

## Episode #939 Matthew 27 Part 1-Judas Regrets

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord’s trial before the Sanhedrin is complete, and they have condemned Him to death. Now, the issue is how that execution is to come about.

III. Judas Regrets. Matthew 27:1-5.

- A. Matthew 27:1. “Morning” means daybreak or dawn. The religious leaders “plot” five times in Matthew: 1. How they might destroy Him in 12:14. 2. How they might entangle Him in His talk in 22:15. 3. How they might put Him to death, here. 4. How to spend Judas’ returned blood money in 27:7. 5. How to hush the soldiers’ report in 28:12. It was not enough for them to condemn Him, or even to execute Him. They wanted to do it in the most public, humiliating way possible. That they would murder Him was already decided. The council here was how to do it.
- B. Verse 2. “Led Him away” is the Greek *apago*, meaning a leading away to present. “Pontius Pilate” is his full name, given four times, the first here. Far more often he is just called “Pilate.” Pontius means “Of the Sea.” Pilate seems to mean “Armed with a Spear,” but some derive its meaning as “Wearing a Felt Cap,” the mark of a freed slave. But this seems an unlikely derivation for a Roman governor! “Governor” is the Greek *hegemon*, meaning the ruler over a hegemony. This was a title for an officer administering a province in the name of the Roman Emperor.
- C. Verse 3. The perfect scenario for Judas, it seems, is that the Lord be locked up and His disciples dispersed, so that he could retire quietly to enjoy the fruits of his embezzlement of the Lord’s funds. When he finds instead that He is condemned to death, his conscience strikes him. “Remorseful” is not *metanoia* for having the aftermind, but *metamelomai*, meaning he regretted or capitulated. He was trying to return the silver. He was suddenly in a horror of this money which he had taken to betray an innocent Man Who had treated him kindly, and whom he had repaid by giving Him to the hands of His enemies. The chief priests and elders were those who had given him this blood money, with whom he had made his deal.
- D. Verse 4. Judas admits He was innocent. Pilate, however, tried to wash his hands of it and claim innocence for His blood, even though it was his authority that crucified Him! They ask, “What to us does it matter?” These chief priests had no compunction against betraying innocent blood, nor did they care that Judas had done so. What wicked men these were! Yet they were the Lord’s known enemies, and Judas had been among His disciples. His betrayal, then, was all the worse. “You look to it.” Judas finds no sympathy from his former co-conspirators. Having gotten what they wanted, the chief priests and elders care little about the man who had helped them achieve it. Bullinger has an interesting note on six witnesses, three in Matthew and three in Luke, who testified to the Lord’s innocence.
  1. Judas (Matthew 27:4).
  2. Pilate (Matthew 27:24).
  3. Pilate’s wife (Matthew 27:19).
  4. Herod (Luke 23:15).
  5. The malefactor (Luke 23:41).

6. The Roman centurion (Luke 23:47).

- E. Verse 5. “Temple” does not mean the temple grounds, the *hieron*, but the holy place, the *naos*. Judas had no access to the holy place, but threw the silver in there from outside, over the barrier he could not pass. He cast them where only the priests could go, so that they would HAVE to deal with them. “Departed” means he returned, that is, to “his own place bought” with the funds he embezzled from the Lord’s purse, as the apostles put it in Acts 1:25. The word for “hanged himself” occurs only here. Acts 1:18 tells us that, since no one knew about this piece of property he had purchased with his embezzled funds, he hung there so long that he swelled up and burst apart and all his bowels gushed out. His end was sad, but in no way indicates actual submission to God. Submission would have involved coming to God, confessing his sin, and letting God deal with it. Instead, he tried to deal with it himself, and tried to pay for it by taking his life with his own hand. This was no true repayment, however, and he will still have to stand before God and answer for his life of crimes. Then, it will be better for him if he had never been born, Mark 14:21.

IV. The Chief Priests and the Blood Money. Matthew 27:6-10.

- A. Verse 6. They were scrupulous against putting blood money into the treasury, but not about paying blood money in the first place! This is always the way of shallow, outward religion, so different than true obedience from a believing heart. “Put them” is literally “cast them into.” The religious leaders would do this, making a loud tinkling sound with each coin, in order to show off how much they were giving. The “treasury” is the *korban*. In Mark 7:11, the Lord accused the religious leaders of teaching that if a man says all his money is *korban*, then he does not have to give to support his poor mother or father.
- B. Verse 7. This was a field that originally had belonged to one who made pots. There is no reason at all I can see for identifying this with the Valley of Gehenna, as some have done. As far as we can tell, that was already a refuse dump. “Strangers” means foreigners. This would make it an unclean place, since foreigners were considered by nature unclean. Matthew uses this word “foreigner” five times, and no other gospel uses it at all. This makes sense, for Matthew who presents Christ to Jews, Israelites, would be presenting him to people who understood what a “foreigner” was in Israel. The rest of the gospels were written to foreigners, and so does not call them so.
- C. Verse 8. The Field of Blood or Bloody Field, two words, *agros haimatos*. In Acts 1:19, Judas purchased a plot of land with the money he had embezzled from the Lord, which became known as “Bloody Estate,” *chorion haimatos*. Since the *New King James* improperly translates this too as “The Field of Blood,” some have mixed up the two. But they were two different purchases, with two different sources of money, and two different kinds of ground. “This day” means the day when Matthew was written, more than thirty years later. This story was so famous that the field never lived down this reputation.

VII. Conclusion: Even the seared conscience of Judas couldn’t stand up to the Lord being murdered based on his betrayal. Contrast this with the wicked leaders, who didn’t care if they killed an innocent man. The religious leaders piously would not put the blood money in the treasury, so they bought a field with it to bury foreigners. May God make our consciences tender so we can never act like these wicked, self-centered, calloused men!