

Matthew Chapter 27 Continued

Verses 32-35: “A man of Cyrene, Simon by name:” Cyrene was a Roman province in North Africa where many Jews lived. They also had a synagogue in Jerusalem (Acts 6:9). His sons, Alexander and Rufus, later became well known Christians (Mark 15:21).

“Compelled” (Greek *aggareuo*, a technical term for “requisitioned”), “to bear his cross.” The cross was generally carried by the prisoner, which (John 19:17), indicates was at first the case with Christ. Evidently, the weight was more than He could bear, due to His severe scourging. The transverse piece was usually carried separately and attached by rope to the vertical pole at the place of execution.

“Golgotha ... a place of a skull:” The name is a transliteration of the Aramaic word for skull and is equivalent to the Latin (*calvaria*), probably due to the physical appearance of the hill. “They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall,” fulfillment of (Psalm 69:21).

This was customarily given to condemned prisoners to serve as a kind of anesthetic or anodyne. It was literally a drugged “wine” (Greek *onion*). The statement that “he would not drink” indicates that Jesus refused any mitigation of His sufferings on our behalf.

Matthew 27:32 "And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross."

Cyrene was associated with Africa, so this means that Simon was a black man. This was not a voluntary act of Simon, but rather this job was thrust upon him. There was no evidence that he was forced. I believe when they told him to do this, that he willingly did it.

Evidently the scourging had so weakened Jesus that He was unable to carry the cross. This is another touching picture of His humanity, beset with all human weaknesses except sin (Hebrews 4:15).

Matthew 27:33 "And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,"

“A place of a skull”: “Golgotha” may have been a skull-shaped hill, or it may have been so named because as a place of crucifixion, its accumulated skulls. None of the gospels mention a hill.

Matthew 27:34 "They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted [thereof], he would not drink."

“Wine ... mingled with gall”: “Gall” simply refers to something bitter (Mark 15:23), identifies it as myrrh, a narcotic. The Jews had a custom, based on (Prov. 31:6), of administering a pain-deadening medication mixed with wine to victims of crucifixion, in order to deaden the pain.

Tasting what it was, Christ, though thirsty, “was unwilling to drink,” lest it dull His senses before He completed His work.

The lessening of physical pain would probably not have diminished the efficacy of His atoning work. But He needed His full mental faculties for the hours yet to come. It was necessary for Him to be awake and fully conscious, for example, to minister to the dying thief (Luke 23:43).

Here, Matthew skipped all the details of getting to the hill of Golgotha where Jesus was to be crucified. This hill was chosen, because it was against Jewish law to kill someone inside the gate.

This spot was on a busy road out of town, so the passerby could see the agony. And perhaps it would be a deterrent to future crime. You can actually see the form of a skull on the side of this mountain.

Matthew 27:35 "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots."

“Parted His garments”: The garments of the victim were the customary spoils of the executioners. (John 19:23-24), gives a fuller account. This action was foretold (in Psalm 22:18).

This robe had no seam, so each one wanted it. There was no way to divide it, so they cast lots to see who would get it.

Crucifixion was a cruel form of punishment. The victims were nailed, hands and feet, and stood up in view of everybody to die. This process usually took several days with torturing pain to the victim.

Verses 36-44: Pilate placed a placard over Jesus’ head with the accusation: “This is Jesus the King of the Jews.” Little did he realize how true this intended mockery of Jesus really was.

Indeed, as Matthew shows, Jesus was the King of the Jews, whom they had rejected. “The thieves (Greek listers) were robbers, perhaps cohorts of Barabbas. The statement “cast the same in his teeth” means they repeated similar taunts to Him.

Matthew 27:36 "And sitting down they watched him there;"

That is, the soldiers, after they had crucified Jesus, and parted his garments, sat down on the ground at the foot of the cross, and there watched him, lest his disciples should take him down. Though there was no need to fear that, since they were few, and weak, and wanted courage, and were in the utmost dread and consternation themselves.

Matthew 27:37 "And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

“His accusation”: For a reconciliation of the differences between the various accounts of this inscription (Luke 23:38; Mark 15:26). The fact that the placard was placed “above His head” suggests that this cross was in the familiar shape with an upright protruding above the transom, and not the T-shaped cross that was also sometimes used.

