

Matthew 27:1-10

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 12 February 2023

[0 : 00] Matthew chapter 27 is going to be our text this morning. Matthew 27 starting in verse 1 and just reading down to verse 10. Matthew 27 verses 1 through 10.

I am aware of the time, but I will try not to allow the time to dictate what the Lord has to say to us. Now let me say this in preface. We too have supper in the oven and it may get burned as well. So, you know, you'll get in trouble and I'll get in trouble. But that is not supper. That's much, right? So it's okay because I want to hear what the Lord has to say to us. I think he's got enough to say and we'll take our time in his presence and we never want to speed out of it.

So you're in Matthew chapter 27 starting in verse 1. We'll read down to verse 10. If you're physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask you to join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God with one another and we'll go from there.

Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put him to death. And they bound him and led him away and delivered him to Pilate the governor.

[1 : 08] And when Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that he had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the 30 pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.

But they said, what is that to us? See to that yourself. And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed. And he went away and hanged himself.

The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, it is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury since it is the price of blood. And they conferred together and with the money they bought the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.

For this reason that field has been called the field of blood to this day. Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled. And they took the 30 pieces of silver, the price of the one whose price had been set by the sons of Israel.

And they gave them for the potter's field as the Lord directed me. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day and we thank you for the opportunity we have together as your people before you today.

[2 : 09] Lord, we pray that you would take your word as we have heard it and read it. And Lord, now that you would speak to every heart and every mind. Lord, may we be focused on what it is you're saying to us and may we hear it clearly.

May our lives be directed, informed, and fashioned according to it. And we give you all the glory and the honor in advance for what it is you're going to do. And we ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

You may be seated. When I come to these passages in particular, reading through the Gospels, namely when I come to the time of the betrayal, the trial, and the ultimate crucifixion of Christ, I tend to slow down.

I tend to try to read it a little bit more intentional. If you are following the yearly reading plan that many of us are following, you read this morning in Mark chapter 15.

Or if you'll read it this afternoon, you'll read this afternoon in Mark chapter 15. In Mark chapter 15 is the account, is Mark's account of the crucifixion of Christ.

[3 : 09] It always strikes me that in those passages we must go a little slower. We must take it in a little bit much because that's our penalty.

That's our due. That's our return for our behaviors. In our passage this morning, we have a clear implication of the grand reward of sinful rejection.

If you have to have a title, that's it. The grand reward of a sinful rejection. That is, what sin gains, what reward we get from an ultimate rejection of such a Savior.

You say, well, I haven't betrayed Him, I haven't forsaken Him, or I haven't denied Him like Judas did. But none who refuse to come to Him ultimately have rejected Him.

So the reward is always the same. Jesus says, you're either for the Son of God or you're for Satan. He says, you're neither, you can't be both and.

[4 : 08] You're either for Satan or for Christ. So if you're not with Christ, the Bible says you've rejected Him. If you're with Christ, you have accepted Him. But here we see the outcome of man's greatest efforts.

And we see it being clearly portrayed for us in the individual Judas. Judas, we'll take a little bit of time and go through it because there is, I think at times, some misconceptions about exactly what is going on in Judas' mind and even his heart.

Hopefully we'll clarify that because even among believers, there's kind of this pull between the reality of exactly what is happening at this moment. And hopefully through the Word of God, we'll clarify that.

We'll come to understand that remorse does not mean repentance. Because what we see here is the grand reward of sinful rejection. We see first and foremost the misery it brings.

Because it tells us in the Scripture, now, when morning had come. The implication there is that when the morning had fully come. Now this is important because in the trial of Christ, if you remember, the proceedings which have preceded this, when He has stood before Annas and then eventually Caiaphas, both of those took place in the middle of the night.

[5 : 18] And having taken place in the middle of the night, therefore they are illegal according to Jewish law. And they had to reconvene when the light had come up. So when the morning had fully come. And when the morning had fully come, He had stood before the Sanhedrin and found condemnation among the Sanhedrin.

That is, the political leaders, those who would set the cases of the Jewish people. But when morning had fully come, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death.

So the prior night's conspiracy are about to become the day's reality. What they had conspired and striven to do all night long now are about to become a reality for all to see.

What they had planned and what they had really manipulated the events to take place are about to happen. So they have convened together and they are against Him and confer with one another against Jesus to put Him to death.

And they bound Him and led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate the governor. That's important because he had to go before Pilate because it was absolutely illegal for the Jewish people to put any man to death.

