

The Gospel of Matthew

Session 23: Matthew 27: The Passion of the King

NEXT WEEK: Gen 3:13-24, Psalm 22, Jer 18, 19, 32-33, Zec 11:12:13, Matt 26:75, Jn 19:1-22, Heb 12:18, 12:21-24, 12:28 CCC: 651-655, 2174-2176

Review: Jesus now prepares to lead His own *Exodus*. He struggled with temptation in the Garden of Gethsemane and set aside His own will to do His Father's will. He has finally stated to Caiaphas that He is the Messiah.

NOTES AND QUOTE

1. Scripture is a fountain we cannot exhaust; we can read and re-read and each time garner more
2. The only way Jesus could usher in the kingdom of Heaven on earth was by giving all and doing what Adam failed to do
3. Judas betrays Jesus for 30 pieces of silver; when Judas returns silver, temple priest buys a potter's field¹ which was a garbage dump outside Jerusalem and had been used for human sacrifices in another time
4. True repentance is when you are sorry but you are hopeful of restoration² (CCC1430); it is a *conversion of the HEART*; a *radical reorientation* of our whole life
- 5. Remember the life of Jesus is a recapitulation of the life of Israel; Israel broke the covenant and covenant law states when that happens one of the parties has to die; there are many curses (Deut 28:15-69. Lev 26) that accompany a broken covenant; Jesus takes upon Himself the curses of the broken covenant with Israelites AND the curses that accompany the fall of Adam and Eve**
- 6. Jesus death and resurrection had a twofold purpose: 1. To make right the broken covenant with Israel, 2. To restore all mankind from the original sin in Garden of Eden**
7. Jesus is accused of thing rebellious which is exactly what Adam and Eve did against God by exercising their free will (highest treason!); now we go to Jesus in the agony in the garden – He did not rebel against God-He became the servant (Psalm 89) but suffering servant (Is 49, 53) will be restored.
8. Release of Barabbas: Customary for the governor to *release*³ a prisoner during Passover to symbolize the exodus from Egyptian bondage; the choice was between Barabbas (name means "*son of the father*") and Jesus; Pilate knew was because of envy that high priests delivered Jesus and wanted His death (difference between envy and jealousy⁴); the only way Barabbas could be released was if Jesus was convicted; Jesus is being turned over to the Gentiles (part of curse listed in Deut 28); In a seemingly inconsequential legal decision that still quakes through the centuries, Pilate was **in essence** asking the Jerusalem crowd: "Which one do you want me to release to you:
Yeshua son of the father or Yeshua son of the father, whom his followers call Messiah?"
Pilate gave up one Jesus for another Jesus, one "son of the father" in place of another. He exchanged an assassin for an innocent man who died in his place. This decision surely has the fingerprint of God.⁵; the blessing of Abraham now comes upon the Gentiles (Gal 3:13-14; Gen 12:1-3); the *last* Adam (Jesus) makes right what Adam made wrong; (Mary as *second Eve* unties know of Eve's disobedience and is co-redemptrix – works with Jesus); both **trusted God**
9. Church is born with out of the mingling of blood and water from side of Christ – reminds us of His humanity and divinity (at Mass, the priest pours a bit of water into the wine; Jesus quotes Psalm 22 "Why have you forsaken me?" (Matt 27:46)
10. St Paul teaches: Jesus' death made Israel free from the Old Covenant; you are free to enter into the New Covenant; he uses story of marriage and a widow to explain they are free from the old law to because Jesus died for them and His resurrection freed them to enter a new live, a new covenant with Christ
11. Carrying of the Cross: we are given a very small *particle* (a *Salvifici Doloris*-redemptive participation in Christ's suffering) so that we might come to know the love of God and participate in union with Him on the *PATENT*⁶ during Mass; Simon of Cyrene was first to pick up the cross of Jesus
12. Through suffering, we receive the gift from Christ to know the love of the Trinity
- 13: When Jesus died, the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom; what does a father do when he loses his son⁷; for God the Father, the grief of heaven over death of His son and now gives access to the Holy of Holies for all; now it proves that we can TRUST the FATHER!

