross, Jesus was mocked four times by four different groups of people:

1. Passers-by (Mark 15:29-31)
2. Jewish Leaders (Mark 15:32-33)
3. Roman Soldiers (Luke 23:36-37)
4. Two Rebels (Matt 27:44)

There were two common elements in all four mockeries: All four groups mocked His messianic claims, and all four groups challenged Him to come down from the cross to prove those claims.

These four mockeries mark Satan's last attempt to keep Jesus from the cross. While Satan wanted Him to die, he did not want Him to die at this time... during Passover; nor did he want Him to die in this way...by crucifixion. If Jesus had died at any other time than Passover, in any manner other than crucifixion, there would have been no atonement. It was not simply the death of the Messiah that was necessary for atonement (He could have been killed along with the other babies in Bethlehem), but His death "according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor 15:2f).

Challenging, even daring, Jesus to come down from the cross to prove His messianic claims was Satan's final attempt to keep the Messiah from the cross. However, if He had responded and shown His messianic power by coming down from the cross, it would have proven Him to be a false Messiah. He would not have died "according to the Scriptures." His failure to bring Himself down from the cross did not negate His claims—it confirmed them.

(B) Christ's death (27:45-56) (Cf. Mark 15:33-37; Luke 23:44-46; John 19:28-30)

45 Now from the **sixth hour** darkness fell upon all the **land** until the **ninth hour**.

45 Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour.

45 From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

- "...sixth hour" - noon

- "...ninth hour" - 3pm

- "...land" - ge, refers to Israel, not the entire world

— Darkness in Scripture often represents judgment or tragedy (Cf. Amos 8:9-10)

— Compare to the three *days* of darkness in Egypt (Ex 10:21-23) with the three *hours* of darkness here

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LEMA SABAKTANEI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"

46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

46 About three o'clock, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eli, eli, lema sabachthani?", which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

- Jesus cried out the words of Ps 22:1 because He felt His Father abandon Him when He "(became) sin for us" (2 Cor 5:21) and bore God's full wrath against sin.

— It was out of the same sense of abandonment that David originally wrote these words. It expresses the spiritual desolation of a man who continues to trust and appeal to God in spite of the fact that his ungodly opponents mock and persecute him with impunity.

— Jesus' words here were recorded in Hebrew; they were recorded in Mark 15:34 in Aramaic (many scholars believe Jesus spoke Hebrew, not Aramaic [see Douglas Hamp, *Discovering The Language of Jesus*, Calvary Chapel Publishing, Santa Ana CA 2005, Ch 6.]

- Separation from the Father must have been the worst part of the Cross for Jesus, who had never before experienced anything but intimate fellowship with the Father.

— Jesus became the focal point of God's judgment on mankind's sin (Cf. Rom 3:21-26; 2 Cor 5:21)

47 And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, said, "This man is calling for Elijah."

47 And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, *began* saying, "This man is calling for Elijah."

47 When some of the people standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling for Elijah."

47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias.

- The bystanders misunderstood what Jesus said from the Cross. They believed that Elijah, whom God took to heaven without dying, would come to rescue the righteous from their distress.

— There is no biblical basis for this idea

48 And immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with **sourwine** and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink.

48 Immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink.

48 So one of the men ran off at once, took a sponge, and soaked it in some sour wine. Then he put it on a stick and offered Jesus a drink.

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink.

- "...sour wine" - oxos, likely wine that the soldiers strengthened with vinegar and drank themselves

— By giving this to Jesus, they really lengthened His sufferings. It was an expression of compassion, but it didn't help Him (Cf. Ps 69:21)

49 But the rest of *them* said, "Let us see if Elijah comes to save Him."

49 But the rest of *them* said, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him."

49 But the others kept saying, "Wait! Let's see if Elijah will come and save him."

49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

- The others restrained the one who gave Jesus the vinegar and told him to wait to see if Elijah would come and save Him

50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and gave up His spirit.

