
OF THE FOUR GOSPELS INCLUDED IN OUR BIBLE, MARK IS THE FIRST TO BE WRITTEN. SCHOLARS TELL US THAT MATTHEW WROTE HIS GOSPEL WITH A COPY OF MARK IN FRONT OF HIM. HE COPIED, ADDED, DELETED, CORRECTED, UNTIL HE HAD A GOSPEL THAT TOLD THE STORY OF JESUS AS IT WAS RIGHT FOR HIS OWN COMMUNITY AND ITS NEEDS. I'VE MADE NOTE HERE OF SOME OF THE WAYS MATTHEW DIFFERS FROM MARK. IT IS WRITTEN AFTER THE FALL OF JERUSALEM IN THE YEAR 70....WE THINK ROUGHLY 10 YEARS AFTER MARK WROTE....ABOUT THE YEAR 80-85. TRADITION SAYS IN ANTIOCH BUT MORE RECENT SCHOLARSHIP THINKS NOT.

MATTHEW 21-27

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

21When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, A VILLAGE JUST OUTSIDE JERUSALEM at the Mount of Olives, PART OF A RIDGE ON THE EAST SIDE OF JERUSALEM. SOME WITHIN JUDAISM AT THAT TIME BELIEVED THAT A BATTLE WOULD TAKE PLACE THERE AT THE END OF THE AGE. SEE ZECH 14:4 Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. COMPARE WITH MARK IN CHAPTER 11. 3If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.*' HAD JESUS SET THIS UP WITH SOMEONE BEFORE HAND? 4This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

5 'Tell the daughter of Zion,

Look, your king is coming to you,

humble, and mounted on a donkey,

and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.' DID MATTHEW ADD THE COLT TO MAKE IT MORE IN SYNC. WITH THIS FROM ZECH 9:9?

6The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; 7they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. 8A very large crowd* spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. AGAIN, NEITHER MARK NOR MATTHEW SAYS PALMS. 9The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!' PSALM 118, THE WORD MEANS "SAVE US NOW"

10When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' 11The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.' ROMAN EMPERORS WOULD ENTER A CONQUERED CITY THROUGH THEIR SHATTERED GATES, OPEN IN SUBMISSION TO THE MILITARY POWER, MOUNTED ON WHITE WAR HORSES. DELIBERATELY, JESUS COUNTERS THIS IMAGE.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

12 Then Jesus entered the temple* THE TEMPLE WAS A HUGE STRUCTURE...IT HAD BEEN

REBUILT BY HEROD THE GREAT ABOUT 20 BCE, NOT COMPLETED UNTIL 63 CE. IT INCLUDED MANY PRECINCTS, INCLUDING PLACES TO BUY AND SELL ANIMALS FOR SACRIFICE. PLACES FOR FOREIGN VISITORS TO EXCHANGE THEIR MONEY INTO TEMPLE CURRENCY. THIS WAS NOT A BAD THING BUT A SERVICE TO THOSE WHO HAD TRAVELLED TO WORSHIP. and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, MARK SAYS HE WENT THE NEXT DAY. and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves.13He said to them, 'It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer"; but you are making it a den of robbers.' JEREMIAH 7. THERE WAS A TRADITION OF SANCTUARY WHERE PEOPLE COULD FLEE TO THE TEMPLE FOR SAFETY FROM THE LAW....IS HE SAYING WE DO THAT TOO?

14 The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them.15But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard* the children crying out in the temple, 'Hosanna to the Son of David', they became angry16and said to him, 'Do you hear what these are saying?' Jesus said to them, 'Yes; have you never read, "Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself"?' PSALM 8:2
17He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, ANOTHER VILLAGE OUTSIDE JERUSALEM. MARTHA MARY AND LAZARUS LIVED THERE. and spent the night there.

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

18 In the morning, when he returned to the city, he was hungry.19And seeing a fig tree by the side of the road, he went to it and found nothing at all on it but leaves. Then he said to it, 'May no fruit ever come from you again!' And the fig tree withered at once.20When the disciples saw it, they were amazed, saying, 'How did the fig tree wither at once?'21Jesus answered them, 'Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, "Be lifted up and thrown into the sea", it will be done.22Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive.'

