

Episode #940 Matthew 27 Part 2-Price of the Innocent

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 conscience of Judas couldn't stand up to the fact that the Lord Whom he betrayed was going to be condemned to death. Yet the chief priests and elders would not take the money back, so he threw the money over the barrier into the holy place where only the priests could deal with it and went and hanged himself. The chief priests piously wouldn't put this blood money into the temple treasury, but they bought a potter's field to bury foreigners in with the money.

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

A. Verse 9. “Was fulfilled” means filled full, completed, or proven true once again. No quotation remotely like this is found in the book of Jeremiah. Some have referred this to Zechariah 11:12-13, which mentions thirty pieces of silver and a potter. Yet other than these two similarities, Zechariah's quote does not say the same thing at all. Ultimately, we have no Old Testament reference that says just what this does, and so we must conclude that, while Jeremiah said something like this, he never wrote it. That is fine, for there were speaking prophets, there were writing prophets, and there were prophets who did both. This is a case where a prophet who did write, nevertheless did not write down this, and yet it was spoken by the inspiration of the Lord, and so had to come true. “Value...Him that was priced...Israel priced” are all forms of the same Greek word *time*, to fix a price or value upon. Remember the Greeks loved to use words over and over in a sentence in slightly different forms. This emphasizes the price or valuation. The corrupt religious leaders thought the life of the Lord of glory was worth thirty pieces of silver. God, however, thought it was worth the redemption of all mankind! As usual “children” of Israel is the Greek *huios*, sons of Israel, not children.

B. Verse 10. Here “they” gave the money for the potter's field, whereas Zechariah cast his thirty pieces of silver to the potter in the temple himself. These are two very different things. Is it not interesting that the Lord appointed it so? Foreigners would rest there, in the field, purchased by the Lord's blood. “Directed” or arranged for me.

IV. Jesus Before Pilate. Matthew 27:11-14.

A. Verse 11. No two gospels give the same details of the trial before Pilate. This trial took place after dawn. Yet He appeared before Pilate more than once. It was Pilate's job to keep the peace for Rome, and to keep his eyes on anyone who claimed to be a king. It was not, of course, illegal to be a king, as long as you did not threaten Roman rule. The Lord was careful never to speak against Rome. Thus in spite of His answer, Pilate could honestly say in 27:24 that he found Him just. “It is as you say” is the same answer as He gave to Caiaphas. This was the strongest possible affirmation.

B. Verse 12. Matthew does not give us the type of things they accused Him of, but they could not have been things discovered at His “trial,” for Rome little cared about a man claiming to be God. They must have been some of the inadmissible false accusations made and discredited at His trial, or other accusations of their own invention. These men well knew that they were speaking nothing but lies, and yet they were bold and unabashed in doing so. Again notice that it was “the chief priests and elders,” this religious mafia of Jerusalem that planned the betrayal and murder of

the Lord. The common people had nothing to do with it. Their accusations now were just as much ridiculous lies as when he was accused before Caiaphas. Thus, He answers them only by silent contempt. Indeed, Pilate needed no answer, for he knew Jesus was innocent.

- C. Verse 13. Of course, He heard, but no answer was necessary. Even today many make contemptible accusations against the Lord, and He answers them nothing. When accused by Him, however, they will have nothing to say, knowing that His accusations are true. Pilate acts impressed by the sheer number of false charges. Yet are many lies any more impressive than one? He knew that the Lord was innocent of these charges, so why did the number of them matter? Yet some are led astray by such things even today, quoting the phrase, “Where there’s smoke, there’s fire,” and supposing that the fact that one is accused must mean that he did at least something, even if many of the charges are untrue. The religious leaders, like scoundrels, slanderers, and liars from all ages, count on this.
- D. Verse 14. He answered not one word or saying, *rhema*. The Lord did not pick the worst lies out and answer them. He remained silent in the face of every false accusation. The reality is that He was innocent, yet He was taking on Himself the sin of us all. That means He was taking on Himself by imputation guilt far greater than anything His false accusers could even imagine! Pilate is called a “governor” again here, the Greek *hegemon*, the ruler of a hegemony or province. The governor never imagined a human being remaining silent in such circumstances. We are usually quick to justify ourselves when accused, whether false or true. No one likes to be accused of things he did not do. We like to answer, but the Lord would not. The fact that all these accusations were lies was well known to both the Lord and the governor.

V. Conclusion: The words spoken by God’s prophets will always be fulfilled, even if they were never written down. The Lord was accused of many things before the governor, and he seemed impressed by the number of false accusations against Him. Are we easily impressed by the number of lying arguments against our Lord made by His enemies today? Or are we assured of His truth and unimpressed by the plethora of the lies of the wicked? Let us never confuse number with truth, and realize that the Lord is ever and always right!