

Matthew Chapter 26-28 – The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus – Part 1

Matthew 26:1-16 – The Plan to Kill Jesus Solidified

Introduction

Matthew is a narrative written with a particular purpose. Its main purpose was to demonstrate that Jesus is the Messiah. This is done through a combination of recording the accounts and discourses of Jesus. We have just concluded the fifth and final discourse in Matthew.

- The first discourse - Matthew 5-7 (5:1-2, 7:28-29) – Sermon on the Mount
- The second discourse - Matthew 10 (10:1, 5, 11:1) – Discipleship of Jesus
- The third discourse - Matthew 13 (13:1-3, 36, 53) – Parables of Jesus
- The fourth discourse - Matthew 18 (18:1, 19:1-2) – Greatness in the Kingdom
- The fifth discourse - Matthew 23-25 (23:1, 24:1-4, 26:1-2) – Olivet Discourse

Before, between, and after the discourses, the narrative progresses from location to location and records the conversations, challenges, miracles, and wisdom of Jesus the Messiah. The narrative sections complete the account of Matthew:

- His birth and early life – 1-2
- His introduction to Israel – 3-4
- His miracles – 8-9
- Affirmation and opposition – 11-12
- Evidence of Jesus' Messiahship and more opposition – 14-17
- Jesus' Judean ministry – 19-22
- The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus – 26-28

Chapters 26-28 Overview

1. The plan solidified (26:1-16)
2. The Last Passover (26:17-30)
3. Jesus predicts the failing of the disciples (26:31-35)
4. The Garden of Gethsemane (26:36-46)
5. The arrest of Jesus (26:47-56)
6. Jesus before the Sanhedrin (26:54-68)
7. Peter denies knowing Jesus (26:69-75)
8. Judas' sorrow (27:1-10)
9. Jesus before Pilate (27:11-26)
10. The crucifixion (27:27-56)
 - a. Scourging
 - b. Death
 - c. Significance
11. The burial (27:57-66)
12. The resurrection (28:1-10)
13. The conspiracy (28:11-15)
14. The commission (28:16-20)

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Transition

Matthew 26:1 is the bookmark that Matthew uses to transition from discourse to narrative.

Καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς – And when Jesus had completed this (all these words). This Greek phrase is found in Matthew five times (Matthew 7:28, 11:1, 13:53, 19:1, 26:1).

This phrase is used consistently and at the end of every discourse to distinguish the discourses from the narrative in the Book of Matthew.

The Plan Solidified

Matthew 26:2 – Jesus gives the timetable for the events that are about to happen. It is currently two days before Passover, and Jesus indicates that He is going to be handed over for crucifixion.

handed over - παραδίδομι paradidomi – This word is used here and means to hand over, turn over, give up a person; to transfer someone or something over to another's authority. Because we have read this account before, we know the process. Judas will hand over Jesus to the Jewish authorities, and Jesus will then be handed over to the Roman authorities for crucifixion.

crucifixion – σταυρόω stauroo – In English, this word means to treat with gross injustice, an unfair persecution. However, the word in the Bible does not convey injustice or unfairness; it simply was a method of execution.

The verb *crucify* is taken from the noun for cross. The verb then means to be placed on a cross.

The practice of placing someone on a cross was not a temporary punishment but a death sentence. It was most commonly used for the most public of executions and is the most infamous and brutal method of execution.

It may have been used by Persians, but it was definitely perfected by the Romans. In the Bible, it is mentioned that the executed are hung on a tree as a display (Genesis 40:19; Deuteronomy 21:22-23; Joshua 10:26-27). The practice of being impaled on a tree or a wooden structure was not uncommon to the Jews, but it was not a method of death; it was used afterward as a display.

The use of crucifixion as the method of execution was only used for non-citizens and for criminals who disturbed the peace, deserters, and rebels.

When Jesus states that He will be handed over for crucifixion, He indicates that it will be the Romans who will do the final act of execution.

Matthew 26:3-5 – With all Jesus' popularity, the direct confrontation, and the miracles, the entire leadership council of the Jews gathered together in the court of Caiaphas and plotted to arrest Him. The NASB states by *stealth*. This does not mean secretly.

δόλος dolos – means taking advantage through craft and underhanded methods (deceit, cunning, treachery). Their plan then was to arrest and kill Jesus by lying about Him (26:59-61). They could not legally arrest Jesus because they were not able to demonstrate a sin.

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Not during the festival indicates that their original plan was to not arrest Jesus and have Him killed during the days of Passover (Unleavened Bread and Passover). The plan was because they feared riots, not because they were acting piously.

What changed? Judas.

Matthew 26:6-13 – This event is not recorded in chronological order; rather, this happened four days prior. We know this because of John 12:1-3. After we review the event, then we will ask a question about timing.

They were having dinner at Simon the Leper's house, but Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were eating with Jesus. The woman who came to Jesus was Mary, and she took very costly perfume and poured it on his head (John also mentions His feet).

Matthew does not specify how costly or the kind of perfume, but the parallels in Mark 14:5 and John 12:5 tell us it was a vial of pure nard, probably from India. If it weighed twelve ounces, it would have been worth about 300 denarii, which was an entire year's wages.

After rebuking Judas' objection, along with other disciples, Jesus explains that she has done a good thing. What she did, she did to prepare Me for burial. This act was usually done after death, not before. But as we will discover later, Mary comes to do this again after His death but does not have the opportunity.

Did she do this knowingly or unknowingly? Remember, Jesus has been speaking about His death for some time now. Based on her actions, I believe that Mary understood that Jesus was speaking literally and honored Jesus in preparation for His death.

Jesus then honors her as she will be remembered whenever the gospel (of the kingdom) is proclaimed.

Why does Matthew record this here?

Because it falls in line with the plot. The plot to crucify Jesus is not one of the Jewish leadership and Judas alone. Jesus, the Father, and now Mary are all in on the plan. Mary knowingly declared that Jesus would be killed.

Matthew 26:14-16

Judas acts according to his plan to profit from his relationship with Jesus. Perhaps Judas thought his opportunities for profit had dried up. Some opine that Mary's act was a catalyst (John 12:4-6). Regardless, Judas sets in motion the final act that will lead to the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Jesus' plans, the plans of the Sanhedrin, the understanding of Mary, and the actions of Judas are all in alignment, and the plan of the crucifixion is now solidified and confirmed.

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The words of the Sanhedrin indicate that they want to wait, but Jesus orchestrates the events to take place at Passover. Jesus even dismissed Judas to go and betray Him after the Passover meal.

What is our major takeaway?

First, Jesus, in His humanity, was given authority to orchestrate prophetic history. The Father planned it, and Jesus carried it out. He clearly told of His betrayal and His crucifixion repeatedly prior to the events.

Second, Jesus did not cause anyone to do what they did. Judas, the Jews, the Sanhedrin, Pilate, and the Romans are responsible for their choices. Israel is responsible for killing Him even though the Father planned it from the beginning (Acts 2:22-23).