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

23 When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?'24Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.25Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?"26But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.'27So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.'

The Parable of the Two Sons

28 'What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today."29He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went.30The father* went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go.31Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.32For John came to

you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

The Parable of the Wicked Tenants

33 'Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, RECALLING ISAIAH 5. THE VINEYARD IS A TRADITIONAL IMAGE FOR ISRAEL. put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country.34When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce.35But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another.36Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way.37Finally he sent his son to them, saying, "They will respect my son."38But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance."39So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.40Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?'41They said to him, 'He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.'

42 Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures:

"The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone;*

this was the Lord's doing,

and it is amazing in our eyes"?PSALM 118

43Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.*44The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.*

45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them.46They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

CHAPTER 22

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

22Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying:2‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. LIKE THE IMAGE OF HARVEST, OR VINEYARD, THE IMAGE OF WEDDING IS ALWAYS ABOUT MORE THAN IT SEEMS. IT’S ABOUT GOD’S REIGN AND REALM. 3He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come.4Again he sent other slaves, saying, “Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.”5But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business,6while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them.7The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city.THIS IS BEING WRITTEN AFTER THE ROMANS HAD MARCHED IN AND SACKED JERUSALEM. THIS CANNOT BE READ APART FROM THAT KNOWLEDGE. HOW DOES THAT AFFECT THE READING AND UNDERSTANDING OF IT? 8Then he said to his slaves, “The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy.9Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.”10Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. BOTH GOOD AND BAD, HE SAYS. THIS IS A THEME IN MATTHEW. GOD CALLS BOTH GOOD AND BAD.

11 ‘But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe,12and he said to him, “Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?” And he was speechless.13Then the king said to the attendants, “Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”14For many are called, but few are chosen.’ WHO IS THE GOD FIGURE HERE? ARE YOU COMFORTABLE WITH THE TRADITIONAL INTERPRETATION OF GOD AS THE KING? WHAT OTHER WAYS MIGHT THERE BE TO SEE THIS?

The Question about Paying Taxes

15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said.16So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, POLITICAL SUPPORTERS OF THE HERODS, BECAUSE OF THE ORIGIN OF THE HERODIAN FAMILY IN A NON JEWISH AREA, MANY NEWS DID NOT REGARD THE HERODS AS LEGITIMATE RULERS OF ISRAEL. saying, ‘Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality.17Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?’ 18But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, ‘Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites?19Show me the coin used for the tax.’ And they brought him a denarius.20Then he said to them, ‘Whose head is this, and whose title?’21They answered, ‘The emperor’s.’THESE COINS (SEE MY NOTES IN THE MARK DOCUMENT) HAD THE IMAGE OF CAESAR ON THEM AND AN INSCRIPTION CLAIMING DIVINITY FOR CAESAR. Then he said to them, ‘Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’22When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away. THE POLL TAX STARTED A REVOLT IN THE YEAR 66. IT WAS WIDELY DESPISED.

The Question about the Resurrection

23 The same day some Sadducees came to him, saying there is no resurrection BECAUSE IT IS NOT MENTIONED IN THE TORAH. THEY WERE ARISTOCRATIC AND CONSERVATIVE AND HELD THAT “IF IT'S NOT SPECIFICALLY IN THE BIBLE THEN IT'S NOT ACCEPTABLE” AS OPPOSED TO THE MORE LIBERAL PHARISEES. * and they asked him a question, saying,24‘Teacher, Moses said, “If a man dies childless, his brother shall marry the widow, and raise up children for his brother.”25Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married, and died childless, leaving the widow to his brother.26The second did the same, so also the third, down to the seventh.27Last of all, the woman herself died.28In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her.’SEE DEUTERONOMY 25:5

29 Jesus answered them, ‘You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God.30For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels* in heaven.31And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God,32“‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”’? He is God not of the dead, but of the living.’33And when the crowd heard it, they were astounded at his teaching.

