

Message #96

Matthew 27:1-10

I am convinced that the reason the Gospel writers are so careful to describe all events pertaining to Christ's crucifixion is because all the events pertaining are ordained of God and fulfill divine prophecy.

Jesus Christ did not come to this earth to live, but to die. This is the very heart of the Gospel; in fact, this is the Gospel. All of this was predicted in Scripture.

JESUS CHRIST CAME TO THIS EARTH TO FULFILL GOD'S PROPHETIC PLAN WHICH REQUIRES THAT HE DIES ON THE CROSS AND EVERYTHING SURROUNDING HIS DEATH FULFILLED THAT PLAN, INCLUDING HIS BETRAYAL.

You will notice that twice in this context we read that the religious leaders “conferred together” (27:1, 7). The emphasis of this Greek word is that these leaders were consulting each other as advisors and counselors of one another (Smith, p. 422). They actually think they are the ones calling the shots and giving advice as to what is to be done with and to Jesus. God controls people's hearts and minds. These leaders view themselves as being in charge, but God is the One who is orchestrating everything they do and say.

DETAIL #1 – In the morning, the religious leaders bound Jesus and sent Him to Pilate, the governor. **27:1-2**

Let us keep in mind that these leaders have been looking for any testimony, including false testimony so they can kill Jesus (26:59). Many false witnesses came forward, but none had anything that would stick until two came up with something about destroying the Temple (26:60-61). Then when Jesus acknowledged that He was the Son of God (26:63-65), they figured they had enough of a case to send Him to Pilate, which is exactly what they did. These are the religious leaders and notice in **verse 1** they are “against Jesus.” They are the choice of the people, not the choice of God (**v. 1**). It is also interesting that when they send Jesus to Pilate—Pilate knows why—he knew these leaders were envious of Jesus (**27:18**). Their motive was not righteousness or justice; their motive was envy.

DETAIL #2 – Judas realizes he has been a traitor against Jesus and kills himself. **27:3-5**

I want you to carefully notice what **verse 3** says—Judas “saw.” Judas was there and the text says he “felt remorse.” The particular Greek verb used here means he had deep regret over what he had done. The word here is *metamelomai*—regret, not *metanoeo*—repent. Remorse or regret is not repentance. Being sorry for sin is not the same as turning from sin. Now according to Matt. 21:32, feeling remorse could be something that could potentially lead one to believe on the Lord, but that is certainly not what happened with Judas. Judas regretted what he did and **verse 4** says he went to the chief priests and elders and gave them the money back and said to them, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”

Look who Judas is saying this to: the false religious leaders of the people. He should have been saying this to Jesus. Notice carefully in **verse 4**, he knew he had betrayed innocent blood. He knew it. But instead of going to Jesus and saying this to the One he actually betrayed, he is telling this to a bunch of religious phonies who couldn't care less about Judas' sin or Christ's innocence.

Verse 5 tells us that Judas threw the pieces of silver down and then hanged himself. Acts 1:18-20 informs us that apparently he hung himself from a tree and the rope or branch broke and he ended up plunging headlong down a mountain and burst open his guts.

There are several things we want to observe here:

- 1) There may be serious consequences to what we make a decision to do, therefore, we had better think very carefully about those consequences before we act (i.e. sell out Jesus).
- 2) Judas had money and he had his sin; but what he did not have was happiness and fulfillment.
- 3) The wages for doing that which is satanic will always be death, not life.
- 4) Remorse and regret are not the same as real repentance.
- 5) The One a sinful person needs to run to is Jesus Christ, not religious leaders.
- 6) Suicide was not the solution to Judas' problem; real repentance was the solution.

DETAIL #3 – The religious leaders react to Judas and fulfill prophecy. **27:6-10**

This is a great text. First of all, I want you to notice the hypocrisy of all of this. These leaders know this is blood money (**27:6**). This is an admission right here of their own guilt. Then they start talking about what is not lawful; namely, use blood money in the temple treasury.

If they truly had been interested in what was lawful according to God, they would have set Jesus free. Now watch this—they are conferring and decide that the best thing to do is to use the money to purchase a potter's field as a burial place for strangers. A potter's field was a field that was dug in so dirt could be collected to make pottery. This kind of field makes a good burial ground because obviously one is able to dig dirt relatively easy.

Now from their perspective they are making all of these decisions. But Matthew makes it very clear by quoting from Jer. 18:1-4 and Zech. 11:12-13 that this was all predicted by God.

Do you see the point? These religious frauds are not in charge; God is. They are not the ones calling the shots; God is the one calling the shots.

Everything about Christ's death is orchestrated by God. There is bizarre stuff here. People are accountable for what they are doing, but God is still sovereign in what they are doing.