

Exegetical Notes, Matthew 27:1-10
“Bad Decisions/Bad Consequences”

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Matthew 27:1-10

Verse 1-2

Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people came to the decision to put Jesus to death. They bound him, led him away and handed him over to Pilate, the governor.

- Contrary to Jewish law, the Sanhedrin met secretly at night to try Jesus. Finally, in the early hours of the morning, they reached the decision that Jesus should be executed for Blasphemy, saying that he was God or the Son of God or equal to God.
- Since they could not sentence him to death without the approval of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, they sent him to Pilate so that their judgment and sentence of death could be made legal.

Verse 3-4a

When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priest and the elders. “I have sinned,” he said, “for I have betrayed innocent blood.”

- Apparently, Judas had not intended for things to unfold as they had. Clearly, he had not intended for Jesus to be condemned to death, for when he saw the outcome of his decision to betray Jesus, he was filled with remorse.
- The word translated “remorse” is the Greek word “metamelomai.” It is composed of two Greek words, “meta” which means with or among, and “melomai” which means out of concern for. Together this Greek word means to regret or to repent. It means to change one’s mind out of concern for one’s actions.
- Notice that when Judas returned the coins he had received for betraying Jesus to the priests he says, “I have sinned for I have betrayed innocent blood.” The indication is that Judas repented of this

sin out of concern for the subsequent outcome of it. He was sorry that he had betrayed Jesus and repented of it.

- Apparently, Judas hoped to escape the consequences of his behavior by returning the reward he had received for doing what he had done.

Verse 4b

“What is that to us?” they replied. “That’s your responsibility.”

- The response of the priests indicates the bitter truth. Judas could repent of his sin, but he could not undue the consequences of it. He had made a sinful choice and now he would have to live with the outcome. Though he might repent the crime, he could not escape the consequences of his action.

Verse 5

So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.

- Judas could not live with the consequences of his sinful behavior, so he killed himself. He was unable to forgive himself for what he had done when he decided to betray Jesus.

Verse 6

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.”

- This response is filled with hypocrisy. The money came from the treasury in the first place and was used to buy the blood of Jesus. It was OK to take money out of the treasury to use to ungodly ends; however, it was not OK to put it back after it had been put to those purposes. The trial of Jesus, from beginning to end, was conducted in forms contrary to the law. The chief priests had no concern for the law in this regard. But when it came to Judas’ money they were suddenly concerned about the law.

Verse 7

So they decided to use the money to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners.

- The potter’s field was a field from which potters took clay for the making of clay pots. It is unlikely that the potter would fill up the holes after he dug out the clay. Therefore, this field already had pre-dug graves waiting to be used.

- Foreigners who died while in Jerusalem would not have family burial plots available to them. They would need some common place where they could be interred. This field would serve nicely for that purpose, and so the chief priests bought it for this use with the money Judas had thrown into the temple.

Verse 8

That is why it is called the Field of Blood to this day.

- See Acts 1:16-19.

Verse 9-10

Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: “They took the thirty silver coins, the price set on him by the people of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter’s field, as the Lord had commanded me.”

- See Jeremiah 19:1-13 and Zechariah 11:12-13.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *Bad Decisions/Bad Consequences*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Senior Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by Dr. Jensen and *Cornerstone Fellowship*.)