

# That's What Jesus Said

## Matthew 22-28

### Part 10

#### Matthew 27 AMPC

*1 When it was morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people held a consultation against Jesus to put Him to death;*

*2 And they bound Him and led Him away and handed Him over to Pilate the governor.*

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*3 When Judas, His betrayer, saw that [Jesus] was condemned, [Judas was afflicted in mind and troubled for his former folly; and] with remorse [with little more than a selfish dread of the consequences] he brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders,*

*4 Saying, I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. They replied, What is that to us? See to that yourself.*

*5 And casting the pieces of silver [forward] into the [Holy Place of the sanctuary of the] temple, he departed; and he went off and hanged himself.*

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### **Zechariah 11:12-13 AMPC**

12 And I said to them, If it seems just and right to you, give me my wages; but if not, withhold them. So they weighed out for my price thirty pieces of silver.

13 And the Lord said to me, Cast it to the potter [as if He said, To the dogs!]<sup>a</sup>—the munificently [miserable] sum at which I [and My shepherd] am priced by them! And I [Zechariah] took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

### **Zechariah 11:12-13 GNT**

12 I said to them, “If you are willing, give me my wages. But if not, keep them.” So they paid me thirty pieces of silver as my wages.

13 The Lord said to me, “Put them in the Temple treasury.”<sup>a</sup> So I took the thirty pieces of silver—the magnificent sum they thought I was worth—and put them in the Temple treasury.

### **Matthew 26:14-16 AMPC**

14 Then one of the Twelve [apostles], who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests

15 And said, What are you willing to give me if I hand Him over to you? And they weighed out for and paid to him thirty pieces of silver [about twenty-one dollars and sixty cents].

16 And from that moment he sought a fitting opportunity to betray Him.

*6 But the chief priests, picking up the pieces of silver, said, It is not legal to put these in the [consecrated] treasury, for it is the price of blood.*

*7 So after consultation they bought with them [the pieces of silver] the potter's field [as a place] in which to bury strangers.*

*8 Therefore that piece of ground has been called the Field of Blood to the present day.*

*9 Then were fulfilled the words spoken by Jeremiah the prophet when he said, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him on Whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel,*

*10 And they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.*

There are several “things” or prophecies being fulfilled and referenced in Matthew 27 in addition to chapters 22-26. One of those prophecies that was fulfilled is found in verse 9 regarding the silver that was given to Judas and then “returned” to the religious leaders. They (the leaders) consulted on what to do with the the 30 pieces of silver and “decided” to buy the potter’s field where Judas would later die.

Critics to christianity frequently accuse the New Testament of “misquoting” the Old Testament as a result of the citation which Matthew attributes to Jeremiah in Matthew 27:9-10. The words he quotes are not found in Jeremiah at all, but most closely resemble a citation of Zechariah 11:13 (though with notable differences). Even sincere Christian readers can sometimes find this passage confusing and wonder what Matthew was thinking. How can we reconcile this with a view that this gospel is the inspired, inerrant word of God?

Let’s take a look at the passage in question:

“Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: ‘And they took the thirty 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,’” (Matthew 27:9-10).

The apparent problem is that these words are not found anywhere in Jeremiah’s writings. We do find a very similar passage In Zechariah:

“Then the Lord said to me, ‘Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them.’ So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the Lord,” (Zechariah 11:13).

Critics will thus claim that Matthew was confused, ignorant, and even malicious and deceitful in conflating the words of Jeremiah with those of Zechariah and (as is often asserted), “altering” Zechariah’s words to better fit his point. A closer look, however, shows us that Matthew was doing nothing of the sort. Instead, he was intentionally drawing together themes from both authors to make a larger prophetic point.

Matthew's reference connects the purchase of the potter's field not only with Zechariah's potter but also with a lengthy portion of Jeremiah. Jeremiah 18-19 provides an extended prophetic narrative involving a visit to a potter's shop. It opens:

"The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord saying, 'Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will announce My words to you.' Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something on the wheel. But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make" (Jeremiah 18:1-4).