The Greatest Commandment

34 When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together,35and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.36‘Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?’37He said to him, ‘ “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”38This is the greatest and first commandment.39And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”40On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’HE QUOTES LEVITICUS AND DEUTERONOMY. THIS WAS NOT NEW; MANY RABBIS ANSWERED THE SAME QUESTION. FOR EXAMPLE RABBI HILLEL SAID “WHAT IS HATEFUL TO YOU, DO NOT TO DO YOUR NEIGHBOUR. THAT IS THE WHOLE TORAH, THE REST IS COMMENTARY, GO AND LEARN IT”

The Question about David’s Son

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question:42‘What do you think of the Messiah?*_ Whose son is he?’ They said to him, ‘The son of David.’43He said to them, ‘How is it then that David by the Spirit*_ calls him Lord, saying,

44 “The Lord said to my Lord,
‘Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet’ ”?PSALM 119

45If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?’46No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.CONFUSING BUT THE ARGUMENT TURNS ON THE COMMON BELIEF THAT THE CHILD CANNOT BE GREATER THAN THE PARENT. THIS IS A COMMON RABBINIC STYLE OF TEACHING.

CHAPTER 23

THIS ENTIRE CHAPTER IS DEVOTED TO JESUS' CRITIQUE OF THE RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP.

Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees

23 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 2 'The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; TEACHING AUTHORITY. 3 therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practise what they teach. 4 They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear,* and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. 5 They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries SMALL LEATHER BOXES CONTAINING SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS, TIED ONTO THE FOREHEAD AND LEFT ARM. SEE DEUT 6: 6 AND 8 broad and their fringes BLUE TWISTED THREADS AT THE FOUR CORNERS OF A GARMENT AS A REMINDER TO OBEY THE COMMANDMENTS NUMBERS 15: 38-40 long. 6 They love to have the place of honour at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, 7 and to be greeted with respect in the market-places, and to have people call them rabbi. 8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students.* 9 And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. 10 Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah.* 11 The greatest among you will be your servant. 12 All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

13 'But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! HYPOCRITES IS A SWORD DERIVED FROM GREEK THEATRE REFERRING TO THE ROLE ASSUMED BY AN ACTOR. For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them.* 15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell* as yourselves.

16 'Woe to you, blind guides, who say, "Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath." 17 You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made the gold sacred? 18 And you say, "Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on the altar is bound by the oath." 19 How blind you are! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? 20 So whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; 21 and whoever swears by the sanctuary, swears by it and by the one who dwells in it; 22 and whoever swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by the one who is seated upon it.

23 'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe SEE LEV. 27 FOR TITHING mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practised without neglecting the others. 24 You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

25 'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26 You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup,* so that the outside also may become clean.

27 'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, TOMBS WERE WHITENED SO THAT PILGRIMS WOULD NOT TOUCH THEM BY MISTAKE AND SO BECOME RITUALLY UNCLEAR. which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth. 28 So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29 ‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous,³⁰and you say, “If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.”³¹Thus you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets.³²Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors.³³You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can you escape being sentenced to hell? ^{*}³⁴Therefore I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town,”YOUR” SYNAGOGUES. CLEARLY BY THIS TIME THE SEPARATION BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND JEWS HAS BEGUN....³⁵so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT THIS PERSON, HE’S NOT REFERRED TO ANYWHERE ELSE. whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.³⁶Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.

The Lament over Jerusalem

37 ‘Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!³⁸See, your house is left to you, desolate. ^{*}³⁹For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.” ’

CHAPTER 24

THIS IS APOCALYPTIC MATERIAL, THE ASSUMPTION OF WHICH IS THAT HISTORY IS HEADING TOWARD SOME GREAT TRANSFORMING CATAclysm. NOT ONLY JEWS AND CHRISTIANS BUT ALSO PHILOSOPHERS, SHARED THIS BELIEF. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE IN THE YEAR 70 WAS COMMONLY SEEN AS THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

The Destruction of the Temple Foretold

24As Jesus came out of the temple and was going away, his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple.2Then he asked them, ‘You see all these, do you not? Truly I tell you, not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.’