50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

50 Then Jesus cried out with a loud voice again and died.

50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

- This likely describes Jesus' cry of *tetelestai*, "It is finished!" (Cf. John 19:30)

- Jesus' final statement from the Cross was: "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit" (Luke 23:46; Cf. Ps 31:6)

The Greek words used here and in John 19:30 are unique in the NT. In 15 other Bible verses, "gave up the spirit," or "yielded up the spirit," is used to translate a single Hebrew or Greek word meaning *breathe out* or *expire*. This is true of the description of the death of Jesus in Mark 15:37,39 and Luke 23:46. But in Matt 27:50 and John 19:30 alone these expressions translate a Greek phrase of two words, meaning *give over the spirit* or *deliver up the spirit*. The death of Jesus was different from that of any other man. No one could take His life from Him except as He was willing to permit it (John 10:18). Christ chose to die so that we might live.

Signs Accompanying Jesus' Death (Cf. Mark 15:38-41; Luke 23:45,47-49)

51 And behold, the **veil of the temple was torn** in two **from top to bottom**; and the **earth shook** and the **rocks were split**.

51 And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

51 Suddenly, the curtain in the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom, the earth shook, rocks were split open,

51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

- "...veil of the temple was torn" - this was the thick veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place in the Temple (Cf. Heb 4:16; 6:19-20; 9:11-28; 10:19-22)

— Only the High Priest was allowed to enter past the veil, only once a year (on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement), and only after extensive ceremonial cleansing

— The veil was 60ft long and 20ft high, and had the thickness of the palm of a man's hand. It was so heavy that it took 300 priests to manipulate it.

— The tearing happened at 3pm, the time of the evening incense offering. A priest would have normally been standing in the holy place offering incense when it tore (Cf. Luke 1:8-10).

— The tearing of the veil indicated that the Mosaic system had lost its power. This system simply postponed the note of indebtedness for another year. This system simply "covered" the nation's sin for another year, but did nothing to remove it.

— Even though this system was deemed irrelevant at the moment of Christ's death, it remained in use by Jews up until the temple was destroyed in 70 AD (from 33 AD to 70 AD, the Mosaic system was in use, but it lacked any power).

- "...from the top to the bottom" - this signified that God is the One who ripped the thick curtain. It was not torn from bottom to top by men ripping it.

- The significance of the rending of the veil is taught in Heb 9:1-8; 10:19-20: with the death of the Messiah, a separation came to an end. No longer is the presence of God available to only one man, out of one family, out of one tribe, out of one nation of all the nations in the world. Now, it was available to all. By faith, everyone now had access to the presence of God Himself, and can approach the Throne of God boldly.

— The torn veil signified the end of God's former order of Jewish sacrifices and ceremonies. These were ordained by God to point to the significance of Christ's sacrifice, and were all fulfilled in His death, resurrection and ascension.

— The torn veil also signified Christ's torn flesh on the Cross. The veil represented the barrier between humanity and God's presence (Heb 10:19-20).

- "...earth shook" - earthquakes often accompanied divine judgment and the manifestation of God's glory in the OT (1 Kings 19:11; Is 29:6; Jer 10:10; Ezek 26:18)

- "...rocks were split" - split open; caused by the earthquake?

— The supernatural occurrences that accompanied Jesus' crucifixion hinted at its spiritual implications

52 Also the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

52 The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

52 tombs were opened, and many saints who had died were brought back to life.

52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

- Careful reading of v52-53 is required to understand what happened...

— In v52, “the graves were opened” (many as a result of the earthquake), and “many bodies of the saints...arose.” At that point, they were resurrected from the dead.

— However, as v53 notes, they did not come out of their tombs until “after His resurrection.” So, they were resurrected at the time of Jesus’ death, but did not come out of the grave to show themselves until after His resurrection.

