

Matthew 27:1-10 **The Profession of Judas**

We start a new chapter this morning, Matthew chapter 27 verses 1 through 10. We are in the fourth section of Matthew's Gospel. The fourth section is chapters 26 and 27, The Crucifixion of Christ. Last week we finished chapter 26, The Preparation of the Crucifixion. And today we start chapter 27, The Portrayal of the Crucifixion, as we actually study about the crucifixion itself.

We ended off last time with Jesus being taken in the garden - seized by a group of soldiers and taken, bound, to Annas the high priest. John tells us that it was Annas that He was taken to first. Matthew focuses on Caiaphas. After He was taken to Annas who was the former high priest, Annas sent him to Caiaphas, and that is why we have the record of Caiaphas in Matthew, at the end of Matthew chapter 26.

But in the meantime, when they were going out to the garden before Jesus got seized, He told the disciples that you are going to scatter. The shepherd will be struck, and the sheep will scatter. But Peter says, "Even though everyone else will be offended in You I will not be offended in You."

"You will deny Me three times before the rooster crows tonight."

Factual statements. You have to understand the language indicates that it is not, "Here is what you are going to do, and you should not do it." Jesus said, "This is what you're going to do." And Peter's response again was, "Though everybody deny You, I will even die for You." And all the other disciples said, "Yes, us too! Count us in there."

But out at the garden, before He was taken to Caiaphas He asked the soldiers, "Who are you looking for?" And they said, "We are looking for Jesus the Nazarene." Jesus said, "I Am," and the soldiers fall over in the midst. This gives Peter the impetus to take out his sword and start whacking away at the soldiers as they were getting up, and he cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. And Jesus told him to put the sword back in its sheath, this is not the way it's going to go down.

So Jesus voluntarily surrendering Himself. Showing Himself by saying the great covenant name of God I Am and them all falling over. Jesus was showing that He is in charge, that He is doing this; surrendering Himself, not being taken. And of course, Peter, he was going to die for Jesus so he took out his sword and began to swing it and cut off the servant's ear. But then Jesus stopped him. So now Peter is perplexed.

As they bound Jesus and took Him to Annas first and then Caiaphas, the text tells us that Peter followed from afar off. When Jesus arrived at the courtyard - at the courts where Caiaphas and Annas were - Peter was inside the courtyard around the fire with the rest of the people warming himself. And a young girl came up and said, "Are not you one of those with Him?" He said, "I do not know what you are talking about." And then another young slave girl comes up

and says, "Did not we see you with Him in the garden?" And he says, "I do not know what you are saying," and he took an oath, "I do not know the Man."

But then there was a third instance, because he gets up and leaves the fire and goes over by the porch. And he is around the porch area and a group of people come up and say, "Are not you one of them? Your speech gives you away." And Peter began to curse and to swear. That literally means he called down a curse from God from heaven to die if he is telling a lie. So he is saying, "God strike me dead if I am lying, I do not know the Man." That was pretty strong words for somebody that knows Him. Then the rooster crows. And the last verses of chapter 26 tell us that Peter remembered the words of Jesus that he would deny Him three times before the rooster crows. And the last verse of chapter 26 says that Peter went out and wept bitterly. He had failed. He was not as sufficient as he thought he was.

Then we saw in John chapter 21 that after the Lord rose from the dead, He restored Peter back to fellowship, and commissioned him to feed His sheep, and to feed His lambs. And of course, there is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts chapter 2, where Peter was the one the Lord used to minister the first message when thousands of people were saved. It is because Peter was now broken vessel. He realized how weak and insufficient that he was, totally depending upon the Lord. He was a humble man and a useful vessel now that he is broken and restored.

Verse 1 for today, verses 1 and 2 of Matthew chapter 27, the circumstances surrounding this chapter. Verse 1, **And when early morning had come, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel together against Jesus, so as to put Him to death.** Contrary to rabbinical law the first two phases of Jesus' religious trial were carried out during the night and away from the temple, against rabbinical law. It cannot be at night-time. It has to be a public hearing especially when you are dealing with the death penalty. He had first been brought before the former high priest Annas probably in hope that this would produce a charge against Jesus that would justify the death penalty. But when that failed Christ was brought before the acting high priest Caiaphas and the hastily assembled Sanhedrin. Only when He confessed to being the Christ and God's Son did they discover a way to destroy Him.