Signs of the End of the Age

3 When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?’4Jesus answered them, ‘Beware that no one leads you astray.5For many will come in my name, saying, “I am the Messiah!”* and they will lead many astray.6And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet.7For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines* and earthquakes in various places:8all this is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

Persecutions Foretold

9 ‘Then they will hand you over to be tortured and will put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name.10Then many will fall away,* and they will betray one another and hate one another.11And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.12And because of the increase of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold.13But anyone who endures to the end will be saved.14And this good news* of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come.

The Desolating Sacrilege

15 ‘So when you see the desolating sacrilege standing in the holy place,THIS MEANS THE PERFORMANCE OF NON JEWISH RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE, PARTICULARLY IDOLATRY AND UNCLEAN SACRIFICE, IN THE TEMPLE. THE SELEUCID KING ANTOICHUS IV COMMITTED SUCH ACTS IN 167 BCE, PROVOKING THE MACCABEAN REVOLT. as was spoken of by the prophet Daniel (let the reader understand),AGAIN THE AUTHOR COMES OUT FROM BEHIND THE CURTAIN OF THE NARRATIVE AND ADDRESSES THE READER 16then those in Judea must flee to the mountains;17someone on the housetop must not go down to take what is in the house;18someone in the field must not turn back to get a coat.19Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days!20Pray that your flight may not be in winter WHEN FOOD MIGHT BE LIMITEDor on a sabbath.21For at that time there will be great suffering, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.22And if those days had not been cut short, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.23Then if anyone says to you, “Look! Here is the Messiah!”* or “There he is!”—do not believe it.24For false messiahs* and false prophets will appear and produce great signs and omens, to lead

astray, if possible, even the elect.²⁵Take note, I have told you beforehand.²⁶So, if they say to you, “Look! He is in the wilderness”, do not go out. If they say, “Look! He is in the inner rooms”, do not believe it.²⁷For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. THE SON OF MAN WAS AN APOCALYPTIC FIGURE PRESAGING THE ARRIVAL OF THE END OF THE AGE. DANIEL 7²⁸Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

The Coming of the Son of Man

²⁹ ‘Immediately after the suffering of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. ISAIAH 13:10, EZEKIEL 32:7
³⁰Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see “the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven” DANIEL 7:13 with power and great glory.³¹And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

³² ‘From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.³³So also, when you see all these things, you know that he^{*} is near, at the very gates.³⁴Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.³⁵Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

The Necessity for Watchfulness

³⁶ ‘But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son,^{*} but only the Father.³⁷For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark,³⁹and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.⁴⁰Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.⁴¹Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left.⁴²Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day^{*} your Lord is coming.⁴³But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.⁴⁴Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

The Faithful or the Unfaithful Slave

⁴⁵ ‘Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give the other slaves^{*} their allowance of food at the proper time?⁴⁶Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives.⁴⁷Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions.⁴⁸But if that wicked slave says to himself, “My master is delayed”,⁴⁹and he begins to beat his fellow-slaves, and eats and drinks with drunkards,⁵⁰the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know.⁵¹He will cut him in pieces^{*} and put him with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

CHAPTER 25

The Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids –

A PARABLE THE ENCOURAGES THE COMMUNITY NOT TO LOST HOPE OR PATIENCE AND TO REMAIN PREPARED.

