

The Gospel of Matthew

Lesson 12

Events Prior to the Death of the King

Matthew 26:1-27:26

Outline of these Chapters:

- 1A. Jesus predicts His betrayal; the Jewish leaders plan His death (Matt. 26:1-5).
- 2A. Jesus is anointed for burial in the house of Simon the leper (Matt. 26:6-13).
- 3A. Judas makes arrangements for the betrayal (Matt. 26:14-16).
- 4A. Jesus prepares for the Passover (Matt. 26:17-19).
- 5A. Jesus eats the Passover with His disciples and predicts His betrayal (Matt. 26:20-25).
- 6A. Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26-29).
- 7A. Jesus predicts His resurrection and Peter's denials (Matt. 26:30-35).
- 8A. Jesus prays at Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-45).
- 9A. Jesus is betrayed and arrested (Matt. 26:46-56).
- 10A. Jesus' illegal trial (Matt. 26:57-68)
- 11A. Peter denies the Lord three times (Matt. 26:69-75).
- 12A. Jesus' trials continue (Matt. 27:1-2).
- 13A. Judas kills himself (Matt. 27:3-10).
- 14A. Jesus' trial before Pilate (Matt. 27:11-26).

Jesus predicts His betrayal; the Jewish leaders plan His death
(Matt. 26:1-5).

We have already seen how the Jewish people rejected their Messiah. Because of this rejection the Lord Jesus predicted that He would do a new thing: He would build His Church (Matthew 16:18). He then began to predict His coming death at the hands of His enemies (Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; etc.). In Matthew 20:18-19 the Lord made this prediction: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him unto the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him." In this lesson we shall see the fulfillment of these words.

Matthew 26:2 makes it very clear that the Lord Jesus was not ignorant about what was going to happen to Him. All of these things which we are going to study in this lesson (His betrayal, arrest, trials, etc.) were known by Him and none of them caught Him by surprise. An interesting verse is Luke 22:22 which shows that all of these things were in the determined plan of God, though men would be fully responsible for the evil that they would do. Judas, for example, fulfilled God's overall plan, but Judas was fully responsible for the evil which he did. God did not make Judas do what he did. However, what Judas did fit perfectly into God's overall plan by which His beloved Son would provide salvation for sinful men.

The living God was certainly not surprised that sinful men would do these things (see Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:27-28). Notice Matthew 26:3-5. The Lord's enemies met to make their plots and plans to accomplish their sinful purposes. But God knew all about it and God would use even these terrible deeds to fulfill His perfect plan for bringing salvation to men.

It's encouraging to know that the Lord knows all about the future and is never caught by surprise. There are many things about the future that you may not know (the college you will attend, who your marriage partner will be, your future work, where you will live, your health, your wealth, the day and manner of your death, etc.). The omniscient God knows all these things. We don't know what the future holds, but we do know who holds the future!

The Son of Abraham About to be Offered Up

Not only does the Gospel of Matthew present Jesus as the "Son of David" (Matthew 1:1), the great Messiah King, but it also presents Him as the "Son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1). Abraham's first son was offered up as a sacrifice to die (see Genesis 22), even though God did not allow Abraham to actually put his son to death. Abraham's later and greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, was also offered up to die. According to Romans 8:32 we learn that God did not spare His own Son but He actually delivered Him up for us all. In these final chapters of Matthew we shall see Abraham's son offered up to die and then raised back to life.

When Abraham was about to offer up his son Isaac, he believed that God would raise his son from the dead, because he knew that Isaac must have children according to God's promise. He also knew that a dead Isaac could never have children. A dead Isaac could only have children if he were raised from the dead, and this is exactly what Abraham believed would happen (see Hebrews 11:17-19 and see Genesis 22:5--"we will come again and return to you"). Isaac, who was offered up (Heb. 11:17) and who then came down from the mountain alive, was a good picture or type of Abraham's later and greater Son, the Lord Jesus, who died and rose again, as unfolded in these last chapters of Matthew.