God uses this as an analogy. If God plans to judge and punish a nation, but that nation repents, He can instead remake them into a blessed nation (or vice versa). God then sends Jeremiah to appeal to Judah:

"So now then, speak to the men of Judah and against the inhabitants of Jerusalem saying, 'Thus says the Lord, "Behold, I am fashioning calamity against you and devising a plan against you. Oh turn back, each of you from his evil way, and reform your ways and your deeds."' But they will say, 'It's hopeless! For we are going to follow our own plans, and each of us will act according to the stubbornness of his evil heart,''" (Jeremiah 18:11-12).

Jeremiah 18:18-23 goes on to describe the Jewish leaders' plot against Jeremiah in words such as "Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah. Surely the law is not going to be lost to the priest, nor counsel to the sage, nor the divine word to the prophet!" It is not hard to see the parallels between this and the plot Judas was involved in to betray Jesus. Jeremiah then returns to the potter:

"Thus says the Lord, 'Go and buy a potter's earthenware jar, and take some of the elders of the people and some of the senior priests. Then go out to the valley of Ben-hinnom, which is by the entrance of the potsherd gate, and proclaim there the words that I tell you, and say, "Hear the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah..."

... and inhabitants of Jerusalem: thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Behold I am about to bring a calamity upon this place, at which the ears of everyone that hears of it will tingle,’” (Jeremiah 19:1-3).

The jar is later used to act this out:

“Then you are to break the jar in the sight of the men who accompany you and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “Just so will I break this people and this city, even as one breaks a potter’s vessel, which cannot again be repaired; and they will bury in Topheth because there is no other place for burial. This is how I will treat this place and its inhabitants,” declares the Lord, “so as to make this city like Topheth”’” (Jeremiah 19:10-12).

Because they chose to continue in wickedness rather than repent, God was going to punish them, overthrow Jerusalem, and destroy the temple. This was true in Jeremiah’s day and was equally true in Jesus’. Matthew has already drawn attention to this, as when he reported Jesus’ words:

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!” (Matthew 23:37-38).

Matthew explains that the rejection and unjust killing of Jesus was the culmination of the rejection and persecution of all the prophets before, such as in the parable of the landowner and the vineyard (Matthew 21:33-46) or when Jesus says:

“so that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar,” (Matthew 23:35).

The rejection and persecution of Jeremiah followed by the destruction of Jerusalem in Jeremiah's day pictured in advance the future rejection of the Messiah and the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem in the first century AD. The parallels connect even on minor issues. The potter passage in Jeremiah pronounces judgment "...because they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent" (Jeremiah 19:4).

In Matthew, Judas throws the money back into the temple because he had "sinned by betraying innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4). Jeremiah tells us that a place "will no longer be called Topheth or the valley of Ben-hinnom, but rather the valley of Slaughter." (Jeremiah 19:6). In Matthew, when the potter's field is bought, we are told of a similar name change, "For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day," (Matthew 27:8).

Much more could be said, but as can hopefully be seen through this brief demonstration, Matthew connected the events of Jesus' rejection, betrayal, and death with a lengthy section of Jeremiah (too long to quote fully in its own right but doubtless quite familiar to his Jewish readers) by relating both to another prophecy in Zechariah. In this, he was following the tradition of the Old Testament writers themselves as we saw in 2 Chronicles.

But why does Matthew 27:9-10 mention a field? One detail in Matthew's citation that is not plainly taken from Zechariah or the potter prophecies in Jeremiah is the reference to a potter's field. Why does Matthew 27:9-10 insert the idea of a field into the composite citation of these two prophets? There are two possible explanations.

The first and simplest is that Matthew is just explaining precisely how Zechariah's words were fulfilled. Zechariah mentions that thirty pieces of silver are "thrown" to the potter, but he doesn't explain why they are thrown (rather than simply handed) nor why to the potter. In connecting the words to Judas, we now see why the silver was thrown. Matthew also clarifies that the silver is given to the potter to purchase his field.