This was an accusation as far as they were concerned, but was 100% true. Jesus is not just King of the Jews; He is King of everyone.

Matthew 27:38 "Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left."

“Two thieves”: Or “robbers”. This word denotes a rebel and brigand who plunders as he steals. Mere thieves were not usually crucified. These were probably cohorts of Barabbas.

We will see that these two thieves, the one on the left and the one on the right, were very different. The difference lies not in the sin they committed, but the fact that the one on the right repented and the one on the left did not.

We read (in Luke 23:43), That Jesus promised the one on the right that He would be with Him in Paradise.

Matthew 27:39 "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,"

“And they that passed by”: In the road to or from Jerusalem. For it seems, the crosses were placed by the wayside. Or they who passed by the cross, the populace that came from Jerusalem, on purpose to see the sight, reviled him, or "blasphemed him":

“Wagging their heads”: In token of derision and insult (see Job 16:4; Psalm 109:25).

They spoke all manner of evil of him they could think of, to which he answered not a word; and which may teach us patience under the reviling's of men: this was foretold of him (Psalm 89:51).

Matthew 27:40 "And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest [it] in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross."

“Destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days” (see 26:61). They had missed His point. “He was speaking of the temple of His body” (John 2:21. He would not “come down from the cross,” but it was not because He was powerless to do so (John 10:18). The proof that He was the Son of God came “in three days” when He returned with “the temple” (i.e., His body), rebuilt.

Again, the temple that Jesus was speaking of was His body. These people were so blinded that they would not have believed, even if He suddenly were to get down from the cross.

Matthew 27:41-42 "Likewise also the chief priests mocking [him], with the scribes and elders, said," "He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him."

“Likewise also the chief priests”: Who as they attended at his arrest and in their own council condemned him to death unanimously, and were very busy at his arraignment, examination, and trial before Pilate. And persuaded the people to be urgent for his crucifixion.

They follow him to the cross to exult over him, and insult him, and to see that the execution was strictly performed. And forgetting their character, office, and education; and laying aside all humanity, decent, and good manners. Instead of rebuking and restraining the populace from using him in an ill and unkind manner, they themselves stood mocking him. With the Scribes and elders; who composed the whole Sanhedrim of the nation.

“He saved others”: It does not seem probable that they meant to admit that he had actually saved others, but only that he "pretended" to save them from death by miracles, or that he claimed to be the Messiah, and thus affirmed that he "could" save them. This is therefore, cutting irony.

“If he be the King of Israel”: It may seem strange to some that Jesus did not vindicate by a miracle his claims to be the Messiah, and come down from the cross. But the time had come for him to make an atonement. He had given full and sufficient proof that he was the Christ.

Those who had rejected him, and who mocked and taunted him, would have been little likely to admit his claims if he had come down from the cross, since they had set at naught all his other miracles. They said this for the purpose of insult; and Jesus chose rather to suffer, though his character was assailed, than to work a new miracle for their gratification.

He had foretold his death, and the time had come; and now, amid revilings, and gibes, and curses, and the severe sarcasms of an angry and apparently triumphant priesthood, he chose to die for the sins of the world.

To this they added "insult" to God, profanely calling upon him to interpose by miracle and save him, if he was his friend. And all this when their prophets had foretold this very scene, and when they were fulfilling the predictions of their own Scriptures (see Isaiah chapter 53:1-12; Daniel 9:24-27). So wonderful is the way by which God causes His word to be fulfilled.

Matthew 27:43 "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God."

“He trusted in God”: That is, he pretended to claim an interest in him, to be high in his favor and esteem, and to have great faith and confidence in him. Let him deliver him now; directly, from the cross, and the death of it:

“If he will have him”: or if he is well pleased with him as his own Son, or delights in him as such, and will show him any favor and good will (see Psalm 22:8). Where are these very words, and which are predicted should be said by these men to Christ; and are a wonderful confirmation of the truth of that Psalm and prophecy belonging to him.

“For he said, I am the Son of God”: not only in his ministry, but he had said so in their grand council, before them all.

Matthew 27:44 "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth."

“The thieves also”: The robbers, or highwaymen. Luke says (in 23:39), that one of them did it, and that the other reproved him and was penitent. The account in Luke may, however, easily be reconciled with that in Matthew by supposing that "at first both" of them reviled the Savior, and that it is of this fact that Matthew speaks.