— After they came out of their graves (after Jesus’ resurrection), they went to Jerusalem and appeared to “many people”

- No mention is made of their disposition, although Eph 4:8 hints that when the Lord ascended to heaven, He took these OT believers with Him

— The Scriptures say they appeared to many so they must have had some kind of physical presence

— They were the wave offering, a sample of the harvest, so logic says they had to be in the form of the rest of the harvest

53 and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

53 and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

53 After his resurrection, they came out of their tombs, went into the Holy City, and appeared to many people.

53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

- This was not, as some claim, a resurrection of all OT saints. This was, like all previous resurrections, only a restoration back to natural life (meaning they would physically die again later). There cannot be a resurrection to eternity before the Messiah’s own resurrection. Jesus is the firstfruits (1 Cor 15:20-24) of the eternal resurrection.

— The difference is that if one is raised from the dead into an eternal resurrection, he will live from then on physically forever. At this point, only Jesus had received this type of resurrection.

Wave Offering

These OT saints fulfilled the Wave Offering part of the Feast of Firstfruits observance. Sample sheaves of newly ripened grain were brought into the Temple and dedicated to the Lord before the general harvest began (Lev 29:9-14). As that was happening in the Temple, the wave offering of the first resurrection was being brought into the Holy City.

54 Now as for the centurion and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the *other* things that were happening, they became extremely frightened and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

54 Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

54 When the centurion and those guarding Jesus with him saw the earthquake and the other things that were taking place, they were terrified and said, "This man certainly was the Son of God!"

54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

- Having seen the events of the crucifixion (the centurion was likely in charge of it) and thereafter, He came to faith that Jesus was indeed the Messiah (Luke 23:47)

55 And many women were there watching from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee while caring for Him.

55 Many women were there looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee while ministering to Him.

55 Now many women were also there, watching from a distance. They had accompanied Jesus from Galilee and had ministered to him.

55 And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:

- Matthew's mention of women at the Cross added credibility to his account of the events (Cf. 1 Cor 1:27-31)

— They did not abandon Him as most of His unfaithful male disciples had done. The only believing disciples who did not abandon Him appear to be a few powerless women, who could not help Him, but only could observe His sufferings from afar, and John (John 19:26-27).

— These women were the last at the Cross and the first at the tomb (Cf. 28:1), indicating their dedication to Jesus

56 Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the **mother of the sons of Zebedee**.

56 Among them was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

56 Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

- "...mother of the sons of Zebedee" - Salome, according to Mark 15:40

- There were four women at the Cross when Jesus was crucified, here there are three

— The one missing is Mary, mother of Jesus. While Jesus was on the Cross, He instructed John to take her home to be under his care from then on

SOME WOMEN WHO OBSERVED THE CRUCIFIXION		
Matthew 27:56	Mark 15:40	John 19:25
Mary Magdalene	Mary Magdalene	Mary Magdalene
		Jesus' mother (Mary)
Mary the mother of James and Joseph =	Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses =	Mary the wife of Clopas
Mother of Zebedee's sons =	Salome =	Jesus' mother's sister

The Burial (Matt 27:57-66; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-55; John 19:38-42)

In the account of Jesus' burial, Matthew emphasized two things:

1. The fulfillment of prophecy
2. The impossibility of the theory that someone stole Jesus' body

Typically the Romans let the bodies of crucified criminals rot on their crosses without burial. The Jews, however, did not want dead corpses to remain unburied overnight (Deut 21:22-23).

(3) Burial (27:57-66)

(A) Body placed in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb (27:57-61)

57 Now when it was **evening**, a **richman** from Arimathea came, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus.

57 When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus.

57 Later that evening, a rich man arrived from Arimathea. His name was Joseph, and he had become a disciple of Jesus.

57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple.

- "...evening" - actually late afternoon before sundown. The next day, a Sabbath, began at sundown, which would have occurred about 6pm at this time of year in Jerusalem.

- Joseph of Arimathea was a member of the Sanhedrin who had not consented to Jesus' death (Luke 23:51)

— He followed Jesus from a distance, since John wrote that he was a secret disciple for fear of the Jews (John 19:38)

- "...rich man" - in the Greek, "rich" is in the emphatic position; Matthew apparently wanted to stress the fulfillment of Is 53:9

58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given *to him*.