25‘Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids* took their lamps TO BE CARRIED IN THE WEDDING PROCESSION. WEDDINGS IN THOSE DAYS WENT LIKE THIS: THE BRIDE AND HER WOMEN FRIENDS WAITED AT HER HOME UNTIL THE GROOM CHOSE TO BEGIN THE PROCESSION. IT COULD BE ANY TIME, AND PART OF THE “FUN” WAS GUESSING WHEN THE GROOM WOULD ARRIVE. THEN THE WOMEN WOULD GO OUT TO MEET HIM. and went to meet the bridegroom.*2Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.3When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them;4but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.5As the bridegroom was delayed, IT'S EASY TO SEE IN THIS PARABLE HOW THE COMMUNITY MATTHEW IS WRITING TO IS STRUGGLING TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE FACT THAT JESUS IS NOT RETURNING (AT LEAST NOT IN THE WAY THEY THOUGHT HE WOULD) AS SOON AS THEY THOUGHT. all of them became drowsy and slept.6But at midnight there was a shout, “Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.”7Then all those bridesmaids* got up and trimmed their lamps.8The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.”9But the wise replied, “No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.”10And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut.11Later the other bridesmaids* came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.”12But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I do not know you.”13Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.*

The Parable of the Talents

14 ‘For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them;15to one he gave five talents,* to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.16The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents.17In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents.18But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.19After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.20Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, “Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.”21His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.”22And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, “Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.”23His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.”24Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, “Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed;25so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.”26But his master replied, “You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter?27Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I

would have received what was my own with interest.²⁸ So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.²⁹ For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.³⁰ As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The Judgement of the Nations

31 ‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.’” HIS GLORY” IS HIS CROSS, NOT A FINAL JUDGEMENT. THIS IS THE EVE OF THE CRUCIFIXION, AND THE SEPARATION WILL BE IN HOW WE RESPOND TO THAT CRUCIAL EVENT. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, HERE IS A QUOTE FROM A BIBLE SCHOLAR WILLIAM ALBRIGHT: “WHY HASN'T THIS BEEN RECOGNIZED FOR WHAT IT IS; COMMENTARY UPON AND SUMMARY OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY? FROM REMOTE ANTIQUITY SHEEP AND GOATS HAVE BEEN KEPT TOGETHER...THE SHEPHERD CARES FOR BOTH” 33 and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. 34 Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; 35 for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” 37 Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? 38 And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? 39 And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” 40 And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, * you did it to me.” 41 Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; 42 for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” 44 Then they also will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?” 45 Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

CHAPTER 26

The Plot to Kill Jesus

26 When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples,² ‘You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.’

3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,⁴ and they conspired to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him.⁵ But they said, ‘Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.’

The Anointing at Bethany

6 Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,^{*7} a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table.⁸ But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, ‘Why this waste?’⁹ For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor.’¹⁰ But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, ‘Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me.¹¹ For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me.¹² By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial.¹³ Truly I tell you, wherever this good news^{*} is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.’

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

14 Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests¹⁵ and said, ‘What will you give me if I betray him to you?’ They paid him thirty pieces of silver. **MARK DID NOT GIVE US THIS DETAIL. PERHAPS IT IS AN ALLUSING TO THE PRICE OF REDEEMING A PERSON FROM A RELIGIOUS OBLIGATION (LEVITICUS 27: 1-8)** ¹⁶ And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

The Passover with the Disciples

17 On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, ‘Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?’¹⁸ He said, ‘Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, “The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.”’¹⁹ So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

20 When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve;^{*21} and while they were eating, he said, ‘Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.’²² And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, ‘Surely not I, Lord?’²³ He answered, ‘The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me.²⁴ The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.’²⁵ Judas, who betrayed him, said, ‘Surely not I, Rabbi?’ **IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW, JUDAS IS THE ONLY ONE TO REFER TO JESUS AS RABBI. IT IS A TITLE OF HONOUR MEANING TEACHER. IT DOES NOT BECOME A TECHNICAL TERM FOR AN OFFICE WITHIN JUDAISM UNTIL THE SECOND CENTURY.** He replied, ‘You have said so.’

The Institution of the Lord's Supper

THIS IS THE THIRD TIME JESUS HAS FED THEM: CHAPTERS 14 AND 15 ARE THE FIRST TWO.

26 While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' 27 Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; 28 for this is my blood of the* covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.' NOTICE AGAIN AS IN MARK, HE DOES NOT SAY DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. HMMMM.