Afterward one of them relented and became penitent perhaps from witnessing the patient sufferings of Christ. It is of this one particularly that Luke speaks.

The evangelists, when for the sake of brevity avoid particularizing, often attribute to many what is said or done by single persons, meaning no more than that it was done by some one or more of them, without specifying the one (compare Mark 7:17 with Matthew 15:15; Mark 5:31 with Luke 8:45; Luke 9:13 with John 6:8-9).

“Cast the same in his teeth”: This is a most unhappy translation. It means in the original simply, they upbraided him or reproached him in the same manner.

What none of these people realized was that Jesus was completely in control of the situation, even though He was hanging on the cross. No one took His life from Him, He gave it willingly. Just as He did not have to prove anything to Satan, when Satan tempted Him for forty days and nights, He did not have to prove anything to these people either.

They already had their chance to believe, and they rejected it. They (these so called religious people), will have their lot with the devil and his angels on judgment day. Jesus never will show us something physical so that we will believe. We must believe when we cannot see, from our heart, not fact, but faith is required.

Verses 45-50: “From the sixth hour ... unto the ninth hour”, means from noon until 3 p.m. Mark (15:25), indicates Jesus had been placed on the cross at the third hour (9 a.m.). The “darkness” was evidently supernatural, since an eclipse of the sun at full noon is impossible.

God’s wrath was poured upon His Son during this time of darkness. At the ninth hour, (3 p.m.), Jesus cried: “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Here we have the high cost to Christ of His atonement for our sins, who was accursed of God as our sin-bearer (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13), and suffered the agony of spiritual death for us.

“He ... cried ... with a loud voice,” as a shout of triumph, and “yielded up” His Spirit. In other words, having borne the wrath of God’s judgment against sin, He knew He had triumphed over Satan and the curse of sin.

Matthew 27:45 "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour."

“From the sixth hour ... unto the ninth hour”: From noon until 3:00 p.m. The crucifixion began at 9:00 a.m.

Jesus hung on the cross for six hours, which are symbolic of the six days we must work. It also has to do with the six 1,000 year days that will be worked and then a 1,000 year day (millennium), of rest of the believers. God set the earth on six days work, and one day rest.

Jesus was fulfilling every detail here. In six hours, His work was completed. This darkness from twelve to three is three hours that were symbolic for the three days in the earth. The darkness symbolized that the Light (Jesus), had gone out for a while.

Matthew 27:46 "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

“Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani”: “Eli” is Hebrew, the rest Aramaic (Mark 15:34 gives the entire wail in Aramaic). This cry is a fulfillment of (Psalm 22:1), one of many striking parallels between that Psalm and the specific events of the crucifixion. Christ at that moment was experiencing the abandonment and despair that resulted from the outpouring of divine wrath on Him as sin-bearer.

You see, at one point of this crucifixion when Jesus took on the sin of the whole world, God turned His head. God cannot look upon sin that is not covered by the blood. He is pure. God will burn it up. The sacrifice was not completed yet.

Matthew 27:47 "Some of them that stood there, when they heard [that], said, This [man] calleth for Elijah."

“Some of them that stood there,”: Near the cross, looking on, and mocking at him, when they heard that; the words, "Eli, Eli", spoken by Christ,

They said, this man calleth for Elijah. These could not be the Roman soldiers that said so, who had no notion of Elijah. Rather the Hellenistic Jews, who not so well understanding the Hebrew language, hearing the above words, and having some notion of the prophet Elijah, fancied he was calling for him.

Though it seems most likely to be the Jews, who either through the nearness of the sound of the words, and mistake of them, and not near enough to hear and distinguish them, really thought he called for that prophet. Or rather willfully mistook him, with an intent to banter and ridicule him.

The strange thing was that they had no idea who Jesus really was. Just like most people of our day do not know. Jesus is Elijah's God. How could they be so blind after all the miracles?

Matthew 27:48 "And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled [it] with vinegar, and put [it] on a reed, and gave him to drink."

"And straightway one of them ran and took a sponge": Which was not far from the cross, where a vessel full of vinegar was set (John 19:29).

"And filled it with vinegar": dipping it into it, it sucked it up. Some of these sponges had leathern handles to them.

"And put it on a reed": A stalk of hyssop.