[6 : 22] Corporal punishment was not allowable for the Jewish people underneath Roman rules. So though they found guilt against Him according to their custom, they had to take Him before the Roman governor, that is, Pilate, and allow Pilate to condemn Him so that they could continue to carry out their plans.

But we have this pause. We interrupt the trials, if you will, because the last time we saw Judas, he was kissing the Savior in a kiss of betrayal.

He had kissed Him in the garden and said, The one whom I kiss, it is He. Take Him. If you remember, he comes up to him and he calls him, Jesus says, Why do you hand me over with a kiss, friend?

And he called him Rabbi, that is, Great Teacher. And we don't know what happened with Judas because we begin to focus on Christ and even Peter and John following at a distance. And we've seen Peter's denials.

None are innocent in this. Jesus said, All of you will forsake me. And they all did. Peter denied him three times. And his denials were grand denials. They weren't small matters.

[7 : 28] If you remember, with each one of them, there was the escalation. At first he said, I don't know the man. The second time he says, I don't even know what you're talking about. I promise you, I don't know anything about this man. And the third time he called a curse down upon himself.

Said, May God curse me if I'm lying. I do not know the man. So with each denial, it got worse. And then Peter hears the rooster crow and his heart is broken because it says, Then he went out and he wept bitterly.

So we see Peter denying, but we see also there's something there to prick his heart and his mind, to call his conscience back. And he goes out and he is weeping.

And he has put himself at least in a place of restoration because now there's brokenness in the life of Peter. And those who are broken are really in a right place.

When you are broken over your sin, broken over your failure, now you're somewhere where the Savior can meet you. And he went out and he wept bitterly. But then our scene changes.

[8 : 28] And now we leave Peter until after the resurrection. We will find him later after the tomb is empty. We'll find him running to the tomb, being bold enough to go in, seeing the face cloth folded up.

We'll see the restoration of Peter. But before we get that, we need to see what happens with Judas. And now we're introduced to this here because here's the reality. All of the betraying and all of the planning and all the scheming and plotting, these things are about to come about.

And everything that Judas has sought to do now is about to happen. See, isn't it tragic when you finally get all the way into something that you thought would be fun?

The reality is, is that sin always takes you further than you ever intended to go. And the pleasure it promises is never enough to suffice the misery it brings. Because it says, then when Judas, notice this qualifying statement.

Then when Judas, who had betrayed him, who had betrayed him. Let's just stop right here because we need to settle the matter. And I understand it.

[9 : 32] There's the grand question. We posed it last week on a Sunday evening. We didn't really get into it too much. From the very beginning, Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray him. Jesus actually refers to him as the son of perdition.

Jesus says in high priestly prayers, he's praying to the father, which I believe is actually the model prayer is the one that we refer to as Jesus' prayer. But Jesus' prayer is in John chapter 17 where we have him praying, not a model prayer, but what is often qualified as a high priestly prayer. He says, Father, I've lost none of them but the one that was appointed to. So we know from the very appointment, Judas was the one, even when he chose him, he knew would forsake him. It tells us all throughout scripture that this forsaking and denying of Christ by Judas never takes Jesus by surprise because he knew from the very beginning. We also know that Judas is moved by Satan.

We see that in the Gospel of John that Satan overcomes him. Satan was looking for an opportune time and he found that opportune time in a person. And when he found that person at the right time, he began to do his work.

[10 : 34] And that person is Judas. And all of a sudden we have this reality that Jesus tells him that what you do, do quickly. But we also see that Jesus says it would have been better for Judas to never have been born.

So there's the raging question that if he was appointed to do it and if God knew he was going to do it, then why is he held accountable for it? You put it this way.

If God knows I'm gonna sin, God understands I'm going to sin, God doesn't stop me from sinning, then why does God hold me accountable for my sin? It's a good question, right?

For one, because just because God knows you are going to do it and God does not stop you from doing it, does not remove your responsibility for doing it.

In great theological discussion, and I know we don't wanna get into grand theological discussions right now, there's what is called the active will of God and the passive will of God. The active will of God is the things in which God knows are going to do and he takes an active role in stopping or starting those.

[11 : 35] The passive will of God are the things that God knows are going to happen, but he allows them to do it because he did not create robots, but he created people for relationship. Don't ever remove the fact that it was Judas, the man, who betrayed him.

Because though Satan may use you, it's still you who's held accountable for it because see, Satan doesn't care about you. He will answer for his own rebellion, but all he's getting you to do is for you to answer to it as well.

