

STUDYING THE BOOK OF MATTHEW
IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Lesson 109 - Judas Hangs Himself - Matthew 27:1-10

Read the following verses in the New International Version or a translation of your choice. Then discuss the questions that follow. Questions should be studied by each individual before your discussion group meets.

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MT 27:1 Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people came to the decision to put Jesus to death. [2] They bound him, led him away and handed him over to Pilate, the governor.

MT 27:3 When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. [4] "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood."

"What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility."

MT 27:5 So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.

MT 27:6 The chief priests picked up the coins and said, "It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money." [7] So they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. [8] That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day. [9] Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "They took the thirty silver coins, the price set on him by the people of Israel, [10] and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 109 - Judas Hangs Himself - Matthew 27:1-10

1339. When did the religious leaders decide to put Jesus to death? (27:1)

1340. What did the religious leaders do with Christ? (27:2)

1341. Where did the religious leaders take Jesus? (27:2)

1342. Why was it significant that Jesus was taken to Pilate? (27:2)

1343. How did Judas feel when he saw that Jesus had been condemned to die? (27:3)

1344. What action did Judas take in an attempt to undo his crime? (27:3)

1345. What did Judas say to the religious leaders? (27:4)

1346. How did the religious leaders act when they heard Judas express second thoughts? (27:4)
1347. What did Judas do when the leaders rejected his offer to return the money? (27:5)
1348. What did the leaders do with the bounty they had paid Judas? (27:6-8)
1349. Why was Judas's suicide significant? (27:9-10)
1350. Why do you think the chief priests were so insensitive to Judas's remorse?
1351. How does sin, if allowed to go unchecked, cause us to lose all sense of rightness and kindness?

Lesson 110 - Jesus Before Pilate - Matthew 27:11-26

MT 27:11 Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

MT 27:12 When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. [13] Then Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?" [14] But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge--to the great amazement of the governor.

MT 27:15 Now it was the governor's custom at the Feast to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. [16] At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. [17] So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" [18] For he knew it was out of envy that they had handed Jesus over to him.

MT 27:19 While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him."

MT 27:20 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.

MT 27:21 "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the governor. "Barabbas," they answered.

MT 27:22 "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?" Pilate asked. They all answered, "Crucify him!"

MT 27:23 "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate.
But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

MT 27:24 When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!"

MT 27:25 All the people answered, "Let his blood be on us and on our children!"

MT 27:26 Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 110 - Jesus Before Pilate - Matthew 27:11-26

1352. What title and position did Pilate have? (27:11)
1353. What question did Pilate ask Jesus? (27:11)
1354. How did Jesus answer the Roman authority? (27:11)
1355. How did Jesus answer the Jews when they made accusations against Him? (27:12)
1356. What did Pilate think of Christ's silence? (27:13-14)
1357. What custom did the governor follow at this particular time of year? (27:15)
1358. Who was in prison at the time? (27:16)
1359. What choice did Pilate put before the crowd? (27:17-18)
1360. What message did Pilate's wife send him? (27:19)
1361. How did the religious leaders influence the crowd? (27:20)
1362. What choice did the crowd make? (27:21)
1363. What did the crowd ask Pilate to do to Christ? (27:22)
1364. How did Pilate attempt to evade any responsibility in the condemnation of Jesus? (27:24)
1365. What ironic statement did the crowd make about Jesus' blood? (27:25)

1366. What happened to the two prisoners—Barabbas and Jesus? (27:26)

Lesson 111 - The Soldiers Mock Jesus - Matthew 27:27-31

MT 27:27 Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. [28] They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, [29] and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. [30] They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. [31] After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 111 - The Soldiers Mock Jesus - Matthew 27:27-31

1367. Who took charge of the flogging and crucifixion of Jesus? (27:26-27)

1368. How many people were involved in torturing Jesus? (27:27)

1369. Where did the guards take Jesus? Why? (27:27-28)

1370. Once they had Jesus inside, what did the guards do? (27:27-31)

1371. What did the guards make Jesus wear? (27:28-29)

1372. What did the soldiers put on Jesus' head? Why? (27:29)

1373. In what way did these soldiers mock Jesus? (27:29)

1374. With what did the soldiers ridicule Christ? (27:29)

1375. What types of emotional and physical abuse did the guards inflict on Christ? (27:30)

1376. After mocking Jesus, what did the soldiers do? (27:31)

1377. What evils have become legitimized by consensus in our society today?

1378. What can Christians do to resist the tendency for evil to spread once it becomes common?

Lesson 112 - The Crucifixion - Matthew 27:32-44

MT 27:32 As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross. [33] They came to a place called Golgotha (which

means The Place of the Skull). [34] There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. [35] When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. [36] And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. [37] Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. [38] Two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. [39] Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads [40] and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!"