¹Potter's Field or High Priest's Tomb? Keldama (Field of Blood)

Akeldama, where **Judas Iscariot** died, is in Jerusalem's Hinnom Valley — a picturesque setting whose infamous history of child sacrifices caused it to be identified with the hell of unquenchable fire and punishment. The

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Greek Orthodox Monastery of **St Onuphrius** now stands on the place where Judas is believed to have hanged himself. The monastery occupies a narrow terrace on the southern face of the valley, facing Mount Zion and the Old City walls. Akeldama (also spelt Aceldama, Hekeldama and Hakeldama) comes from Aramaic words meaning **Field of Blood**. The Gospel of Matthew says Judas repented after betraying Jesus with a kiss at Gethsemane. He then took his payment of **30 pieces of silver** back to the chief priests and elders and threw the money down in the Temple. “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**’. So they decided to use the money to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day.” (27:6-8) The Monastery of St Onuphrius, built in 1874 over the remains of an earlier church building, is occupied by a small community of **Greek Orthodox** nuns. It is dedicated to a saintly monk from the 3rd or 4th century. Onuphrius was famous for his luxuriant **beard**, which was his only garment apart from a loincloth of leaves. The hillside on which the monastery stands is honeycombed with burial caves and **tombs** — some of them holding the bones of pilgrims of past centuries who came to Jerusalem but did not survive to make the journey home. In the Byzantine period, many of these caves were occupied by **monks** and hermits.

The monastery **chapel** is in a former burial cave, with holes in the walls where bodies were laid. A 16th-century tradition says eight of the apostles hid here after Jesus was captured at Gethsemane. Near the Monastery of St Onuphrius are the remains of an underground charnel house built by the **Crusaders** in the 12th century, to bury the 50 or more patients who died each day in the hospital run by the Knights of St John near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Loads of **soil** from this place were often taken to consecrate Christian cemeteries in Europe. One of the tombs found near the monastery is believed to be that of **Annas**, head of the high priestly family that included Caiaphas, who presided at the trial of Jesus. On the same side of the Hinnom Valley, archaeologists excavating a tomb in 1979 found two tiny silver scrolls from around 600 BC, inscribed with portions of the **priestly blessing** from the Book of Numbers: “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.” (6:24-26) These inscriptions are the earliest known citations of **texts** found in the Hebrew Bible. During the First Temple period the Hinnom Valley became notorious as the place where apostate Jews sacrificed their children through fire to the pagan god **Moloch**. Because of these atrocities, the valley’s name (Gei-Hinnom in Hebrew, Gehenna in Greek) became a byword for **hell**, the place of eternal punishment by fire, in both Jewish and Christian traditions. In the Gospels, Jesus uses the Greek word **Gehenna** 11 times to describe the hell of unquenchable fire which can destroy “both body and soul” (Matthew 10:28). However, a Middle Ages belief that the Hinnom Valley continued to belch smoke and fire because it was a perpetually burning **rubbish dump** has no basis in fact. In modern times the Hinnom Valley has become a green and pleasant **venue** for picnics, rock climbing and concerts.

² CCC 1430: Jesus’ call to conversion and penance, like that of the prophets before him, does not aim first at outward works, “sackcloth and ashes,” fasting and mortification, but at the conversion of the heart, interior conversion. Without this, such penances remain sterile and false; however, interior conversion urges expression in visible signs, gestures and works of penance.

³ The word *release* is often used in OT (Matt 18; Jeremiah 34, Exodus 12)

⁴ Jealousy refers to thoughts or feelings of insecurity, fear, and concern over a relative lack of possessions or safety; can consist of one or more emotions such as anger, resentment, inadequacy, helplessness or disgust. ENVY is a feeling of discontented or resentful longing aroused by someone else’s possessions, qualities, or luck. ENVY is a two-person situation whereas JEALOUSY is a three-person situation. Envy is a reaction to lacking something. Jealousy is a reaction to threat of losing something or someone); creates sense that jealousy and envy are similar-even though different.

⁵ <http://www.hebrew-streams.org/works/ntstudies/yeshua-bar-abba.html>

⁶ PATENT - A paten, or diskos, is a small plate, usually made of silver or gold, used to hold Eucharistic bread which is to be consecrated during the **Mass**. It is generally used during the liturgy itself, while the reserved sacraments are stored in the tabernacle in a ciborium.

⁷ Tearing of one’s clothes is an ancient tradition among the Jews, and it is associated with mourning, grief, and loss. The first mention of someone tearing his garments is in Genesis. “When Reuben returned to the cistern and saw that Joseph was not there, he tore his clothes” (Genesis 37:29). A short time later, “Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days” (Genesis 37:34) when he thought that Joseph had been killed. Other biblical examples of men who tore their clothes to express pain and sorrow include David, when Saul and Jonathan were killed (2 Samuel 1:11–12); Elisha, when Elijah was taken up into heaven (2 Kings 2:11–12); Job, when he was bereft of all he possessed (Job 1:20); Jephthah, when he learned the result of his rash vow (Judges 11:34–35); Mordecai, when he learned of Haman’s plot to destroy the Jews (Esther 4:1); Ahab, when Elijah pronounced a judgment against him (1 Kings 21:27); and Paul and Barnabas, when the people of Lystra began to worship them (Acts 14:14). Sometimes, the tearing of one’s clothes was accompanied by other signs of humility and grief, such as shaving one’s head (Job 1:20), throwing dust on oneself (Job 2:12), and wearing sackcloth (2 Samuel 3:31).