Matthew's citation is plainly not meant to be a word-for-word quotation, so he may just be explaining why the thirty pieces of silver go to the potter, i.e., to purchase a field.

However, it is also plausible that the reference to purchasing a field is also meant to connect this citation with a promise in Jeremiah. In chapter 32, Jeremiah (at God's command) measures out shekels of silver to purchase and redeem a field. Interestingly, Jeremiah 32 connects the arrest and imprisonment of Jeremiah and the dark warnings of Jerusalem's impending destruction with the promise of a future restoration. The purchase of the field is used as a reminder that one day God will bring His people home from exile.

Thus, if Matthew intended the purchase of the field with the silver to bring this passage to mind as well, it actually draws in a message of hope! Though our hands are stained even with the innocent blood of the righteous, there is hope for forgiveness and restoration if we, unlike Judas or the hardened Jewish leaders, will repent and turn in faith.

### **Conclusion: Matthew 27:9-10 is not a misquotation:**

Ancient writers, including biblical writers, did not always cite sources in the straightforward manner we are accustomed to today. Matthew is no exception. Yet, when we take the time to understand what he is doing, we can see that there was no mistake here.

*Matthew was carefully, even brilliantly, drawing together the events of his times with rich and lengthy passages from the prophets which would have been too long to quote in full. His approach allowed him, in only a few words, to connect and show the ultimate fulfillment of numerous Old Testament passages in a way that would have made sense to his original (primarily Jewish) readers. There is certainly no error nor deception in Matthew 27:9-10.*

***Back to our main text in Mathew 27....***

**Matthew 27:11 AMPC**

**11 Now Jesus stood before the governor [Pilate], and the governor asked Him, Are you the King of the Jews? Jesus said to him, You have stated [the fact].**

**12 But when the charges were made against Him by the chief priests and elders, He made no answer.**

**13 Then Pilate said to Him, Do You not hear how many and how serious are the things they are testifying against You?**

**14 But He made no reply to him, not even to a single accusation, so that the governor marveled greatly.**

**15 Now at the Feast [of the Passover] the governor was in the habit of setting free for the people any one prisoner whom they chose.**

**16 And at that time they had a notorious prisoner whose name was Barabbas.**

**17 So when they had assembled for this purpose, Pilate said to them, Whom do you want me to set free for you, Barabbas, or Jesus Who is called Christ?**

**18 For he knew that it was because of envy that they had handed Him over to him.**

**19 Also, while he was seated on the judgment bench, his wife sent him a message, saying, Have nothing to do with that just and upright Man, for I have had a painful experience today in a dream because of Him.**

**20 But the chief priests and the elders prevailed on the people to ask for Barabbas, and put Jesus to death.**

## **Prevailed defined:**

prove more powerful than opposing forces; to succeed; become dominant; win out:  
to prove superior in power and influence

**21 Again the governor said to them, Which of the two do you wish me to release for you? And they said, Barabbas!**

**22 Pilate said to them, Then what shall I do with Jesus Who is called Christ?**



*23 They all replied, Let Him be crucified! And **he said, Why? What has He done that is evil?** But they shouted all the louder, Let Him be crucified!*

**John 8:21-31 AMPC**

21 Therefore He said again to them, I am going away, and you will be looking for Me, and you will die in (under the curse of) your sin. Where I am going, it is not possible for you to come.

22 At this the Jews began to ask among themselves, Will He kill Himself? Is that why He says, Where I am going, it is not possible for you to come?

23 He said to them, You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world (of this earthly order); I am not of this world.

24 That is why I told you that you will die in (under the curse of) your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He [Whom I claim to be—if you do not adhere to, trust in, and rely on Me], you will die in your sins.

25 Then they said to Him, Who are You anyway? Jesus replied, [Why do I even speak to you!] I am exactly what I have been telling you from the first.

26 I have much to say about you and to judge and condemn. But He Who sent Me is true (reliable), and I tell the world [only] the things that I have heard from Him.

