

- Last week we looked at the events leading up to the death of Christ. We looked at how the apostles still didn't quite get the urgency of the situation, and how Christ responded with predictions, and the institution of communion. We also looked at the betrayal and arrest of Jesus, and how He conducted Himself in the "trials" he faced.
- This week we are going to look at the events of Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection, including what happened to the apostle known as Judas who betrayed. We will also look at the things Jesus did after He was resurrected, including how He ascended to heaven.
- Matthew's Gospel account tells us that Judas was sorry that he betrayed Jesus. In fact, he was so distraught about it he tried to give the 30 pieces of silver back but the Jewish religious leaders wouldn't take it because it was "blood money." So, Judas just throws the money down and goes to hang himself. The religious leaders take the money and buy a field to bury him and others like him in the future. They name it Akeldama - which literally means, "field of blood." (Matthew 27:3-10)
- Matthew writes this was done to fulfill the words spoken by the prophet Jeremiah. It was written down by the prophet Zechariah. Critics have said Matthew was erroneous in his attribution. However, the New Testament is full of cases where writers refer to the first prophet on a scroll as having said something (and maybe Jeremiah he did say it also, Matthew only notes that it was spoken, not written down) when it was actually written down by a different prophet later in the scroll. (Zechariah 11:12-13)
- The account we read in Acts differs slightly from Matthew's version of events. We read in Acts that Judas purchased the field and that he committed suicide by jumping on some rocks and being disemboweled. These are easily reconcilable. The Jewish leaders were circulating the story that Judas had bought the field since they didn't want that "blood money" on their hands, but it was likely they who bought the field - but it doesn't really matter who bought it. As far as the disembowelment part, the most plausible explanation is that he hung himself, then the rope broke and he ended up falling on the rocks and being disemboweled too. (Acts 1:15-18)
- Christ was led from his final trial to be crucified since He had been sentenced to death. Remember that He has already been mocked, beaten, and whipped in His trials. It was Roman tradition to put people to death by crucifying them, and to make them carry their own instrument of death. Christ was too weak from His experience to carry his own cross. So, after taking off the Royal purple robe they had been using to mock Him and then putting Him back in His own clothes, they got a person named Simon of Cyrene to help him carry his cross. A procession of people goes out to a hill called Golgotha, which in the Jewish language means "the place of the skull", where Christ is to be crucified between two persons convicted of thievery. During the process, Christ explains to the multitude that the day is coming that they will wish the terrain would cover them up because the affliction would be so bad. (Matthew 27:31-34, Mark 15:20-23, Luke 23:26-33)

- Crucifixion was a horrible death that ultimately resulted in suffocation, or heart failure. It could take days for someone to die. Sometimes people were tied to a cross (like the case of the thieves) and sometimes they were nailed (like in the case of Christ). In this case the people carrying out the crucifixion were probably in a hurry to see it through because the Passover holiday was fast approaching. Many people were mocking Jesus saying things like He should be able to save Himself. Christ was at one point offered some wine mixed with a medicinal tree bark called myrrh to drink but He would not. Soldiers who were there were gambling for Christ garment (in fulfillment of [Psalms 22:18](#)) Some notable things happened when Christ was being crucified: 1) the whole sky went dark and the sun stopped shining 2) the veil of the temple that separated the holy place from the holy of holies where only the priest would go was torn in two from the top to the bottom on its own (an unlikely way to tear something). This was the place where the priest could only go once a year to intercede to the sins of the people, indicating that priests weren't needed anymore because Christ became the way for all of us to approach God. 3) Dead people got out of their tombs and walked around. All these things together lead the head of the Roman soldiers (called a Centurion) to say that Christ really must have been the Son of God. Christ said seven things while He was on the Cross, to piece all these together we must include a look at the Gospel account written by John also. These statements were to different audiences and show Christ's true nature. 1) "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." (Christ to God, asking Him to be merciful to those who were putting him to death). 2. "Today you will be with me in Paradise." (a promise made to one of the thieves who believed in Jesus, proving that there is life after death, most likely in some kind of pleasant "holding bin"). 3. "Woman, behold your Son/Son behold your mother." (Christ to Mary and John, indicating that Jesus wanted to forge a family bond between the two). 4. "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (In a cry of agony to His father, most likely indicating the separation between God and Christ was taking place at this point.) 5. "I thirst." (To anyone who would listen, which resulted in him getting a sponge soaked with wine). 6. "It is finished." (To everyone within earshot, meaning His work that He came to fulfill was done). 7. "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." (A prayer to God indicating that He was trusting His spirit to God upon the physical death of His body). Finally, to make sure he was dead a spear was thrust into His side, if blood came out, it meant he was still alive, but if water came out, it meant his body cavity had filled up with water and he was dead. That was what happened, in fulfillment of a prophesy made in [Psalms 34:20](#) that no bone of his body will be broken. This is significant because if He was found to not be dead yet, it would have been traditional to break his legs so he could no longer raise himself up and get oxygen. ([Matthew 27:35-56](#), [Mark 15:24-31](#); [Luke 23:33-49](#), [John 19:26-37](#))
- A follower of Christ named Joseph of a town called Arimathea got Pilate to agree to give him Christ's body so he prepared it for burial and provided a tomb to put Christ in. The Jews warned the Romans that someone might try to steal the body since Christ claimed He

would be resurrected, so the Romans secured the tomb and put a lot of extra soldiers outside to guard it. (Matthew 27:56-66, Mark 15:42-47, Luke 23:50-56)

