

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Matthew: Jesus As Israel's Messiah And His Kingdom

Part XXXIII: Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen In The Scriptural Demise Of Judas Iscariot (Matthew 27:2-10)

I. Introduction

- A. Matthew's Gospel was written to explain to Jewish readers how Jesus was their Messiah even if He did not establish His Messianic Kingdom in His first advent, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1337.
- B. A part of that explanation is Matthew's record of the demise of Judas Iscariot who betrayed Him, and we view that Matthew 27:2-10 passage for insight and edification as to Jesus' identify as Israel's Messiah (as follows):

II. Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen In The Scriptural Demise Of Judas Iscariot, Matthew 27:2-10.

- A. The events of Judas' demise in Matthew 27:3-10 occurred as Jesus was bound and led away captive to Pontius Pilate for trial, a time when Jesus was **humanly unable** to affect the Matthew 27:3-10 events, Matthew 27:2.
- B. Yet, those Matthew 27:3-10 events evidenced God's involvement in them to show Jesus as the true Messiah:
 - 1. When Judas who had betrayed Jesus saw He had been condemned to die, likely not anticipating that bad an outcome for his betrayal activity, Judas "changed his mind" (ESV) and brought back the thirty pieces of silver he had received of the religious leaders for betraying Jesus to them, Matthew 27:3.
 - 2. Judas told the religious leaders he had sinned in betraying innocent blood, Matt. 27:4a. This was a great admission, for though he as an unbeliever, a "son of perdition" (John 17:12), a term used elsewhere only of the antichrist in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, Judas testified that nothing in Jesus was deserving of death!
 - 3. The religious leaders ignored Judas' confession, implying that it was Judas' problem (Matt. 27:4b), a great violation of the Law on the part of these leaders, for anyone who falsely testified to convict an innocent man was himself to receive the punishment he intended to see administered on his victim, Deut. 19:18-19.
 - 4. Judas was overcome with remorse, so he threw the pieces of silver down in the temple and went out and hanged himself, Matthew 27:5. What actually happened is that Judas, attempting to hang himself, failed in that effort as his body fell headlong either in or away from the rope to its awful death, Acts 1:18.
 - 5. Though having blatantly violated the Law relative to handling Judas' confession, Israel's religious rulers decided to follow their restrictions relative to the money flung into the temple and not put it into the temple treasury, but rather to use it to buy the potter's field for burying strangers, Matt. 27:6-7. Since Judas' money was for the "price of blood," they brazenly called it the "field of blood," Matthew 27:8.
 - 6. All of this activity fulfilled Zechariah 11:12-13 regarding the **Messiah** as Matthew 27:9-10 reveals:
 - a. [Matthew reports these events fulfilled prophecy by Jeremiah when it actually fulfills Zechariah 11:12-13 (Ibid., ftn. to Matt. 27:9). Since in Christ's day "the books of the prophets were headed by Jeremiah, not Isaiah as now, and the quotation is identified by the name of the first book in the group, rather than by the name of the specific book within the group," Matthew naturally attributed the prophecy to Jeremiah.]
 - b. That prophecy reveals that since Israel had rejected her Messiah from being her shepherd, He would ask her only for the wages of a slave, or thirty pieces of silver, Exodus 21:32; Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to Zech. 11:12.
 - c. When the wages were paid, God told the Messiah to cast it to the potter, mocking the meager price paid for the Messiah, so the Messiah took it and cast it to the potter in the temple of the Lord, Zech. 11:13.
 - d. Thus, though Jesus was then bound and headed off to Pontius Pilate for trial, **God** (1) arranged for Israel's religious leaders to decide to give a slave's ransom for Judas to betray Jesus, then (2) for Judas to feel such remorse that he wanted to be rid of the money he had first lusted to obtain, (3) so much so that he flung it down in the temple and committed suicide, and then, (4) to cause the religious leaders who had gravely violated the law on Judas' confession of a capital crime to regard their regulation about not putting the money into the temple treasury so as to (5) buy the potter's field for burying strangers and (6) call it the "field of blood" for the "blood money" with which they bought it, (7) all with a settled conscience! The hand of God was all over this event via a prophecy made 520-518 B. C. by Zechariah, Ibid., p. 1310!

Lesson: *Though Jesus was then humanly incapable of affecting such events, a five-hundred-year-old prophecy about the money used to betray Him was precisely fulfilled amid the inconsistent behavior of Israel's evil religious leaders and Jesus' betrayer himself. God was sovereignly at work to signal the credibility of Jesus as the Messiah.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ as Messiah and God for salvation, John 20:31. (2) May we appreciate the sovereign control of God over even evil, powerful human foes that we might relax even when opposed by them.*