To him you're a number, to Christ you're a name. But it was Satan who used Judas, but it was Judas who betrayed him. Now, when Judas heard these things, he who had betrayed him saw that he had been condemned.

He felt remorse. If you're reading the King James Version, it says he repented of himself. Other translations say he regretted. I believe the New American Standard, and I'll show you why in just a

moment, has it worded correctly.

It says he felt remorse and returned the 30 pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. And the reason we have to be careful here, even when using the King James in particular, and I'm not here to put down any translation of scripture, but the reason we have to be careful of using that word repented of himself is because when we think of repentance, we think of genuine repentance. [12:57] But there are actually two words in the Greek, and they're very two different words. And the word for repentance, which we think of being repentant in heart and turning to the Savior, means to change all of one's life and actions in accordance to what God is leading the individual to do.

Long definition for a single word, right? It is to change all of one's life, all of one's actions, to change course, to turn around and go a completely different direction because of God's leading.

But the word used here literally just means to feel sorry for what's happened. See, repentance is so much than feeling sorry for your sins or having a little bit of remorse for your sins.

Repentance is changing your life because of your sins. The word used here is a word we would use when an individual gets caught for doing something wrong, and all of a sudden he has remorse, not because he did something wrong or she did something wrong, but because they are now dealing with the consequences of doing something wrong.

It is the remorse and the regret that comes from the consequences that are the outcome of the action rather than the changing of an individual's life because God condemns the action.

[14:12] See the difference. What is going on in Judas? Judas feels bad and wants to get away with it. All of a sudden, Judas has what we call a guilty conscience.

Some Bible scholars will tell you that Judas was a zealot, and he was. He was one who did not like the reigning rule of Rome over the Jewish people and therefore was seeking to free himself from Roman rule.

Some will tell you that Judas really had mixed intentions, that the reason Judas handed Jesus over was so that hopefully he could spur Jesus to rise up in power and therefore assume the rightful position that Jesus himself had claimed.

Some people would long to tell you that Judas did this to try to manipulate the Savior so that the Savior who himself had declared he was the King, the Son of God, would therefore cast Rome out and would set up his kingdom and rule.

I have a problem with that because the Bible tells us that Judas betrayed him. It doesn't say that Judas tricked him. And I have a problem with that because the text tells us that Judas just felt sorry.

[15:20] He doesn't tell us that he tried to change anything. See, one of the grand rewards of sinful rejection is misery. It is misery.

Man was created for fellowship with God. He was created to commune with the Lord his God and to enjoy him, the Bible tells us in the opening pages of Genesis. It tells us that you have but one grand purpose and that though you try in many ways and in many fashions and in many forms to fill that void, nothing you can do will fill that void.

The end of all things is misery. And the reason I know that is because there was a man who referred to himself as the preacher who wrote the book of Ecclesiastes. More than likely it was Solomon, the wisest individual who ever led, who wrote that.

Some don't think so but I believe so from the text who said that he had tried to fill that void in every way, in every fashion, in every form. He needed money so he got money. He wanted pleasure so he had pleasure.

He wanted all the things that he could provide for himself so he did it. And then he kept saying vanity of vanity, misery of miseries, all is vain because all that the world can offer you by all of your actions and behaviors is misery.

[16:33] In the end, it amounts to nothing. And that's why when the book of Ecclesiastes closes after this pursuit of happiness, this pursuit of peace, this pursuit of contentment, at the end he writes, the end of the matter is this, to fear the Lord your God and obey him in all that you do.

Oh, that sounds a whole lot like Genesis, right? To commune with the Lord your God and obey him in all that you do. See, one of the grand rewards for rejection is misery.

Judas was a miserable individual. He had got the silver. He had got what he had desired to do. He had taken about and done the plan. Everything had worked perfectly. No one was hunting Judas down except for the conscience within him.

Sin breeds misery. The second thing we see is not only the misery it brings, it's the mockery it breeds because when you are in misery, other miserable people love to mock you.

The text tells us that Judas went back to the religious leaders. Now get this picture. Judas, who is of miserable soul, whose heart is not really breaking, but his mind is aching, right?

[17 : 51] He who has a conscience problem, who's not trying to address the heart issue, he just wants to change the mind issue, right? If I could just quit thinking about it and if I could get this out of my mind, I would be okay.