"And gave him to drink"; not to revive his spirits, or hasten his death, as some have thought, but in contempt of him, and to mock him, he having signified that he was thirsty.

Matthew 27:49 "The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."

"The rest said, let be": The others, to whom he belonged, that fetched the sponge, said to him, let him alone, keep at a distance from him, give him nothing to drink.

"Let us see whether Elijah will come to save him": Whom the Jews looked upon to be the forerunner of the Messiah, and therefore suggest, that should he come to save him, they would believe he was the Messiah. And they had a mighty notion of Elijah appearing to persons frequently, and talking and conversing with them

Matthew 27:50 "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost."

"Yielded up the ghost": A voluntary act.

Luke 23:46 "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

Jesus dismissed His spirit from His body and told it to go to the Father. Even this was in His control and not someone else's. The teaching going around that Jesus was taken from the cross by two demons and suffered in hell for us is **blasphemy**. He went to hades to take the keys away from the devil, and to preach to those in hades, and bring them out with him (not to suffer).

Jesus had everything under control all the time. The cross was no defeat, but the greatest victory mankind has ever known. Jesus is no longer on the cross. He is not the suffering Christ. He is the victorious Christ.

Verses 51-53: The events immediately following Jesus' death are remarkable indeed. "The veil of the temple" refers to the curtain separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (Exodus 26:31). This symbolizes the permanent opening of God's presence to man and man's direct access to God through the atoning death of Christ.

Matthew 27:51 "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;"

"Veil of the temple": I.e., the curtain that blocked the entrance to the Most Holy Place (Exodus 26:33; Heb. 9:3). The tearing of the veil signified that the way into God's presence was now

open to all through a new and living way (Heb. 10-19-22). The fact that it tore “from top to bottom” showed that no man had split the veil, God did it.

Matthew 27:52 "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,"

“Bodies of the saints ... arose”: Matthew alone mentions this miracle. Nothing more is said about these people, which would be unlikely if they remained on earth for long. Evidently, these people were given glorified bodies; they appeared “to many” (verse 53), enough to establish the reality of the miracle; and then they no doubt ascended to glory, a kind of foretaste of (1 Thess. 4:16).

Matthew 27:53 "And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

“And came out of the graves after his resurrection”: The resurrection of Christ; for he rose as the first fruits, as the first begotten of the dead, and the firstborn from the dead. For he was the first that was raised to an immortal life; for though others were raised before him, by himself, and in the times of the prophets, yet to a mortal life.

The narrative of Matthew does not determine whether they came to life before Jesus rose, and remained in the tombs, or came to life after he died. The latter is probably the correct opinion. There is nothing said of the reason why they were raised. It is not improbable to suppose that it was, amid the other wonders attending the death of Jesus, to convince the Jews that he was the Messiah.

What became of them after they had entered into the city whether they again died or ascended to heaven, is not revealed, and conjecture is vain.

“And went into the holy city; the city of Jerusalem”: Which though now a very wicked city, was so called, because of the temple, and the worship of God, and his residence in it. The burying places of the Jews were without the city and therefore these risen saints, are said to go into it.

Here is victory to the utmost. What all the prophets and holy men before Him had not been able to do, Jesus did. Jesus had opened the way to the Holy of Holies in heaven to His followers. God had torn down the curtain of partition that had kept the people from getting close to God. All believers have been made perfect by the blood of the Lamb (His precious Son).

These graves opened when Jesus came out of the earth and brought captivity captive with Him. The Sunday that Jesus arose is the feast of the firstfruits with the Jews. This is the first of the harvest. Truly these coming from the graves were the firstfruits of the rapture. These resurrected from the dead were seen of many in Jerusalem, as Jesus was seen by over 500.

Verses 54-56: "Truly this was the Son of God:" Whether this was an affirmation of genuine faith (based on all they had witnessed), or merely a pagan appreciation of the awesomeness of the circumstances is not clear. Certainly, the incident reveals how Jesus' life and character, even in the face of death, rose above the greatest qualities of pagan Rome.

The witnesses also included several key women: "Mary Magdalene (Magdala), in Galilee. She is the woman out of whom Jesus cast seven devils in that region (Mark 16:9).

"Mary the mother of James and Joses" was the wife of Cleophas (John 19:25), the "other Mary" (of verse 61); the "mother of Zebedee's children" was Salome (Mark 15:40), and apparently, a sister of the Virgin Mary.