Verse 2 says, **And having bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him over to Pontius Pilate the governor.** Now Pontius Pilate was the leading Roman official over Judea. And the Jews wanted Jesus put to death through the law. Though the law required death for blasphemy they still needed the Roman officials for approval. So they brought Him to Pontius Pilate, the governor. The Roman government was the only official agency that could pronounce the death sentence on someone. The Jews were not allowed to pass the death sentence, especially crucifixion. So they brought Him to Pilate so that Pilate could give the death sentence.

John chapter 18 verse 31 tells us that Jews were not allowed to administer the death penalty themselves. Jewish leaders now had to convince the Roman governor to give immediately required permission for Jesus' execution. After hearing before Caiaphas, the first phase of Jesus's secular Roman trial would begin. So He had religious trials with Annas and Caiaphas. Now He has been brought before the Roman governor, because the Roman official is the only one who can decree the death sentence and order it carried out.

In John chapter 18 verse 28 tells us to keep from ceremonially defiling themselves and thereby prevented from celebrating the Passover later that day, the Jewish leaders waited outside. So this is all going on inside - Jesus and the Roman soldiers. All of the Jewish leaders were outside at the time Pontius Pilate was hearing about Jesus.

In verses 3 through 10 we have the profession of Judas. Verses 3 to 5, the conduct of Judas. **Then Judas, the one delivering Him over, when he saw that He** (that is, Jesus) **was condemned.** The word *condemned* is a judicial term that means judgment was passed against Him. So, **when he saw that Jesus had judgment passed against Him, having regretted, he returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders.** So once he saw that Jesus was condemned, he regretted. The old King James uses the word *repented*, he repented himself. The New King James as well as the newer translations use the translation *remorseful*, that he was remorseful and returned the thirty pieces of silver. It literally means *to regret, to be sorry*. It does not mean *to repent*.

The word for *repentance* is **μετανοέω** (metanoēō). **μετανοέω** (metanoēō) means *to make a decision for change*. And so, a person in order to repent, which is absolutely necessary for salvation - for a person to repent is to make a decision to change the direction of their life. But secondly, the word also carries with it the meaning and understanding that a person who repents cannot change themselves. They can only make the decision for change. The change has to come by the Lord and dependence upon Him for change for salvation. That is what salvation is. That is the change that takes place. **μετανοέω** (metanoēō), *to repent*.

This is the word **μεταμέλομαι** (metamelomai), which means *to be sorry, or to regret*. It does not mean *to repent*. And it has to do with the consequences, which is something that we need to learn as far as in dealing with other people, as well as dealing with ourselves. People come to us with hardships and difficulties because they are suffering from the consequences of their sin. A person can be remorseful and sorry over the consequences of their sin without repenting of the sin itself. So it is important a person understand that when you repent you are making a decision to change. Things have to change. I have to change the direction of my life. I need to surrender my life to Christ.

An example of this is a person wakes up every morning, let us just say somebody who has an alcohol problem, wakes up every morning with a hangover and is remorseful over the consequences of drinking. But as soon as a hangover leaves, and he is back to halfway normal again, he goes back to drinking again. He never repented of the drinking. He was remorseful over the consequences of his sin, but not the sin itself.

Judas was remorseful. He regretted what he did, but he did not repent of what he did. There is a difference. He is sorry that has to suffer the consequences of what he did. When he saw Jesus was condemned, he regretted, he felt sorry for the consequences of what he did. So he went back and he returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders - that is the money that they gave him to deliver Jesus to them.

Verse 4, **Saying**, here is what Judas said, "**I sinned having delivered over innocent blood.**" He confesses. He professes. **I sinned having delivered over innocent blood**, even proclaiming about Jesus that Jesus was innocent of the condemnation that brought about. Judas probably in his own mind did not want it to go this far. **But they said, What is it to us? You yourself will see to it.**" In other words, they are saying, "It is your problem. It is going to be on your head not ours, why are you telling all this to us?" Notice a profession - he is stating that Jesus is innocent. He has betrayed innocent blood. Judas knew that he betrayed innocent blood, but he did not come to Christ's defense nor seek for his own forgiveness. Again, he was just remorseful over the consequences, not repentant of the sin itself.