So Judas went to what the people thought was the right place. He didn't go to the right person. He went to what he thought was the right place and the right place surely would have been the temple. So he went to the temple and he didn't say he just went to the temple.

He said he went to the sanctuary in the temple. Notice that. One thing you need to notice is Judas all of a sudden went further than he was ever supposed to go. He went past the court of Gentiles. He went past the court of the Jewish men and he went into the inner sanctuary.

He went to where the priests were at. Judas didn't belong there, but he decided he was in such a miserable condition. He was going there anyway. It says that he went into the sanctuary in the temple where the priests were at and only the priests.

So he went to the priest into the inner part of the temple. He went as far as any man could go save one day a year on the day of atonement when the high priest could go into the holy of holies.

[18 : 50] He went as far as any man could go into the place where God said his presence would dwell and couldn't find hope there because hope's not found in religion.

Hope's found in a person and that person is now standing before Pilate. The problem is is Judas is standing before the priest. Judas goes to the priest and he says, I have sinned.

Friend, mock this and mark this. It doesn't matter who you tell you have sinned until you tell the right person you have sinned. He stood before the priest in the sanctuary and said, I have sinned and betrayed innocent blood.

And they looked at him and said, what has that got to do with us? Because see, the grand mockery of the priest is that if they had accepted Judas' acknowledgement, then the guilt would have been placed upon them.

What does the text tell us? When the morning came, all of the priests had gathered together, right? So the guilt would have been on them. It's much easier to say, well, Judas did it. But the priest, if they had said, yes, he was innocent, then the priest would have had to accept responsibility for also betraying innocent blood.

[20 : 07] But they didn't want to take that guilt upon themselves because it's much easier to put that guilt on Judas. Judas is in misery because of his actions and men are living in mockery because they want no part in it.

Sinners hang around sinners and they're no better off for one another. Because the best we can do is mock the individual because the reality is, is I'm not going to carry the weight of your sin and you're not going to carry the weight of mine.

What is that to me? They say, we're not going to do it. They say, what is that to us? See to that yourself. Oh, notice here the mockery of this. He is at the place where men should find restoration and redemption.

He is in the sanctuary of the temple. And in the sanctuary of the temple with the mental acknowledgement of having sinned and betrayed innocent blood, the best he can find is, see to that yourself.

Because as the book of Proverbs tells us, no man can pay the price of redemption for another man, let alone pay the price of redemption for his own soul.

[21 : 19] See, Judas may have had a change of mind. He never had a change of heart. Peter went and waited for restoration. Judas went and sought it in the wrong place. I don't really care how much an individual's mind thinks of their sin.

What I want to know is how much an individual's heart is broken over their sin. Because we can go talk to people all day long and say, well, I've done this wrong and I've done that wrong and I've done this wrong and it doesn't matter how good the people we're talking to are and it really doesn't even matter where they are.

Friend, listen to me. If you were to come to me today, if you were to come to the front and talk to me and talk about all these things right here, you and I could have a great conversation right here at

this altar. But until we talk to the Savior about it, it doesn't change a thing.

The best you could do is come to me and I could bring you to the Savior. But until you tell the Savior about it, it doesn't matter. Because the grand reward of sinful rejection is the mockery it breeds.

We cannot help one another. There is but one priest that we can run to and he is the great high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. The third and final thing we see is not only the misery it brings, the mockery it breeds, the measure it benefits.

[22 : 31] The measure it benefits. Now, Judas had to set a price. 30 pieces of silver. That 30 pieces of silver, by the way, it is a thread that runs throughout Scripture.

Joseph was sold as a slave. You remember how much Joseph was sold for? 30 pieces of silver, right? Jeremiah the prophet, he went and bought a field. You know what he bought it for?

30 pieces of silver. Zechariah the prophet, he went and bought a field too. You know what it was with? 30 pieces of silver. See, these 30 pieces of silver keep running this thread throughout Scripture and we're called to pay attention to this.

And Judas had set a price and the price that was agreed upon was 30 pieces of silver. Judas thought surely the betrayal would be worth the 30 pieces of silver because what I'm seeking to gain in the end is the 30 pieces of silver.

I think the 30 pieces of silver will surely be enough to suffice any guilt or displeasure I feel after the matter because if I had the 30 pieces of silver, I'd be willing to do anything against the Savior.

[23 : 32] Put whatever you want to in that 30 pieces of silver because here is really what we are benefited. Judas goes and the misery is so strong and the mockery is so grand that he throws the 30 pieces of silver down.