FOUR ACTIONS ARE ALWAYS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS ACT. TAKING, BREAKING, GIVING AND BLESSING. BLESSING IS THE ACTION OF A MASTER; GIVING IS THE ACTION OF A SERVANT. JESUS IS BOTH HOST AND SERVANT. THIS FEEDING OF THEM WOULD NORMALLY HAVE BEEN THE WORK OF A SERVANT GIRL.

30 When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Peter's Denial Foretold

31 Then Jesus said to them, 'You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."' 32 But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.' 33 Peter said to him, 'Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you.' 34 Jesus said to him, 'Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.' 35 Peter said to him, 'Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.' And so said all the disciples.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; MARK TRANSLATED IT FOR US, MATTHEW DOES NOT. IT MEANS "PLACE OF THE SKULL" and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' 37 He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, JAMES AND JOHN. THESE THREE HAVE BEEN WITH HIM LIKE AN INNER CIRCLE ALL THE WAY THROUGH. and began to be grieved and agitated. 38 Then he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.' 39 And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.' 40 Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? 41 Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial;* the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' 42 Again he went away for the second time and prayed, 'My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.' 43 Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. 44 So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then he came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.'

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

47 While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people.48Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.'49At once he came up to Jesus and said, 'Greetings, Rabbi!' and kissed him.50Jesus said to him, 'Friend, do what you are here to do.' Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him.51Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear.52Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.53Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?54But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?'55At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me.56But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.' Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Jesus before the High Priest

57 Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered.58But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end.59Now the chief priests and the whole council **THE COUNCIL IS THE SANHEDRIN, THE OFFICIAL JEWISH COURT, 70 SCRIBES, PRIESTS, AND ELDERS, PRESIDED OVER BY THE HIGH PRIEST** were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death,60but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward61and said, 'This fellow said, "I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days."'62The high priest stood up and said, 'Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?'63But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, 'I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah,* the Son of God.'64Jesus said to him, 'You have said so. But I tell you, From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.'**DANIEL 7**
65Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, 'He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy.66What is your verdict?' They answered, 'He deserves death.'67Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him,68saying, 'Prophecy to us, you Messiah!* Who is it that struck you?'**MATTHEW HAS COPIED THIS PART FROM MARK BUT HE FORGOT TO ADD THAT THEY BLINDFOLDED HIM, OTHERWISE ASKING HIM TO GUESS WHO HIT HIM MAKES NO SENSE.**

Peter's Denial of Jesus

69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, 'You also were with Jesus the Galilean.'70But he denied it before all of them, saying, 'I do not know what you are talking about.'71When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, 'This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.'*72Again he denied it with an oath, 'I do not know the man.'73After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, 'Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.'74Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, 'I do not know the man!' At that moment the cock crowed.75Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: 'Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus Brought before Pilate

CHAPTER 27

27When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death.2They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor. IN THE ROMAN IMPERIAL SYSTEM, NOT EVEN CAIAPHAS, MUCH LESS LOCAL LEADERS LIKE ELDERS, SCRIBES OR PHARISEES, HAD FINAL LEGAL AUTHORITY. THEY HAD TO APPEAL TO THE REGIONAL ROMAN OFFICIAL, THE GOVERNOR. PONTIUS PILATE WAS THE ROMAN GOVERNOR OF JUDEA FROM 26-37 CE. HIS RESIDENCE WAS IN THE CITY OF CAESAREA MARITIMA ON THE COAST. PILATE WAS PROBABLY IN THE CITY FOR THE PASSOVER TO HELP KEEP ORDER.

The Suicide of Judas

3 When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus* was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders.4He said, 'I have sinned by betraying innocent* blood.' IN DEUTERONOMY, 27:25, A CURSE IS UPON ANYONE WHO BETRAYS AN INNOCENT PERSON FOR MONEY. But they said, 'What is that to us? See to it yourself.'5Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. THERE IS ANOTHER TRADITION ABOUT JUDAS' DEATH; SEE ACTS 1: 18-20 6But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, 'It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.'7After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners.8For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.9Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah,* 'And they took* the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set,* on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price,10and they gave* them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me.'

Pilate Questions Jesus

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus said, 'You say so.'12But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer.13Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?'14But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Barabbas or Jesus?