- Christ died on the Friday afternoon before and right at the Passover. Christ arose from the grave, how it happened, we are not exactly sure. We do know that Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and some other women went to visit Christ's tomb right after dawn on Sunday morning. While this is going on, an angel of the Lord appears during a great earthquake. His countenance was like lightning and his robe was white as snow. All this scared the soldiers to the point that they fainted. The women come upon the scene and find the big heavy stone has also been rolled back from the door. The angel says that Christ is risen and that they should go and tell Christ's disciples what had happened. (Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:9-11, Luke 24:1-9, 12)
- Christ appears at least one or two times right away at his empty tomb. We think He appears just to Mary Magdalene (John's account we will study next quarter gives us more detail on this incident), then He appears to the women who came to visit his tomb when they are on the way back to tell the disciples as the angel of the Lord instructed. He tells them not to be afraid but to tell his followers to meet Him in Galilee. (Matthew 28:9-10, Mark 16:9-11, Luke 24:9-11)
- The soldiers who had been charged with guarding the tomb knew they were in big trouble for letting Jesus escape. Often Roman soldiers who failed in a job like that were executed. In this case, the Jewish religious leaders paid off the soldiers to say the disciples came and stole the body, so they do. That theory still circulates to this day. (Matthew 28:11-15)
- The stolen body theory doesn't make any sense for many reasons, two of those include: 1) there has never been any valid explanation for how a few of his disciples could defeat a beefed-up guard of Roman soldiers; and 2) Christ appears in the flesh and does many proofs of who He is with over 500 people over 40 days after his death on the cross (Acts 1:3, I Corinthians 15:6). We obviously don't have all His appearances written down for us.
- Christ appears again one or two times. If it was a second and third time (remember that the first time was at the tomb), it was to two persons both times. Then, we have some detail about what would be the fourth appearance. Peter and another apostle (we are not sure who) were walking along a country road in a village called Emmaus and they were discussing the events which had just taken place. Christ appeared to them (but they didn't know it was Christ till after He was gone) and explained how the prophecies showed He would be killed, buried, and raised again, and He takes communion with them. Then, He vanishes (Mark 16:12-13, Luke 24:13-15)
- If you reckon that Christ had appeared four times already, His fifth appearance comes as His disciples are talking about the things that had happened, and Christ appears before them and commits a physical act by eating fish. (Mark 16:4, Luke 24:36-43)
- The Gospel account John writes which we will look at later talks about a sixth and seventh appearance of Christ post-resurrection. The eighth time we read about Christ appearing was to the disciples on a mountain in Galilee where He said He would meet them, both through Mary Magdalene above and during the Last Supper. (Matthew 28:16-17)

Originally developed by Madison Laird for high school study at the East Foothill Church of Christ in San Jose, CA following a curriculum outline by Aaron Curtis. Edited by Betty Brown of Jackson, TN. Material may be used free of charge without license or royalty. Questions or comments: madison@madisonlaird.com

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The King is Dead and Long Live the King

Matthew 27:3-10 27:31 - 28 Mark 15:20-16 Luke 23:26 - 24

p 4 of 4

- In something we call “The Great Commission,” all the Gospel accounts have very similar wording Christ gave his followers – instructions to preach the Gospel and make more followers of Him all over the world. (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18, Luke 24:44-49)
- The last thing we read about after Jesus laying out the Great Commission is His ascension into heaven where He sat down at the right hand of God. (Mark 16:19-20, Luke 24:50-53)

Questions:

1. What happens when Judas tries to give back the 30 pieces of Silver?
2. What prophet does Matthew mention and how are we to reconcile that it was written by Zechariah instead?
3. What does Akeldama mean?
4. How does Judas commit suicide?
5. Who helps Christ carry the cross?
6. What is Golgotha and what does it mean?
7. What is crucifixion?
8. What were soldiers doing for Christ’s garment?
9. What three notable things happened at Christ’s death?
10. What were the seven statements of Christ on the cross and what do they mean?
11. What is significant about the fact that a spear was used on Christ’s side?
12. Who buried Christ?
13. Why was Christ’s tomb secured by the Romans?
14. Describe the events surrounding Christ’s resurrection.
15. Describe Christ’s first two appearances at His tomb.
16. What were the Roman soldiers guarding Christ’s tomb paid to say? Give two reasons this story does not make sense.
17. What does Christ eat once when He returns?
18. What is significant about the fact the Christ meets the disciples on a Mountain in Galilee?
19. What is the Great Commission and what does it say?
20. Where does Jesus go after he gives the Great Commission?

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