Says he threw it into the sanctuary. See, in the end, 30 pieces of silver wasn't enough. It couldn't answer the question of what am I going to do with my conscience?

What am I going to do with my guilt? What am I going to do with everything around me? What am I going to do with the reality of my events? The 30 pieces of silver wasn't enough so he threw it down and the Bible says he went out and hanged himself.

Tells you in the book of Acts that he fell asunder in the field and his intestines burst out. We don't have to get into all the scientific information of how that happened but both of them are true, by the way.

Acknowledge both of them. He fell headlong, it says. There is a way for them both to be true and we accept both of them as realities. But in the end, the grand thing that this rejection and denial and betrayal gained Judas was death.

[24 : 44] Paul says it like this, for the wages of sin is death. Sin always brings death. But the priests now have this problem because the money is on the floor.

Now we look at the irony of the priests. The priests look at the money and they have to clean it up because it's in the sanctuary. And they say, now we can't put this in the treasury. Think about this just for a moment because this is the price of blood.

The priests acknowledge the reality that this is the money they have paid for the blood of an individual. And they didn't want to break the law because the price of blood cannot go into the treasury. So in order to keep the law legalistically, they have to find something else to do with the money that is now before them.

They weren't concerned about the law and the reality that they took the money out the first time to buy an individual's blood. Because see, in our own minds, we're either a Judas or we're one of the priests here.

We can justify it all we want to. They say, we can't put it back because that would be unlawful. So now they have to find something to do with it. And it says that they go out and they buy the potter's field.

[25 : 49] Now the potter's field will be those who made pottery went out and they dug pits in the clay and they would get the clay out so that they may make pottery. Therefore, there were already these holes all in the field. And when the holes were already there, it made very easy graves.

So they bought a field that was full of holes so that it would be easier to bury strangers in. They didn't want to even do the work of digging the graves. So they just went and bought the field that someone else had already dug the hole.

So they bought the potter's field so that they may bury the strangers. Now you have a problem in your text and we'll try to handle that problem in just a moment because it says here that this was to

bring about in verse 9 that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled and they took the 30 pieces of silver and the price of the one whose price had been set by the sons of Israel and they gave them for the potter's field as the Lord directed.

Now the problem here is this that if you look that verse up you're going to find it in Zechariah. And you're going to say well Jeremiah didn't say it it's recorded in Zechariah. So why does it tell us in the Gospels that Jeremiah said it?

Well there's really a two-fold answer here. Jeremiah had kind of alluded to this when he stood before the potter's house and he watched that and the 30 pieces of silver was there. Some think that Jeremiah may have proclaimed this but Zechariah the prophet actually recorded this.

[27 : 08] Probably a better understanding is that in the times of Christ and the times following Christ that a particular book of the Bible was actually referenced which whatever book was before the Bible.

So the writings of Moses the writings of the Psalms the Psalter for the Jewish people included both Psalms Proverbs and Song of Solomons. So when they refer to the Psalms they were referring to all of those three and when they refer to Jeremiah because Jeremiah was considered the chief prophet whereas today we consider Isaiah the chief prophet.

So Jeremiah would have been the first prophet in that collection of books so when they refer to Jeremiah they're referring to every prophetic word which follows Jeremiah. So I just needed because I know you're going to go home and be good students of the Bible and you're going to study that and you're going to see that cross reference and I didn't want that to be there.

But what we see here is this potter's field the price of blood. So we want to answer the question what is the great measure that it benefits us? The best thing that sinful rejection can do is buy a grave.

The best thing it can do is buy a grave because the price that was set and agreed upon the price that Judas was willing to betray the Savior for in the end all it bought was a grave.

[28 : 30] Friend the best thing that you can ever hope to attain from any rejection of the Savior is a grave. That's the reality because the wages of sin is death.

But the other side of that verse is but the free gift of God through His Son is eternal life. We see here this sad reward of sinful rejection.

Whereas Peter was broken of heart Judas had a change of mind. Peter was repentant and weeping. Judas was just sorry that things happened the way they did.

We search our own hearts and we search our own minds and we say Lord where am I in that? And may we understand that every one of our sinful actions the best they could ever attain is a grave.

Let's pray. Lord we thank you for this day and we thank you for your word. Lord we pray that your word would continue to speak to our hearts. Lord we pray as we come to this time of invitation Lord that you would move by the power and presence of your spirit and you would move your people for your glory.

[29 : 40] We ask it in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.