27 **They did not perceive (know, understand) that He was speaking to them about the Father.**

28 **So Jesus added, When you have lifted up the Son of Man [on the cross], you will realize (know, understand) that I am He [for Whom you look] and that I do nothing of Myself (of My own accord or on My own authority), but I say [exactly] what My Father has taught Me.**

29 And He Who sent Me is ever with Me; My Father has not left Me alone, for I always do what pleases Him.

30 As He said these things, many believed in Him [trusted, relied on, and adhered to Him].

31 **So Jesus said to those Jews who had believed in Him, If you abide in My word [hold fast to My teachings and live in accordance with them], you are truly My disciples.**

**32 And you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free.**

33 They answered Him, We are Abraham's offspring (descendants) and have never been in bondage to anybody. What do You mean by saying, You will be set free?

34 Jesus answered them, I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, **Whoever commits and practices sin is the slave of sin.**

24 So when Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but rather that a riot was about to break out, he took water and washed his hands in the presence of the crowd, saying, **I am not guilty of nor responsible for this righteous Man's blood; see to it yourselves.**

25 **And all the people answered, Let His blood be on us and on our children!**

Pilate asked for a basin of water and wash his hands and attempt to free himself of the guilt of shedding innocent blood (vs. 24). This “washing” ritual was known to the religious Jews, based on the law in Deuteronomy, stating that when a corpse is discovered near a city, the elders living closest to that city are to take a heifer, turn off its head, and wash their hands and water over the slain heifer's head, declaring that they are innocent of the blood of the slain person (Deut 21:3-6).

Pilate did not ask for a heifer, but he did wash his hands, and the Jewish religious authorities knew what he was doing. He was declaring himself free from the blood of Christ, which was about to be shed. At that moment the religious leaders said, “his blood, be on us and on our children” (vs. 25) in line with the law of God, given to Moses, the shutting up innocent blood brought a curse upon the city of Jerusalem, in the land of Israel, as Christ had warned when He predicted the destruction of Jerusalem for shedding innocent blood. (Matt. 23:34–37).

26 So he set free for them Barabbas; and he [had] Jesus whipped, and delivered Him up to be crucified.

27 **Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the palace, and they gathered the whole battalion about Him.**

28 And they stripped off His clothes and put a scarlet robe ([d]garment of dignity and office worn by Roman officers of rank) upon Him,

29 And, weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on His head and put a reed (staff) in His right hand. And kneeling before Him, they made sport of Him, saying, Hail (greetings, good health to You, long life to You), King of the Jews!

30 **And they spat on Him, and took the reed (staff) and struck Him on the head.**

31 And when they finished making sport of Him, they stripped Him of the robe and put His own garments on Him and led Him away to be crucified.

32 As they were marching forth, they came upon a man of Cyrene named Simon; this man they forced to carry the cross of Jesus.

33 And when they came to a place called Golgotha [Latin: Calvary], which means The Place of a Skull,

## Golgotha: David kills Goliath

Goliath was from Gath (just east of the Gaza Strip) and after he was killed by David, he took Goliath's skull and placed it in Jerusalem by the Temple Mount. This is where we get the word "Golgotha" from, the place where the skull of Goliath was placed. It was here that Jesus was later crucified on this very spot where Goliath's skull was placed fulfilling scripture.

### Genesis 3:13-17 AMPC

13 And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled (cheated, outwitted, and deceived) me, and I ate.

14 And the Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, you are cursed above all [domestic] animals and above every [wild] living thing of the field; upon your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust [and what it contains] all the days of your life.

15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her Offspring; He will bruise and tread your head underfoot, and you will lie in wait and bruise His heel.

16 To the woman He said, I will greatly multiply your grief and your suffering in pregnancy and the pangs of childbearing; with spasms of distress you will bring forth children. Yet your desire and craving will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.

17 And to Adam He said, Because you have listened and given heed to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it, the ground is under a curse because of you; in sorrow and toil shall you eat [of the fruits] of it all the days of your life.