Matthew 27:54 "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."

"The centurion ... they ... with him": These were probably men under his charge. (Mark 15:39), says the centurion was the one who uttered the words of confession, but he evidently spoke for his men as well. Their fear speaks of an awareness of their sin, and the word "truly" suggests a certainty and conviction that bespeaks genuine faith.

These men represent an answer to Jesus' prayer (in Luke 23:34). Their response contrasts sharply with the mocking taunts of (verses 39-44).

If anything would make you believe, this would. They had probably, been involved in many crucifixions before and never saw signs like earthquakes and darkness in middle of the day before. It was time to believe.

Matthew 27:55 "And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:"

"And many women were there": At the cross of Christ, at some little distance from it. But where was Peter, who had declared he would never be offended, though all men were. And would die with Christ, rather than deny him? And where were the rest of the disciples, who said the same things?

None were present excepting John, as can be learnt from the evangelists. But many women, those of the weaker sex, were there. Which was a rebuke of the former vanity and confidence of the disciples, and of their present contemptible fearfulness and cowardice.

The women "beholding afar off"; Christ upon the cross, in all his agonies, the chief priests and people mocking him. The darkness upon the earth, the quaking of it, and the rending of the rocks: they were witnesses of all this. Being at some little distance, by reason of the crowd of people and soldiers about the cross.

And they beheld with an eye of faith, their bleeding, dying Lord, as crucified for them, and as bearing and taking away their sins. A sight which at once stirred up their affection and love to Christ, their concern for him, and sorrow for sin; and yet joy and peace, in believing in him.

They had followed Jesus from Galilee: where they had seen his miracles, heard his doctrines, and had been saved and converted by him. And therefore, followed him wherever he went, though an hundred miles or more, and through many difficulties and discouragements. They attended him in his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and now at his cross. Nor did they leave him when dead, and in his grave.

“Ministering unto him”: Not now, for he stood in no need of their assistance, nor could they give him any. But in respect to what they had done heretofore, in their journey with him from Galilee to Jerusalem; when they ministered to him of their worldly substance, as a token of their affection for him. Which expresses the low estate and mean condition he was in, and is an instruction to his followers, how to behave toward faithful preachers of his Gospel (Luke 8:3).

Matthew 27:56 "Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children."

Mary the mother of Jesus was also present at the cross.

“Mary Magdalene”: Mary of Magdala. She had a special cause of attachment to the Savior, having been relieved by him of a most dreadful calamity and restored to her right mind, after being possessed by seven devils.

Mary the mother of James and Joses: the same with the wife of Cleophas, and sister to Mary, the mother of Jesus. Instead of Joses, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read Joseph. "Jose", in Hebrew, is the same with "Joseph", the last letter being cut off. The Arabic version reads Mary, the mother of James, and the mother of Joses (John 19:25).

And the mother of Zebedee's children. That is, of James and John (Matthew 10:2). Her name was Salome (Mark 15:40).

These women could not bear to watch His sufferings, but neither could they bear to leave Him.

Verses 57-61: The burial of Jesus' body was seen to by a “rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph.” In fulfillment of (Isaiah 53:9), Jesus made His death with the rich. Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin, who had become a “disciple.” His wealth enable him to own a tomb at Jerusalem even though he lived nearly 20 miles away.

With help from Nicodemus, a believing Pharisee (John 3), he took the body from the cross and wrapped it in a “clean linen cloth” or shroud, in the typical burial custom of the day. The body was then placed in Joseph's “own new tomb ... hewn out in the rock”, and covered with a “great stone,” generally rolled in a groove and into place securely over the opening of the tomb.

Matthew 27:57 "When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:"

“Arimathea”: A town about 15-20 miles northwest of Jerusalem.

“Joseph of Arimathea” was from a small Judean town by that name and a member (counselor), of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish legislature and high court. Each of the gospel writers provides something distinct concerning Joseph. Matthew describes him as a wealthy man who possessed a newly hewn tomb. Luke refers to his character as being good and just.

(Mark 15:43 and Luke 23:50-51), identify him as a member of the Sanhedrin, though Luke says “he had not consented to their plan and action” in condemning Christ. Joseph and Nicodemus (John 19:39), both being prominent Jewish Leaders, buried Christ in Joseph’s own “new tomb” (verse 60), thus fulfilling exactly the prophecy of (Isa. 53:9).