Jesus Is Anointed for Burial in the House of Simon the Leper (Matt. 26:6-13)

Consider the ointment that was poured upon the Lord as told to us in Matthew 26:6-13. How precious was this ointment? According to Mark 14:5 it could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii. A Roman denarius was a silver coin which represented an ordinary day's wages for a laborer. If you were to get a job in New Testament times, your boss would probably pay you one denarius for a day's work (this is the same coin given to the workers in the parable of the laborers--Matthew 20:1-16). Thus more than 300 denarii would be equal to almost the amount a working man could earn in a full year. A working man would not work on the Sabbath, so although there are 365 days in a year, there are only about 313 working days, and "more than 300 denarii" comes very close to the wages a man would get for a year's work. If your father has an average job, think of the sum of money that he makes in an entire year; this amount would be somewhat equivalent to "more than 300 denarii." No wonder the disciples, especially Judas (John 12:4-6), thought that this was a waste.

We need to make sure that we see things as God does. Jesus looked upon this act as an act of love and as a "good work" (Matthew 26:10). An act of devotion and worship towards the Saviour should not be considered a waste.

The suggestion that the money be given to the poor instead of being wasted in this way actually came from Judas (John 12:6), not because he cared for the poor but because he cared for himself. Judas held the money bag and he was a thief hoping to get some of this money for himself.

What the Lord says about the poor is very instructive. "Ye have the poor always with you, but Me ye have not always" (Matt. 12:11). The poor would always be around, but the Lord would not. This should tell us something about all we hear these days concerning "putting an end to poverty." Jesus made it very clear that as long as we are in this sinful and selfish world there will not be an end to poverty. Believers need to be realistic about this and not naive (showing lack of informed judgment). There are Biblical and responsible ways to help the poor, but believers need to realize that poverty will not be eliminated on this earth until the second coming of Christ.

The Lord labeled the deed of this woman as an anointment "for my burial" (Matt. 26: 12). This is a very interesting statement. People were anointed for burial after they died, not before. But the Lord's case was unique and special. He had to be anointed before His death because after His death when the women came to anoint Him (Mark 16: 1), He had already risen from the dead. It was too late to anoint Him then! Thus it had to be done prior to His death.

Perhaps there are things that you do as a believer that others might consider a big waste! The time that you spend in prayer and the time you spend reading God's Word might be considered by others a waste of time. After all, there are so many other things you could do with those minutes and hours. And why should a person go to church all Sunday morning, a good part of Sunday evening and Prayer Meeting night as well? What a waste! Isn't one hour each Sunday enough? Just think of all that you could accomplish if you had several extra hours every week. But here again, we need to make sure we see things as God does. The things that we think are very important uses of time might not be so very important in God's sight. Those who put God first will never lose out.

The Betrayer (Matthew 26:14-25)

As the Lord Jesus was eating with His twelve disciples, He made this startling announcement, "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me!" How did the disciples respond to this? Did they all say, "Lord, I'm sure You must be referring to Judas. We always knew that he was a traitor." This is not how the disciples responded at all. Instead they said, "Lord, certainly it is not I, is it?" (according to the Greek text, they said this in such a way that they expected a negative answer). In other words they were saying, "Certainly it can't be me, can it? I'm sure it's not me, but who is it?"

Judas had fooled them all. The others did not even suspect him, even on the very night when he did his horrible crime. Remember, the Bible teaches that Judas was an unsaved man, an unclean disciple who had never had his salvation bath (see John 13:10-11 and compare Matthew 26:24). This reminds us that it is possible for a person to be very "close" to the Lord and give every outward indication of being saved, but to not really be saved at all.

What Judas did perfectly fulfilled God's plan (see Matthew 26: 24--The Son of man goeth as it is written of him"). Do you think Judas will ever be able to stand before God and say this: "Lord, I played an important part in Your overall plan. The Old Testament Scriptures said that the Messiah must die and I helped to bring this to pass. Surely you should let me go unpunished because I helped to bring about the death of Christ and it was the death of Christ that has made it possible for countless number of people to be saved. I helped to bring about that great work of salvation!"? How foolish to think such a thing. Read what Jesus Himself said about this wicked man in Matthew 26: 24 (and compare Luke 22: 22). It is very true that the Sovereign God does use sinful and wicked men to accomplish His

purposes, but these men are held fully responsible for their crimes and for their sins. To see what God thinks about such reasoning, see Romans 3:5-8. It is true that God often brings good out of evil, but this does not give man any excuse to do evil!

The Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26-29)

In Matthew 26:26-29 the Lord Jesus instituted one of the ordinances of the Church (later in Matthew 28:19 He would institute the second ordinance of the Church--water baptism). This ordinance is today called the Lord's supper (or the Lord's table or communion). The Catholic Church teaches that the bread and the wine actually become the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (this teaching is called transubstantiation). Let's think about this to see if this is really so or to see if this understanding even makes sense.

When Jesus gave the bread to eat and the cup to drink, do you think the disciples really thought that they were eating and drinking His actual body? Remember, He was right there in front of them in His real body when He spoke these words! What then did Jesus mean when He said, "This is my body" and "This is my blood"?

The teacher can illustrate this with a snapshot or photo of someone. For our purposes here, let's assume that the picture is that of Sally Jones. If one should ask you, "Who's that?", you would probably hold up the photo and say, "This is Sally Jones!" And everyone would know what you mean by this. Actually it is not really Sally Jones that you are holding up because it is only a photograph and a mere piece of photographic paper. But everyone understood clearly what you meant when you said, "This is Sally Jones!" You were saying, "This is a picture of Sally Jones! This represents Sally Jones!" The Lord was saying the same thing: "This bread is a picture of My body; it represents My body and this blood is a picture of My blood; it represents My blood and should help to remind you of My blood and what I have done for you so that you can be saved and have your sins forgiven!" According to Luke 22:19 they were to eat and drink in remembrance of Him. Just as a photo reminds us of a person represented by the photo, so the bread and the cup help to remind us of the Lord Jesus Christ and what He did for us on the cross. God never wants His believers to forget the cross and what took place there. How important is the cross to you?

We must not overlook the significance and the importance of what the Lord did this night. In Matthew 26:18-19 the Bible makes it very clear that when this supper took place it was the Passover time of the year. The Passover was a very important day for the Jewish people. It reminded them of the time when God brought them out of Egypt and through the Red Sea. Try to help the students to put themselves in the shoes of the Jews who lived in the days of Christ, even in the shoes of the twelve disciples.

If you were to ask a Jew, "What is the greatest thing that God ever did for the Jewish people?" he would undoubtedly say something like this: "The greatest

thing God ever did for our nation was when He brought us out of Egypt with His outstretched arm and by His mighty power, and delivered us from Egyptian bondage and brought us across the Red Sea by an amazing miracle." This event was the key event in Jewish history. It stood out in their minds like no other event.

And yet, when the Lord Jesus met with His disciples on that final night He did not point them back to the great Exodus, the great deliverance from Egypt. Instead He instituted a brand new supper which pointed ahead to what He would do on the next day. This would turn out to be an event far greater than what God did for His people back in Egypt. The death of Christ on the cross is the key event in all of history. In fact, the Passover itself was a picture or type of this even greater event, because Paul in 1 Corinthians 5: 7 wrote, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." This is the great event which the Lord told them to remember.

The Lord mentioned the "new testament (covenant)," a term which should have been very familiar to these Jewish disciples. See Jeremiah 31:31-34 where new covenant promises are made to the nation Israel, including provisions for full forgiveness of sins. We now know that this forgiveness is based on the blood of Christ. Consider Romans 3:25:

"To declare His righteousness"--at the cross God demonstrated His righteousness and vindicated His Character. "How can a holy God allow sin to go unpunished?" The cross proved that sin does not go unpunished! God proved that He is not indifferent when it comes to sin. God does deal with sin and He deals with it severely.

"For (because of) the remission (passing over) of sins that are past through the forbearance of God" -- A holy and righteous God passed over sin and allowed sin to go unpunished for thousands of years (from Adam to the time of the cross). Prior to the cross, Old Testament believers were in paradise "on credit" (their sins had not been paid for yet, even though they received some of the benefits from what historically had not yet taken place; just as when we purchase something with a credit card, we enjoy possessing the purchased item, even though we have not yet paid for it). God's righteousness was shown at the cross in that God righteously judged and punished every sin that man has committed (or will commit). The cross is the center point and the focal point of all history. Old Testament believers looked forward to what God would someday do; believers today look back at what Christ has already done. The Lord's Supper focused on this key event: Christ's finished work on the cross.