Note: The term "Golgotha" is derived from the Aramaic word for "skull," and "Calvary" comes from the Latin word "calvaria," meaning "skull." The word "Calvary" also denotes a place of great suffering or a mental crucifixion.

34 They offered Him wine mingled with gall to drink; but when He tasted it, He refused to drink it.

35 And when they had crucified Him, they divided and distributed His garments [among them] by casting lots so that the prophet's saying was fulfilled, They parted My garments among them and over My apparel they cast lots.

#### **Psalm 22:18 AMPC**

18 They part my clothing among them and cast lots for my raiment (a long, shirt like garment, a seamless under tunic).

**In addition, verse 1 of Psalm 22...**

#### **Psalm 22:1 AMPC**

1 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Why are You so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning?

36 Then they sat down there and kept watch over Him.

37 And over His head they put the accusation against Him (the cause of His death), which read, This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.

Both Luke (23:38) and John (19:19-20) record that this statement was written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. The Hebrew people would have it in Hebrew, the Romans in Latin and the Greeks in Greek.

#### **Luke 23:38 AMPC**

38 For there was also an inscription above Him in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew: This is the King of the Jews.

#### **John 19:19-20 AMPC**

19 And Pilate also wrote a title (an inscription on a placard) and put it on the cross. And the writing was: Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews.

20 And many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, [and] in Greek.

Everyone knew who He was... there was no denying He was the King of the Jews!

38 *At the same time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right hand and one on the left.*

39 *And those who passed by spoke reproachfully and abusively and jeered at Him, wagging their heads,*

40 *And they said, You Who would tear down the sanctuary of the temple and rebuild it in three days, rescue Yourself from death. If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.*

41 *In the same way the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, made sport of Him, saying,*

42 *He rescued others from death; Himself He cannot rescue from death. He is the King of Israel? **Let Him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in and acknowledge and cleave to Him.***

43 *He trusts in God; let God deliver Him now if He cares for Him and will have Him, for He said, I am the Son of God.*

44 *And the robbers who were crucified with Him also abused and reproached and made sport of Him in the same way.*

45 *Now from the sixth hour (noon) there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour (three o'clock).*

46 *And about the ninth hour (three o'clock) Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?—that is, **My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me [leaving Me [l]helpless, forsaking and failing Me in My need]**?*

47 *And **some of the bystanders, when they heard it, said, This Man is calling for Elijah!***

48 *And one of them immediately ran and took a sponge, soaked it with vinegar (a sour wine), and put it on a reed (staff), and was about to give it to Him to drink.*

49 ***But the others said, Wait! Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him from death.***

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50 And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and gave up His spirit.

51 And at once the curtain of the sanctuary of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth shook and the rocks were split.

52 The tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep in death were raised [to life];

53 And coming out of the tombs after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

54 When the centurion and those who were with him keeping watch over Jesus observed the earthquake and all that was happening, they were terribly frightened and filled with awe, and said, Truly this was God's Son!

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55 There were also numerous women there, looking on from a distance, who were of those who had accompanied Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him.

56 Among them were Mary of Magdala, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

57 When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus.

58 He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him.

59 And Joseph took the body and rolled it up in a clean linen cloth used for swathing dead bodies

60 And laid it in his own fresh (undefiled) tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a big boulder over the door of the tomb and went away.

61 And Mary of Magdala and the other Mary kept sitting there opposite the tomb.

62 The next day, that is, the day after the day of Preparation [for the Sabbath], the chief priests and the Pharisees assembled before Pilate

63 And said, Sir, we have just remembered how that vagabond Imposter said while He was still alive, After three days I will rise again.

64 Therefore give an order to have the tomb made secure and safeguarded until the third day, for fear that His disciples will come and steal Him away and tell the people that He has risen from the dead, and the last deception and fraud will be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said to them, You have a guard [of soldiers; take them and] go, make it as secure as you can.

66 So they went off and made the tomb secure by sealing the boulder, a guard of soldiers being with them and remaining to watch.

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