Though he was part of the Sanhedrin he did not consent to the death of Jesus. John notes that he feared the Jews and remained a secret disciple, whereas Mark observes his boldness following the Crucifixion to take public action when most others fled.

History is silent concerning Joseph of Arimathea, but several legends are associated with him, including the carrying of the Holy Grail (the cup used at the Last Supper), to England.

Matthew 27:58 "He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered."

“He went to Pilate”: Because no one had a right to remove the body but by authority of the magistrate. Jesus was condemned to be crucified, usually a long and most bitter death, and in common cases it would have been unlawful to have removed the body so soon.

“Begged the body”: That he might bury it honorably otherwise, by the Jewish customs, he would have either been burned, or buried in the common place appointed for executed criminals.

Matthew 27:59 "And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,"

“Wrapped it in a clean linen cloth”: The Jews, as well as the Egyptians, added spices to keep the body from putrefaction, and the linen was wrapped about every part to keep the aromatics in contact with the flesh. From (John 19:39, John 19:40), we learn that a mixture of myrrh and aloes of one hundred pounds' weight had been applied to the body of Jesus when he was buried.

And that a second embalment was intended, we learn from (Luke 23:56; Luke 24:1), as the hurry to get the body interred before the Sabbath did not permit them to complete the embalming in the first instance.

Matthew 27:60 "And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, and departed."

“In his own new tomb”: John says (John 19:41), that this was in a garden that was "in" or "near" the place where he was crucified. This tomb Joseph had prepared for himself, as was not uncommon among the Jews. Compare the notes at (Isaiah 22:16). In this tomb Luke and John inform us that no man had been laid.

This was so ordered, in the providence of God, doubtless, that there might be no suspicion about his identity when he rose; that it might not be alleged that another person had risen, or that he was raised by touching the bones of some prophet, as happened to the corpse that touched the bones of Elisha (2 Kings 13:21).

Farther, by being buried here an important prophecy was remarkably fulfilled.

Isaiah 53:9; "He made his grave ... with the rich in his death." The fulfillment of this is the more remarkable, because during his life he associated with the poor and was himself poor.

"Which he had hewn out in the rock": This was a common way of constructing tombs in Judea. Being cut out of a rock, there was no way by which the disciples could have access to it but by the entrance, at which the guard was placed, and consequently it was impossible for them to steal him away.

The sepulcher thus secure, was rendered more so by rolling a great stone at its entrance. All possible precautions thus being used, in the providence of God, against imposition and deceit.

Notice here, this was late in the evening. Jesus' body being buried now would fulfill the feast of unleavened bread. Jesus is the Bread of life and He, like the Matzah, had stripes and holes. He was covering this feast as well.

Notice, there was NO embalming. That is Egyptian, not Hebrew custom. One more thing to notice is that this rich man was a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 27:61 "And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulcher."

“Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary”: The mother of James and Joses (Matthew 27:56). The mother of our Lord had probably, by this time, been taken home to the house of John (see John 19:26, John 19:27).

“Sitting over against the sepulchre”: These holy women, filled with that love to their Lord which death cannot destroy, cleaved to him in life, and in death were not divided. They came to the grave to see the end, and overwhelmed with sorrow and anguish, sat down to mourn.

Verses 62:66: The “next day ... followed the day of the preparation:” There is some question as to whether this was Saturday (the Sabbath), following a Friday crucifixion. However (John 19:14, 31), indicates that this “preparation” day was the day before the Passover feast day. This

may account for Matthew's not using the term Sabbath here. In modern Greek, the word here translated "preparation" (paraskeue) is the word for Friday.

Matthew 27:62 "Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,"

"The next day": The Sabbath.

"That day followed the day of the preparation": This was on Friday.

Matthew 27:63 "Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again."

"Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said": Meaning Jesus; for no better name could they give him alive or dead, and they chose to continue it. And the rather to use it before Pilate, who had a good opinion of his innocence. And to let him see, that they still retained the same sentiments of him: "a deceiver".

"While he was yet alive": So that they believed that he was dead; and therefore could not object this to the truth of his resurrection, that he was taken down from the cross alive, and did not die.

"After three days I will rise again": now, though he said to his disciples privately (Matthew 16:21), yet not clearly and expressly to the Scribes and Pharisees.