Verse 5, **And having thrown down the silver pieces in the temple, he left. And having gone away he hanged himself.** He committed suicide. So, he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple. Now the word *temple* is not the word *sanctuary*. This is the inner court where only the priests can go. So he threw the money down only where the priest could go get it, not the common person. So he threw the money down and when he went out he hanged himself.

We know that from Luke chapter 22 verse 3 it says before the Lord and the disciples celebrated the Passover meal that Satan entered into Judas. In John chapter 13 verse 2 it says that Satan persuaded Judas to betray Jesus. In John chapter 6 verse 70 Jesus said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" So we know that Judas was always of Satan. At a particular time Satan entered into him and used him for the betrayal. He [Judas] was regretful and remorseful for what he did, but was not repentant. And he went out and hanged himself.

Verses 6 to 8, The Counsel of the Chief Priests. **And the chief priests having taken the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is the price of blood."** They are admitting that the money is a bribe and against the law to be put in the temple treasury. They are so pious to keep the treasury clean, and yet at the same time they are willing to give the money for the blood of Jesus. Interesting they are also pronouncing that the money was a bribe and it was all a crime.

Verses 7 and 8, **And having taken counsel, they bought from them the field.** The term *from them* means *the silver pieces*. **They bought from them the field of the potter, for burial for the strangers. On account of which the field was called Field of Blood until today.** There is a field in Jerusalem where the potters used to go and get their clay out of. And when the field ran out of clay they put it up for sale, so the potters sold it to the priests. Verse 7 says, **burial for the strangers.** This would be people who are not Jewish, these are people who are Jewish but were criminals. They would use this as a burial plot. And they purchased it with the money that was given to Judas that he returned. **On account of which the field was called Field of Blood until today.**

Verses 9 and 10, **Then was fulfilled that which had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "And I took thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one who had been priced, on whom they set a price on from the sons of Israel, and gave them for the field of**

the potter, according as the Lord directed me." So Matthew says that the purchase of the field of the potter was found in prophecy, through Jeremiah the prophet.

The problem is the quotation is from Zechariah chapter 11 verses 12 and 13. Jeremiah did not say it, Zechariah said it. This is why it is important to understand who the writer is writing to, to understand the presentation made. He [Matthew] is appealing to Jewish readers based on the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew Bible is divided off into different sections than our English Bibles are. For the Jewish people it is called the Tanakh, the Old Testament - what we call the Old Testament. The Tanakh - for Torah, that is the law; Neviim, the prophets; and the Ketuvim being the writings, poetry writings. T - N - K, Tanakh. Each of these three sections were named after the first book of each section. So the name of the section for the Ketuvim (the writings) is Psalms, because Psalms is the first book of the writing section. The poetry: Job, Song of Solomon, those poetical books. But the Neviim, the prophets, are all headed by Jeremiah. Jeremiah is the first book of the prophets in the Old Testament, in the Tanakh. And so what they would do is everything that the prophets had said was actually said through Jeremiah according to the Jews, because Jeremiah is the leading prophet. So that is why it is important to understand that if Matthew is writing to the Jews he is making reference to the Old Testament Scriptures according to the way the Jew understood them, according to the Hebrew Bible. That is, that it is through Jeremiah the prophet, he is the head of the prophets. But it is actually written in Zechariah chapter 11 verses 12 and 13, all prophesied that it would happen.

But it is important to understand the difference between being sorry and regretting what one has done, versus a repentance. *Repentance* means to make a decision for change based on the sinful lifestyle, with the awareness that I cannot make the change. I can only make the decision to change and surrender my life to Christ and let Him make the change in the direction my life. But **μεταμέλομαι** (metamelomai), the word in our text for today, *to regret* or *be sorry*; means to be sorry for the consequences of the sin, the effects of the sin, not the sin itself. That is why over the years many believers meet with other people who are suffering because of the consequences of their sin, and because they show remorse, and even admit, "I have sinned," they think, "Well, this person is ready to be saved." But in reality, that is not true. You cannot just be remorseful. You cannot just be sorry. There must be repentance for salvation.

Alright, let's close with prayer.