MT 27:41 In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. [42] "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. [43] He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.' " [44] In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 112 - The Crucifixion - Matthew 27:32-44

- 1379. When did these events take place? (27:32)
- 1380. Whom did Jesus and his executioners meet as they were making their way to the site of the crucifixion? (27:32)
- 1381. What was Simon forced to do? For whom? (27:32)
- 1382. Where did the group take Jesus? (27:33)
- 1383. What is the meaning of "Golgotha"? (27:33)
- 1384. What was offered to Jesus? (27:34)
- 1385. After nailing Jesus to the cross, what did the soldiers do? (27:35-36)
- 1386. What did the soldiers place above Jesus' head? (27:37)
- 1387. Who was executed that day? (27:38)
- 1388. What did onlookers shout at Jesus? (27:39-40)
- 1389. What was the behavior of the religious leaders like as they watched Jesus die? (27:41-43)
- 1390. How did the robbers act toward Jesus? (27:44)

1391. In a passage where many people are anonymous, why do you think Simon of Cyrene is mentioned by name?

Lesson 113 - The Death of Jesus - Matthew 27:45-56

MT 27:45 From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. [46] About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"-- which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*

MT 27:47 When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah."

MT 27:48 Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. [49] The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."

MT 27:50 And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

MT 27:51 At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. [52] The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. [53] They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

MT 27:54 When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son* of God!"

MT 27:55 Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. [56] Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 113 - The Death of Jesus - Matthew 27:45-56

1392. What happened from the sixth to the ninth hour (from 12 noon until 3 p.m.)? (27:45)

1393. What did Jesus cry out at the ninth hour? Why? (27:46)

1394. What did Jesus' last words mean? (27:46)

1395. What did some of the bystanders think Christ had yelled? (27:47)

1396. What did one man in particular try to do for Jesus? (27:48)

1397. How did the rest in the crowd respond to the gesture of kindness toward Jesus? (27:49)
1398. What happened the next time Jesus cried out in a loud voice? (27:50)
1399. What supernatural event took place inside the temple when Jesus died? (27:51)
1400. How were things in Jerusalem at that time? (27:51)
1401. How did the death of Jesus affect activity in some of the area's cemeteries? (27:52-53)
1402. How did a Roman centurion react to the way Jesus died? (27:54)
1403. Who else was in the crowd watching the crucifixion? (27:55)
1404. Who in the crowd was most prominent at Jesus' death? (27:56)
1405. Why does it often take drastic measures or life-threatening upheavals to bring people to their senses and persuade them to follow Christ?

Lesson 114 - The Burial of Jesus - Matthew 27:57-61

MT 27:57 As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. [58] Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. [59] Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, [60] and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. [61] Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 114 - The Burial of Jesus - Matthew 27:57-61

1406. Who came to the execution site? When? (27:57)
1407. What was true about Joseph of Arimathea? (27:57)
1408. What did Joseph think about Jesus and His message? (27:57)
1409. What kind of help did Jesus receive at His death? (27:57-58)
1410. How did Joseph ask for the body of Jesus? (27:58)
1411. How did Pilate respond to Joseph's request? (27:58)

1412. What did Joseph do with Jesus' body? (27:59-60)
1413. Where did Joseph put Jesus' body? (27:60)
1414. How did Joseph seal the tomb? (27:60)
1415. Who watched Joseph bury Jesus? (27:61)
1416. Where were Jesus' disciples when all these events were going on?
1417. As a respected Jewish religious leader (see Mark 15:42-43 and John 19:38), what risk was Joseph taking in coming forward to bury Jesus?

Lesson 115 - The Guard at the Tomb - Matthew 27:62-66

MT 27:62 The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. [63] "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' [64] So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

MT 27:65 "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." [66] So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 115 - The Guard at the Tomb - Matthew 27:62-66

1418. When did the chief priests go to Pilate? (27:62)
1419. Who went to Pilate the day after Christ was buried? Why? (27:62-63)
1420. What words of Jesus did the chief priests remember and report to Pilate? (27:63)
1421. What did the religious leaders call Jesus? (27:63)
1422. What did the religious leaders want Pilate to do? (27:64)
1423. For how long did the religious leaders want help from Pilate? Why? (27:64)
1424. What were the Jewish leaders afraid would happen if Pilate refused their request? (27:64)

1425. What were the chief priests afraid would happen if Jesus' body disappeared?
(27:64)

1426. What command did Pilate give? (27:65)

1427. What did the religious leaders do to secure the tomb where Jesus was buried?
(27:65-66)