Wherefore they must either have gotten it from Judas, and lied in saying they remembered it. Or they gathered it either from what he said concerning the sign of the prophet Jonah (Matthew 12:40).

Or from his words (in John 2:19); and if so they acted a most wicked part, in admitting a charge against him. As having a design upon their temple, to destroy it, and then rebuild it in three days. When they knew those words were spoken by him concerning his death, and resurrection from the dead.

They remembered this, when the disciples did not. Bad men have sometimes good memories and good men bad ones; so that memory is no sign of grace.

Matthew 27:64 "Command therefore that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first."

"Until the third day": That is, during two nights and the intervening day. This proves that when the Jews spoke of "three days," they did not of necessity mean three "whole days," but parts of three days, as was the case in our Savior's lying in the grave.

“The last error shall be worse than the first”: That is, the last "deception," or the taking him from the tomb. Pretending that he rose, will have a wider influence among the people than the first, or his pretending to be the Messiah.

Matthew 27:65 "Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make [it] as sure as ye can."

“Ye have a watch”: The Jews had a corps of Roman troops, consisting of several companies, as a guard for the temple (Acts 4:1). These companies mounted guard by turns (see Luke 22:4). Some of these companies, which were not then on duty, Pilate gave them leave to employ to watch the tomb.

Matthew 27:66 "So they went, and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."

“Sealing the stone”: The sepulchre was made sure by affixing the large stone to the entrance in such a way that it could not be removed without detection. It was sealed. In what way this was done cannot now be certainly told.

The cave in which Daniel was cast was fastened in the same manner, and sealed with the king's signet (Daniel 6:17), perhaps by fastening the stone in its place with cords, and bringing them together and uniting them with wax, and impressing on that the seal of the king.

“Setting a watch”: That is, as large a number of soldiers as they judged necessary to secure the tomb.

Pilate was satisfied that that was the fact; they had their own way about his burial. He was buried alone; the place of his sepulchre was made sure, "expressly to prevent his being removed." And they placed around him a guard, in their own judgment large enough to prevent his being taken away by force or strength.

His very enemies, therefore, took every possible precaution to place his resurrection beyond the possibility of suspicion of fraud and imposture. And those precautions were the very means of furnishing the most striking proof that his death, burial, and resurrection were not impositions, but most affecting, awful, and yet cheering realities.

These scribes and Pharisees had seen enough that now they knew perhaps, this was the Son of God and perhaps, He would rise again. They figured out this scheme to secure the tomb. Jesus cannot be held by things of this earth. They could have had a thousand stones and it would have made no difference.

You see, they knew nothing of the spirit at all, only the physical. So they had set the watch to keep the disciples from stealing His body. Had they known the Scriptures as well as they pretended, they would have known that He truly would rise on the third day (Sunday, firstfruits).

Matthew Chapter 27 Continued Questions

1. What country was Simon from?
2. What did they compel him to do?
3. What color was Simon?
4. What are two other names for Calvary?
5. What did they try to give Jesus to drink?
6. Why was this hill chosen for the crucifixion?
7. What did they do with Jesus' garments?
8. What did they cast lots for?
9. What accusation did they put over Jesus' head?
10. How many were crucified with Jesus?
11. If thou be the Son of God, _____.
12. What was different about these two thieves?
13. What temple was Jesus speaking of?
14. The scribes, chief priests, and Pharisees said that they would believe if He did what?
15. What did they accuse Jesus of calling Himself?
16. These religious people turned down Jesus, so they will have their lot with whom?
17. There was darkness, for how long?
18. Why was Jesus on the cross six hours?
19. What does Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani mean?
20. Who did the people think Jesus was calling?
21. When Jesus went to hell, He was _____.
22. What two things did He do there?
23. The temple veil was rent how?
24. What had Jesus done that all the holy men of old could not?

25. Those who came out of the graves with Jesus were _____ of the rapture.
26. What made the centurion say "Truly this was the Son of God"?
27. Where had the women followed Jesus from?
28. Who was the rich man who came for Jesus' body?
29. What did they wrap the body of Jesus in?
30. Was Jesus embalmed? Why?
31. This rich man was a _____.
32. Who was sitting by the sepulcher?
33. What did the scribes and Pharisees ask Pilate to do? Why?
34. What day would Jesus rise? What other names is it called?