Peter's Problem

Peter made some stirring statements in Matthew 26:33,35. "I will never be offended (v.33); I will not deny Thee (v.35)." I'll never do it! Someone has wisely said that we should never say never! We should not doubt the sincerity of Peter's words. He meant what he said. The problem with Peter was that he did not

know himself very well. He did not know his own weakness in time of great trial. He had a great deal of self-confidence but he lacked the Christ-confidence which he really needed. God does not want us to be self-confident but Christ confident (Phil. 4: 13). Peter also failed to prepare himself spiritually for the trying hours that would come ahead (see Matthew 26: 40,41,43).

The Terrifying Cup

In Matthew 26: 39,42 the Lord Jesus mentions a dreaded cup, which He did not want to drink from, unless it was the Father's will. What was this "cup"? And what was it filled with?

The contents of a cup can either be good or bad, a blessing or a curse. Because of our Lord's strong aversion towards this cup (He shrank from the awful prospect of having to drink from this cup), it obviously contained something terrible. There are several verses in the Old Testament that help us to understand the contents of this cup:

Psalm 11:6--What kind of people is this cup for?

Psalm 75:8--Who shall drink from this cup?

Compare also Isaiah 51: 17, 22 and Revelation 14:10; 16:19.

This cup is full of the wrath of God and the wicked deserve to drink from this cup. Because of their sins they deserve the wrath and judgment of God to fall upon them. The good news is that our Substitute, the Lord Jesus, took our place and suffered the wrath of God instead of us.

According to John 18:11 we learn that it was the Father who gave this cup to Jesus to drink (not the devil, not the Jewish leaders, not Judas, not the Romans, but the Father).

Why would God the Father give His beloved Son something terrible to drink? Why did the Father give to Jesus that cup which the wicked should drink? The answer to these questions is found in 2 Corinthians 5:21. When Christ died on the cross He was made sin for us (God treated Him as if He were the sinner). How must God deal with and treat sin? In only one way—judgment! Punishment, wrath, judgment and hatred must come down upon sin. All this is what we deserved and which should have fallen upon us because we are wrath deserving sinners. Our Substitute drank from the cup which we should partake from.

The Arrest

It's amazing to think of the great multitude of people, with all their weapons, who

came to arrest one unarmed man! The kiss of the betrayer is mentioned in verse 48. It probably would have been more in line with his real character if Judas had given this as a sign: "Whosoever I shall spit upon, that is He, take Him and hold Him fast" (compare Matt. 26:48). But Judas did not want his real character to show, so he continued to be a pretender.

The other gospels tell us that even during His arrest the Lord Jesus gave full evidence that He was really the Son of God. He performed two miracles: 1) He caused everyone (including Judas) to fall down by just saying some words (see John 18:6; 2). He healed a man's ear which had been severed by a sword (see Luke 22:51).

Peter acted on behalf of the Lord (Matt. 26:51 with John 18:10) but Jesus had to inform Peter that He really did not need his help. He could have prayed and the Father would have without a second's delay given Him more than twelve legions of angels (Matt. 26:53).

A "legion" at full strength consisted of 6,000 soldiers. Thus, if we use this figure, twelve legions would equal 72,000 soldiers. The Father would have sent more than this many angels! It is hard to imagine such an immense angelic army! The Romans only had one cohort (perhaps as many as 600 soldiers) who had been sent to arrest Jesus (see John 18:3 where the word "band" refers to a Roman "cohort"). A cohort is one-tenth of a legion. Twelve legions would contain 12 X 10 or 120 cohorts! And certainly one angel alone could easily wipe out an entire Roman cohort because angels are far superior to men in strength and power. If Christ had made this request, there would have been at least one complete legion of angels to protect the Lord and each of the eleven disciples. But the Lord never prayed this prayer! The reason He did not pray it is found in John 18:11. Jesus could not save Himself if He would save us. If He were not to go to the cross, none of us could be saved.

We should note that about 53 days later Peter once again used a sword against the enemies of Christ, and this time he was very successful. His sword did much more than slice off an ear; it pierced deeply into the hearts of thousands of people. This powerful sword was not made of metal, but it is described in Hebrews 4:12 and Ephesians 6:17. Peter is seen using this mighty sword in Acts chapter 2. How well did this sword penetrate (Acts 2:37)? It cut to the heart! Instead of bringing death, Peter's sword brought life to thousands (Acts 2:41 and compare Hebrews 4:12 where the word "quick" means "living") . Moreover, the same sword Peter used is the very same sword which is available for us to use today (compare 2 Corinthians 10:4). Are you a submissive believer who rightly uses God's Word in the power of God's Spirit? If so, then let the enemies of God be on guard! Some of them will be cut to the heart!