58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given *to him*.

58 He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and Pilate ordered it to be done.

58 He went to Pilate, and begged for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

- Joseph was pretty bold to ask Pilate for Jesus' body

- The fact that Pilate allowed Joseph to bury Jesus' body shows that he did not think Jesus was guilty of treason

- Joseph helped prepare Jesus' body for burial with the help of Nicodemus (John 19:39), and perhaps other friends or servants

59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a **clean linen cloth**,

59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

59 So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

- "...clean linen cloth" - *sindon*, this is the only detail Matthew provides on how they wrapped Jesus' body

— In that day, this cloth would have been expensive, reflecting their respect for Jesus

60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.

60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.

60 Then he placed it in his own new tomb, which he had cut out of the rock. After rolling a large stone across the door of the tomb, he left,

60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

- Joseph had prepared this tomb for himself, but now he put Jesus' in his place

— This is a extravagant act of devotion, and also indicative of what every believer needs to do with Jesus: count Him to have taken our place as our Substitute

61 And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.

61 And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the grave.

61 but Mary Magdalene and the other Mary remained there, sitting in front of the tomb.

61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

- These women witnessed Jesus' burial, along with Joseph and Nicodemus

- Matthew's notation of what they saw prepares for 28:1...

(B) Grave sealed (27:62-66)

62 Now on the next day, *that is, the day* which is after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate,

62 Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate,

62 The following day (that is, after the Day of Preparation), the high priests and Pharisees gathered before Pilate

62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63 and they said, "Sir, we remember that when that deceiver was still alive, He said, '**After three days I am rising.**'

63 and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, '**After three days I am to rise again.**'

63 and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said while he was still alive, '**I will be raised after three days.**'

63 Saying, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, **After three days I will rise again.**

- The fact that Jesus' prediction of His resurrection had reached the ears of these men reflects badly on the disciples' lack of faith. They should have understood and believed that Jesus would arise, since knowledge of His prediction of this event was so widespread.

64 Therefore, give orders for the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise, His disciples may come and steal Him, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first."

64 Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first."

64 Therefore, order the tomb to be secured until the third day, or his disciples may go and steal him and then tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead.' Then the last deception would be worse than the first one."

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first."

- From their view, Jesus' first deception was His messiahship, and His second was His claim that He would rise from the dead

— The chief priests pretended to want to protect the people from deception. Matthew viewed their actions as self-deception designed to deceive others.

— They had formerly accused Jesus of being a "deceiver" (26:4), but *they* were the real deceivers of the people.

65 Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it *as* secure as you know how."

65 Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it *as* secure as you know how."

65 Pilate told them, "You have a military guard. Go and make the tomb as secure as you know how."

65 Pilate said unto them, "Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can."

- Pilate responded by releasing the Roman guard to the Jewish leaders

— This was a Roman guard, not a Jewish Temple guard. If this had been a Jewish Temple Guard, there would have been no need for the Jewish leaders to go to Pilate with this request (they could've sent a Jewish guard themselves). They wanted a Roman guard instead.

66 And they went and made the tomb secure with the guard, sealing the stone.

66 And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone.

66 So they went and secured the tomb by putting a seal on the stone in the presence of the guards.

66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

- At this point, the tomb is officially sealed with the Roman seal. The sealing of the tomb was done in several steps:

— First, a strong rope was placed around the stone at the door of the tomb.

— Secondly, the two ends were drawn to the side of the door on the outer wall of the tomb.

— Thirdly, a wax or clay seal was placed on the rope where it crossed itself in front of the stone and where the rope touched the two sides of the tomb. It would be impossible to move the stone without breaking the seal. To break the Roman seal was punishable by death.

— This occurred on Saturday. Jesus was laid in the tomb on Friday and, on Saturday the Roman guard was placed to make sure that the body would not be stolen out of the tomb.

- Cf. Ps 2:4...