

**Matthew 27-28, The Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ**  
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**Overview**

1. People today are seeking for answers to life's problems. Two of the places they look are
  - a) organized religion (large groups)
  - b) civil government ("There ought to be a law").
2. One of the followers of Jesus Christ had experience with both of these: Matthew, the writer of the first of the four Lives of Christ that we have in the Bible.
  - a) He was a Levite, the family in Israel responsible for the temple worship; the group that "ran Israel's religion."
  - b) He was a Roman tax collector, and so very interested in what civil government could do.
3. Part of his book describes the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection. These events tell us a great deal about the failings of organized religion and civil government, and show us that our only hope is a personal relation with the Lord Jesus.

**A. 27:1-26, Introducing the Adversaries**

They reveal their character by their interactions with one another and with other people

1. 1-2, The Three Characters  
Matthew will play these off against one another so that we can understand exactly what each one has to offer.
  - a) "All the chief priests and elders of the people": religious leaders.
  - b) "Jesus"
  - c) "Pontius Pilate the Governor": representative of the civil government.
  - d) *Fulfills Isa 53:1-3*
2. 3-10, Organized Religion and a Wicked Man  
Judas, smitten by conscience, comes back to the spiritual authorities. How will they minister to him?
  - a) 3-5, They will not cure his guilt.  
They could have pointed him to Psalm 51 to teach him repentance, and Psalm 32 to learn God's free forgiveness, but they do not. If organized religion cannot lead a guilty person to peace with God, what good is it?
  - b) 6-10, They are blind to their own hypocrisy.  
Here they are quibbling over the "lawfulness" of receiving the

money that only the day before they had spent to buy Jesus' death!

3. 11-19, Civil Government and Jesus  
Pilate realizes Jesus' innocence.
  - a) 11-14, Jesus does not defend himself. No fear of Pilate's power over him. *Pilate's amazement: Isa 52:14-15*
  - b) 15-18, He detects the priests' envy.
  - c) 19, The Romans believed that the gods spoke through dreams, and he receives such a warning through his wife.
4. 20, Organized Religion and the Multitudes. The problem is not with faith in God, but with religion as a tool to manipulate people who are not allowed to think for themselves. Marx was right: "religion is the opiate of the masses." But do not confuse this organized political structure with a personal, individual relation with Jesus Christ.
5. 21-25, Organized Religion and Civil Government  
Note four statements that Pilate makes to the priests and elders, and their responses.
  - a) 15-17, 21. WHICH do you want: Barabbas (a thief and a murderer), or Jesus (who claims to be Christ, "Messiah")?
    - 1) They choose Barabbas.
    - 2) Shows their love of evil and hatred of good.
  - b) 22, WHAT shall I do with Jesus?
    - 1) Crucify him.
    - 2) Shows their cruelty.
  - c) 23, WHY? Asks for an indictment appropriate to the crime.
    - 1) They give none, just agitate for the Lord's death.
    - 2) Shows their injustice.
  - d) 24-25, Declares Jesus "just" and disowns responsibility for him.
    - 1) They take bloodguiltiness on themselves and on their descendants.
    - 2) Shows that there is no fear of God before their eyes.
    - 3) Also shows that Pilate is too cowardly to defend the righteous. If government cannot defend the innocent, what good is it?
6. 26, Civil Government and Jesus: "Scourged" a man judged innocent. *Isa. 53:5 "stripes"*
7. **Application:** Beware organized religion and civil government. Religion cannot cure the sin-sick soul; government cannot protect the weak but innocent. Neither one seeks the glory of God, and both regularly oppress God's people. Do not look to either one to

solve the world's problems. The only answer is a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus.

**B. 27-56, Introducing the Lord Jesus**

He is identified through two rounds of mocking, suffering, and affirmation, first as King of the Jews, then as Son of God.

1. 27-38, King of the Jews

- a) 27-32, Mocked by the soldiers as the King of the Jews.
- b) 33-35, Crucified: Physical Suffering. The last thing you expect a king to put up with.  
The Lord refuses the "vinegar ... mingled with gall," a painkiller. He will do nothing to lessen his own suffering.
- c) 36-38, Recognized as King of Jews. John (19:22) shows that Pilate was serious about this title.

2. 39-56, Son of God

- a) 39-44, Mocked as the Son of God  
Three groups mock him:
  - 1) 39-40, passers-by. The place of execution was just outside one of the city gates.
  - 2) 41-43, the religious leaders.
  - 3) 44, the thieves dying with him.
- b) 45-53, Forsaken: Spiritual Suffering
  - 1) 45-49, the separation from God. Fulfills Isa 53:6, 8b, dying for our sin, carrying our guilt on himself, and now shut off from God, as we would have to be without him.
  - 2) 50-53, the immediate outcome:
    - a> 51, "The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." The way into God's presence was opened.
    - b> 52, "the graves were opened." Death was defeated, and the saints could rise.
- c) 54-56, Recognized as Son of God
  - 1) 54, The Executioners
    - a> Hardened Roman soldiers
    - b> "They feared greatly"
    - c> Declared him to be the Son of God.
  - 2) 55-56, The Women
    - a> They believed all along.
    - b> Now they patiently watch and wait. No mention of "fear." Matthew places the faithfulness of these simple peasant women in contrast with the fear of the grizzled warriors.

### C. 57-66, Preparations

1. 57-61, His Followers included both rich and poor.
  - a) 57-60, a rich follower. *Together with the thieves, fulfills Isa 53:9.*
  - b) 61, the women, still watching faithfully.
2. 62-66, His Adversaries: in spite of their apparent victory, paranoid. Locking up a dead corpse!

### D. 28:1-10, The Resurrection

1. 2-4, The Angel and the Keepers
  - a) The plotting of the chief priests has been ineffective.
  - b) The seal of the Roman empire means nothing.
  - c) The strong Roman soldiers are powerless before God's angel.
2. 1, 5-8, The Angel and the Women
  - a) "He is risen." *Fulfills Isa 53:10-11.*
  - b) Note that the angel refers to "his disciples."
    - 1) What an honor, to be the disciple, the student, of such a one.
    - 2) This is NOT organized religion. This is the personal relation of a student to a teacher. It is our commitment to a Person, not to an Organization.
    - 3) But that is not all ...
3. The Women and the Lord
  - a) The Lord honors use even further: "my brethren." God is his Father, and theirs, and he is not ashamed to call them "brethren."
  - b) Emphasizes even further the personal, individual relation into which he calls us.

### E. 11-20, Impact

We saw both his friends and his adversaries before the resurrection. Now we consider them after.

1. 11-15, Impact on his Adversaries. They have no recourse but to resort to deception and bribery.
2. 16-20, Impact on his Followers
  - a) *The Lord's authority is in fulfillment of Isa. 52:13; 53:12.*
  - b) He dispatches his followers, now his brethren, in this same authority.

### F. Summary

1. Some today think that hope for the world lies in great religious movements. But organized religion hated the only perfect man who ever lived. Do not trust in any religious system.

2. Some search for salvation through social engineering and government programs. But civil government is powerless to stem the tide of moral decay. It gave in to the corrupt religious system. Do not trust in government.
3. After temple and palace had done their best to destroy him, Jesus Christ rose from the dead. He is the only one who can give us forgiveness of sin and power to live a life that pleases God.
  - a) Come to him as your Teacher, and you his Disciple.
  - b) Receive him as your Sacrifice for sin, the one who died and rose again to destroy his people's sin.
  - c) Live with him as your Brother.