15 Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted.16At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus* Barabbas.17So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus* Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?*'18For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over.19While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.' ONLY MATTHEW REPORTS THIS, ABOUT PILATE'S WIFE. TRADITION (ST. AUGUSTINE) SAYS THAT HER NAME WAS CLAUDIA PROCLA. THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH CELEBRATES HER DAY ON JUNE 25TH AND THE GREEK CHURCH DOES SO OCT 27. 20Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed.21The governor again

said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.'²²Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?'^{*} All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!'²³Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!'**SOME MAY HAVE BEEN SUPPORTERS OF BARABBUS AND ONLY CRIED FOR JESUS' DEATH SO THAT BARABBUS WOULD BE SET FREE. OTHERS WOULD HAVE BEEN CARRIED AWAY BY MOB MENTALITY, URGED ON THE THOSE IN CONTROL WHO WANTED JESUS GONE.**

Pilate Hands Jesus over to Be Crucified

24 So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood;^{*} see to it yourselves.'²⁵Then the people as a whole answered, 'His blood be on us and on our children!'²⁶So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. **FLOGGING WITH A MULTITONGUED WHIP WEAKENED THE VICTIM BEFORE EXECUTION.**

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters,^{*} and they gathered the whole cohort around him.²⁸They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him,²⁹and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'³⁰They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head.³¹After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

The Crucifixion of Jesus

32 As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene **CYRENE WAS THE CAPITAL OF THE NORTH AFRICAN DISTRICT OF CYRENAICA, ON THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN COAST WEST OF EGYPT. IT HAD A LARGE JEWISH COMMUNITY.** named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. **NOTE MATTHEW HAS OMITTED THE NOTE ABOUT SIMON BEING THE FATHER OF ALEXANDER AND RUFUS, REPORTED BY MARK.** ³³And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull),**MATTHEW FEELS HE HAS TO TRANSLATE FOR HIS READERS. WERE THEY NOT JEWS? EITHER THE HILL WAS SHAPED LIKE A SKULL, OR IT WAS AN UNCLEAN BURIAL GROUND.** ³⁴they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; **GALL IS A BITTER SUBSTANCE.** but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.³⁵And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots;^{*}³⁶then they sat down there and kept watch over him.³⁷Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.'**THIS SPECIFIES HIS CRIME ACCORDING TO THE ROMANS: TREASON OR SEDITION AGAINST ROMAN RULE.**

38 Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.³⁹Those who passed by derided^{*} him, shaking their heads⁴⁰and saying, 'You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.'⁴¹In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying,⁴²'He saved others; he cannot save himself.'^{*} He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him.⁴³He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, "I am God's Son." '⁴⁴The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.**NO PENITENT THIEF HERE EITHER.**

The Death of Jesus

45 From noon on, darkness came over the whole land* until three in the afternoon.46And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' PSALM 22: 1 47When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.'48At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink.49But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.'*50Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.*51At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. REFERS TO AN ENORMOUS TAPESTRY THAT HUNG IN FRONT OF THE HOLY OF HOLIES, THE INNERMOST ROOM OF THE TEMPLE SEE EX 26: 31-33The earth shook, and the rocks were split.52The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised.53After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many.54Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!'*ONLY MATTHEW REPORTS THE EARTHQUAKE.

55 Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him.56Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.COMPARE TO THE LIST OF WOMEN MARK GIVES.

The Burial of Jesus

57 When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph,HE IS MENTIONED BY ALL FOUR OF THE GOSPELS. who was also a disciple of Jesus.58He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.59So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth60and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away.61Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The Guard at the Tomb

62 ONLY MATTHEW INCLUDES THESE VERSES. The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate63and said, 'Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, "After three days I will rise again."64Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, "He has been raised from the dead", and the last deception would be worse than the first.'65Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard* of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.'*66So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.IN THE EARLY CHURCH THE RUMOUR CIRCULATED THAT SOMEONE HAD STOLEN JESUS' BODY. PERHAPS MATTHEW IS ADDRESSING THIS CONCERN.

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