In Matthew 26:35 all the disciples said that they would not deny the Lord but would even die with the Lord. However, notice the sad words of Matthew 26:56: "All the disciples forsook Him and fled." In a time of great trial they did not have

what they needed to stand and remain faithful to the Lord. Later these same men would stand in the power and boldness of the Holy Spirit and many of them would give their very lives for the Lord and for the sake of the gospel. Their failure was not final.

The Rigged Trials

In Matthew 26:61 we have false witnesses speaking against the Lord. If you compare what they said with what Jesus really said in John 2:18-21, you will see how they misinterpreted and twisted His words. In like manner people twist and misinterpret the plain statements of Scripture today. (Compare 2 Peter 3:16 which speaks of people who "wrest" or twist the sacred Scriptures.) God says what He means and means what He says, and we need to be very careful to simply take Him at His Word and believe what He says.

In Matthew 26:63 Caiaphas places Jesus "under oath" ("I adjure thee"), the most solemn and weighty oath of all, namely "by the living God." Jesus was now required by oath to answer a most important question: "Tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God" (Matt. 26:63). The Lord knew that it was now impossible to remain silent. He could not deny Who He was.

His answer was "Thou has said" (v. 64) and this carries the meaning of "What you have said is so!" (See also this same expression in connection with Judas--Matthew 26:25.) See also Mark 14:62. Jesus also referred to Himself as "the Son of man" who would come again to judge the world (Matthew 26:64 and see Daniel 7:13-14).

As soon as Jesus had made this great claim the High Priest gave the verdict (Matthew 26:65): He is guilty of blasphemy! The Council (Sanhedrin) then pronounced the sentence (Matthew 26:66): He is worthy of death!

What was His great crime? He claimed to be the Messiah (God's anointed King), the Son of God! When criminals were crucified the charge or accusation was often written over their heads. For example, if a man intentionally killed someone, they might write, "This man is a murderer!" (This was to discourage any potential murderers who might see this and think, "I don't want to end up like this person!") Notice the accusation written over the head of Jesus (Matthew 27:37): "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." Such was His crime!

Peter's Denials

See Matthew 26:69-75. Notice how each denial became even stronger than the one before it, until finally Peter even began to curse and swear (verse 74). In verse 75 we are told that after his sin Peter went out and wept bitterly (verse 75). How is this an indication that Peter was really a saved man? Later when Peter's heart was again right with God he was given an opportunity to confess Christ boldly and courageously before thousands of people (Acts chapter 2; see especially

verses 14,22-24,36-37). Also Jesus graciously and lovingly gave Peter a wonderful opportunity to confess that he loved the Lord, and Peter was able to confess this three times! See John 21:15-17.

Have the students think about the difference between Peter and Judas (see Judas' remorse in Matthew 27:3-4). Both of these men sinned, but what was the difference? Both of these men fell but what was the difference between their falls? Peter fell but he later recovered. Judas fell and he never recovered. Peter was saved but Judas was not. Peter had a lapse of faith but Judas had a lack of faith, and there is a big difference. Judas confessed his sins to the wrong persons and he never went to God. Are there people today who go to the wrong people to confess their sins?

The Gospel According to Barabbas

The person of Barabbas is mentioned in Matthew 27:15-26. The person of Barabbas can be used in a very helpful way to illustrate salvation and the importance of the substitutionary death of Christ. To be saved, each of us need to see ourselves as Barabbas saw himself. Consider the following:

1) Barabbas knew that he was guilty and that he had done crimes worthy of death. He knew that he deserved to go to that cross and to suffer the death penalty. He knew that he was justly condemned (cf. Luke 23:40-41).

2) Barabbas knew that Jesus Christ was perfectly innocent and guiltless. Pilate knew this, Pilate's wife knew this, the thief on the cross knew this, and certainly Barabbas knew this as well (compare Luke 23:4,14,15,22,41).

3) Barabbas knew that Jesus was his Substitute. The name Barabbas means "son of the father." Jesus, the true Son of the Father took the place of Barabbas and went to the cross instead of him. In recent years people have wrongly questioned whether the death of Jesus was really a vicarious and substitutionary death, but one thing is certain—Barabbas could never question this.

