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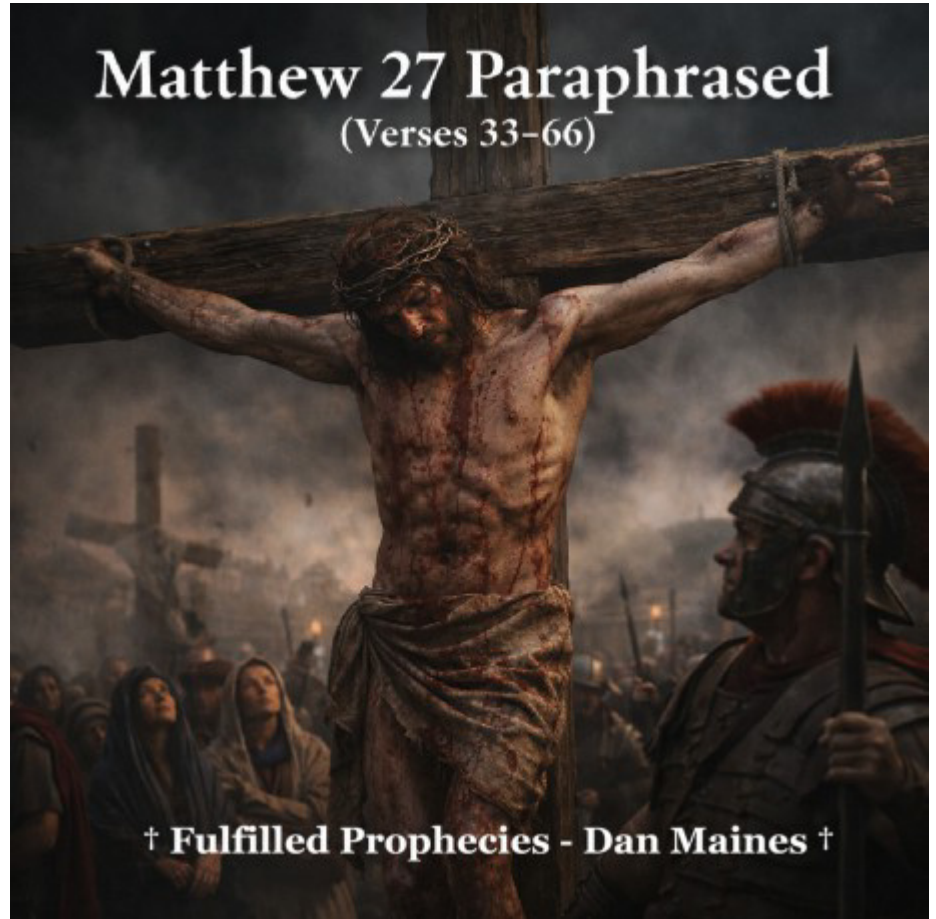
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## Matthew 27 Paraphrased (Verses 33-66)



By Dan Maines

## Matthew 27 Paraphrased (Verses 33-66)

### Introduction

† Matthew continues the account with the crucifixion itself, the moment where the rejection of the Messiah by the leaders of that generation reached its peak. The Roman execution was brutal, public, and humiliating, yet it unfolded exactly as the scriptures had foretold.

† These events were not random acts of violence. They fulfilled the prophetic descriptions of the suffering Messiah and demonstrated that Jesus willingly laid down His life as part of God's redemptive plan.

† Even the smallest details surrounding the crucifixion, from the dividing of His garments to the mocking of the crowds, occurred in ways the prophets had already described centuries earlier.

### **Matthew 27:33**

And when they came to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull,

† Golgotha was the location outside the city where Roman executions were carried out.

† The name likely came from the shape of the hill or from the association with death and execution.

† Roman law required crucifixions to occur publicly outside the city walls.

### **Matthew 27:34**

They gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall, and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink it.

† The drink was sometimes offered as a mild pain reliever to those being crucified.

† Jesus refused it, choosing to face the suffering fully conscious.

† This moment fulfilled the prophetic imagery of the suffering servant (Psalm 69:21).

## **Matthew 27:35**

And when they had crucified Him, they divided His garments among themselves by casting lots.

† Roman soldiers commonly took the clothing of the condemned.

† This fulfilled Psalm 22:18 which predicted the dividing of the Messiah's garments.

† Even the actions of the soldiers unknowingly fulfilled prophecy.

## **Matthew 27:36**

And sitting down, they began to keep watch over Him there.

† Roman guards remained present to prevent anyone from interfering with the execution.

† Crucifixions could last many hours and sometimes days.

† The soldiers' watch ensured the sentence would be carried out fully.

## **Matthew 27:37**

And above His head they put up the charge against Him which read, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

† Roman executions included a written charge explaining the crime.

† The accusation reflected the political claim brought before Pilate.

† Ironically, the sign declared the truth about Jesus' identity.

### **Matthew 27:38**

At that time two rebels were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.

† Jesus was executed among criminals.

† This fulfilled the prophecy that the Messiah would be numbered with transgressors (Isaiah 53:12).

† The placement further emphasized the humiliation intended by the Romans.

### **Matthew 27:39**

And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, shaking their heads

† The crucifixion took place along a public road.

† People passing by joined in mocking the condemned.

† The shaking of heads fulfilled Psalm 22:7.

### **Matthew 27:40**

And saying, You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself. If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.

† The crowd misunderstood Jesus' earlier statements about the temple (John 2:19).

† They mocked the idea of His power while He remained on the cross.

† Their words reflected their disbelief in His identity.

### **Matthew 27:41**

In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying,

† The religious leaders who condemned Jesus continued their ridicule at the cross.

† Their actions demonstrated the complete rejection of their Messiah.

† They believed the crucifixion proved Jesus was not the Christ.

### **Matthew 27:42**

He saved others, He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him.

† The leaders mocked the miracles Jesus had performed.

† They misunderstood that remaining on the cross was part of the mission.

† Their demand for a sign ignored the many signs already given.

### **Matthew 27:43**

He trusts in God, let God rescue Him now, if He delights in Him, for He said, I am the Son of God.

† This mockery echoed the words predicted in Psalm 22:8.

† The leaders used Jesus' own claims against Him.

† They believed the crucifixion disproved His relationship with God.

### **Matthew 27:44**

The rebels who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him in the same way.

† Even those suffering beside Him initially joined the mocking.

† The humiliation surrounding the crucifixion was complete.

† Luke records that one of the criminals later changed his response (Luke 23:39-43).

### **Matthew 27:45**

Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour.

† The darkness lasted approximately three hours.

† Such darkness symbolized divine judgment in scripture (Amos 8:9).

† The event marked the solemn moment surrounding the death of Jesus.

### **Matthew 27:46**

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI? that is, MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?

† Jesus quoted Psalm 22:1, identifying Himself with the suffering described in that psalm.

† The cry expressed the depth of the suffering He endured.

† Psalm 22 ultimately ends in vindication and victory.

### **Matthew 27:47**

And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, This man is calling for Elijah.

† The bystanders misunderstood the words spoken by Jesus.

† Elijah was often associated with deliverance in Jewish expectation.

† The misunderstanding continued the mocking atmosphere.

### **Matthew 27:48**

Immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink.

† Sour wine was a common drink among soldiers.

† The sponge allowed the drink to be lifted to the crucified victim.

† This fulfilled the imagery of Psalm 69:21.

### **Matthew 27:49**

But the rest of them said, Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him.

† The crowd continued mocking the situation.

† They expected some dramatic rescue.

† Their words reflected continued disbelief.

### **Matthew 27:50**

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

† Jesus willingly gave up His life.

† His death was not forced but surrendered according to His mission (John 10:18).

† This moment completed the sacrifice.

### **Matthew 27:51**

And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

† The tearing of the veil symbolized the end of the temple system's separation.

† The tearing from top to bottom showed it was an act of God.

† The earthquake emphasized the significance of the moment.

### **Matthew 27:52**

And the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

† This event demonstrated the power associated with the death of Christ.

† The opening of the tombs symbolized victory over death.

† The resurrection language reflected the hope connected with the Messiah.

### **Matthew 27:53**

And coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

† These appearances occurred after Jesus' resurrection.

† The event served as testimony to the power of God.

† It reinforced the reality of what had taken place.

### **Matthew 27:54**

The Roman centurion and the soldiers guarding Jesus witnessed the earthquake and everything happening around them, and they were filled with fear and said that this truly was the Son of God.

† The centurion was the Roman officer responsible for overseeing the execution.

† The supernatural events surrounding the crucifixion caused even hardened soldiers to recognize that something extraordinary had happened.

† The statement shows that even Gentiles began to recognize the identity of Jesus while Israel's leadership rejected Him.

### **Matthew 27:55**

Many women were also watching from a distance. These women had followed Jesus from Galilee and had supported His ministry.

† The male disciples had largely scattered, but these women remained faithful witnesses.

† They had followed Jesus for a long time and helped support the ministry.

† Their presence also establishes eyewitness testimony to the crucifixion.

### **Matthew 27:56**

Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

† These women appear repeatedly in the Gospel accounts as witnesses to the crucifixion and resurrection.

† Mary Magdalene in particular is mentioned in all four Gospel accounts.

† Their presence further confirms the reliability of the testimony surrounding these events.

### **Matthew 27:57**

When evening arrived, a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph came forward, and he also had become a disciple of Jesus.

† Joseph of Arimathea was a respected member of the council according to other Gospel accounts.

† His willingness to step forward shows courage since Jesus had just been executed.

† His actions fulfilled prophecy concerning the burial of the Messiah (Isaiah 53:9).

### **Matthew 27:58**

Joseph went to Pilate and requested the body of Jesus. Pilate then ordered that the body be given to him.