4) Barabbas knew that He had done nothing whatever to merit the marvelous benefits of that substitutionary death. He deserved death, but he was given freedom. Christ was condemned, so that he could be released.

5) Barabbas knew that his Substitute died so that he would not have to die. The only question before Pilate was whether Christ should die or Barabbas. When it was decided that Christ should die, Barabbas was set free.

To be saved, every one of us needs to realize these same five facts. Barabbas is a wonderful type of the guilty sinner for whom Christ died.

Was this man ever saved? The Bible gives no answer. He may not have been saved, even as today so many people think nothing and care nothing about the

fact that Christ died as their Substitute!

Pilate—Was He Guilty or Innocent?

See Matthew 27:24 where Pilate is seen washing his hands, symbolically removing himself from the guilt of the crucifixion of Christ. Was Pilate really innocent? What would have been the right thing for Pilate to have done (even though it would have taken great courage and would have greatly displeased the Jews who were crying for His crucifixion)? What does John 19:11 tell us about Pilate's innocency? Was he responsible, in part, for the death of Christ? Who was even more responsible according to John 19:11? Notice also in Matthew 27:25 that the Jews took full responsibility for the death of Christ.

What about you? Are you in any way responsible for the death of Christ? Are you part of the reason that the Lord Jesus went to the cross? See 1 Peter 2:24 and 1 Peter 3:18. Did He go to the cross because of your sins? Was it for you that He suffered and bled and died?

Notes for Further Study

Matthew 26:6. This is not the same "Simon" who is described in Luke 7:36-50. "Simon" was a common Jewish name. The two accounts have some similarities but also great differences. They are two separate accounts.

Matthew 26:13. Here the content of the gospel being preached is widened to include this account of this act of devotion rendered to the Lord. True gospel preaching should not just include the bare essentials (1 Cor. 15:3-4), but also the wider context of all these events which would include this anointing of the Lord's body for burial.

Matthew 26:27. "Drink ye all of it" is a confusing translation. This would mean that all of the liquid should be consumed. This is not what the phrase means. It should be, "All of you drink of it." That is, all of the disciples were to partake. The phrase is telling who should drink, not how much they should drink. "Drink of it, all of you" (ESV) is a better rendering.

Matthew 26:29. If we take this verse literally (and there is no reason not to), then it is telling us that Jesus will drink the fruit of the vine with His disciples in the kingdom. This is a problem for those who say that the kingdom is here and now. Is Jesus drinking the fruit of the vine with His disciples here and now?

Matthew 26:34. See our detailed study on Peter's three denials.

Matthew 26:50. "Friend." What tender compassion even toward His traitor!

Matthew 26:64-65. Compare Daniel 7: 13. If Christ were a mere man, then He would have been guilty of blasphemy. It is only God (the Son of God) who will someday come to this world in power and great glory (Matthew 24: 30).

Matthew 26: 74. The "cursing and swearing" does not mean that Peter used foul language and terrible swear words. The meaning is that he took a solemn oath, something like this, "I swear to God that I am telling the truth." This made his sin even worse, because he not only lied and denied Christ, but he broke a solemn oath in which God's Name was used.

Matthew 27:1. The Jewish council (Sanhedrin) could decide to put Jesus to death, but they could not carry out the death penalty. Only Rome could do this. Thus the case had to be brought to Pilate.

Matthew 27:2. The word "delivered" (from a verb meaning "hand over, give over, to turn someone over to someone else") is used in various ways. It was used of Judas, the betrayer, who handed Jesus over to his enemies. It was used of the Jewish leaders (as in this verse) who handed Jesus over to Pilate. It was used of Pilate who handed Jesus over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified. But it was also used of Jesus in Galatians 2: 20, "(He) gave Himself for us." He handed Himself over (voluntarily) to the cross. No one took His life from Him. He voluntarily gave up His life for us (John 10: 17-18).

Matthew 27:5. Compare the account of the death of Judas in Acts 1. We know that both of these accounts are true. Perhaps Judas hung himself but somehow the rope broke resulting in the fall and fatal injury described in Acts 1.

Matthew 27:4. The Lord's innocence was declared by many: here by Judas, by Pilate's wife who called Him "just" (righteous)–(Matt. 27: 19); and by Pilate (Matt. 27: 24).