† Roman practice normally left crucified bodies exposed, but permission could be granted for burial.

† Joseph used his position and influence to ensure Jesus received a proper burial.

† This fulfilled the prophetic expectation that the Messiah would be buried with the rich (Isaiah 53:9).

### **Matthew 27:59**

Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth.

† Linen burial cloths were typical for Jewish burials.

† The care shown in the burial reflects honor toward Jesus.

† The burial preparation would also become important evidence for the resurrection.

### **Matthew 27:60**

He placed the body in his own new tomb which had been cut into the rock, and after rolling a large stone across the entrance he departed.

† Rock tombs were commonly used by wealthy families.

† The stone sealed the tomb entrance.

† This ensured the burial location was clearly known.

### **Matthew 27:61**

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.

† These women carefully observed where Jesus was buried.

† Their presence removes any possibility of confusion about the tomb location.

† They would later return to the same place on the first day of the week.

### **Matthew 27:62**

On the next day, which was the day after the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together with Pilate.

† The religious leaders remained concerned even after the crucifixion.

† They feared Jesus' followers might create a claim about resurrection.

† Their actions ironically set up additional proof of what would happen.

### **Matthew 27:63**

They said, Sir, we remember that while He was still alive that deceiver said that after three days He would rise again.

† Even Jesus' enemies remembered His prophecy about rising after three days.

† The leaders referred to Jesus as a deceiver, showing their continued hostility.

† Their memory of His words led them to take preventative action.

### **Matthew 27:64**

Therefore give orders for the tomb to be secured until the third day, otherwise His disciples might come and steal the body and say to the people that He has risen from the dead.

† The leaders feared the disciples would claim resurrection.

† They sought to prevent any possible movement of the body.

† Ironically this security would later strengthen the evidence for the resurrection.

### **Matthew 27:65**

Pilate told them they had a guard available and instructed them to secure the tomb as carefully as they could.

† Pilate allowed the religious leaders to take whatever precautions they believed necessary.

† Roman guards were trained soldiers assigned to ensure security.

† The presence of guards removed the possibility of a secret removal by the disciples.

## **Matthew 27:66**

So they went and secured the tomb by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

† The seal likely involved a Roman cord and official mark placed across the stone.

† Breaking such a seal would have been a serious offense.

† Instead of preventing the resurrection message, these precautions ultimately provided stronger testimony to the events that followed.

## **Historical References**

† Josephus records that Pontius Pilate governed Judea under the Roman emperor Tiberius and frequently dealt with unrest during the Passover festivals in Jerusalem.

† Tacitus confirms that crucifixion was a common Roman punishment used for those considered enemies of the state or threats to Roman authority.

† Justin Martyr wrote in the second century that the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus fulfilled the prophetic writings of the Hebrew scriptures.

† Irenaeus testified that the death and burial of Christ occurred exactly as foretold by the prophets and were publicly known events witnessed by many.

† Tertullian referenced the Roman records surrounding the crucifixion and pointed to the testimony of the soldiers and the governor involved in the execution.

## How It Applies To Us Today

† The crucifixion reminds us that Jesus willingly endured suffering in order to accomplish the work of redemption.

† The rejection of Jesus by the religious leadership warns us that religious systems can become blind to truth when tradition and authority become more important than scripture.

† The faithful presence of the women at the cross reminds us that loyalty to Christ does not disappear when circumstances become difficult.

† The confession of the Roman centurion shows that the truth about Jesus reached beyond Israel and began to be recognized by the nations.

† The sealing of the tomb by the authorities shows that even the enemies of Jesus unknowingly helped establish the evidence surrounding the events that followed.

## Q & A Appendix

**Q** Why did the Roman centurion declare that Jesus was the Son of God?

**A** The centurion witnessed the earthquake and the extraordinary events surrounding the crucifixion and recognized that Jesus was not an ordinary man (Matthew 27:54).

**Q** Why was Jesus buried in a rich man's tomb?

**A** The burial fulfilled the prophecy that the Messiah would be associated with the rich in His death (Isaiah 53:9).

**Q** Why did the chief priests ask for the tomb to be guarded?

**A** They remembered that Jesus had predicted He would rise after three days and feared His disciples might claim that He had risen (Matthew 27:63-64).

**Q** Why is the sealed tomb important?

**A** The guard and seal made it impossible for the disciples to secretly remove the body, strengthening the historical testimony of what occurred afterward (Matthew 27:65-66).

**Q** What does the crucifixion show about God's plan?

**A** The events surrounding the death of Jesus fulfilled the scriptures and demonstrated that His death was part of God's predetermined purpose (Acts 2:23).

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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## Source Index

† Matthew 27:33-66; Isaiah 53:9; Psalm 22:1, 7-8, 18; Psalm 69:21; Luke 23:39-43; John 10:18; Acts 2:23

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews; Tacitus, Annals; Justin Martyr, First Apology; Irenaeus, Against Heresies; Tertullian, Apology.

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