

FATAL RELIGIOUS ERROR

THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS THE CHRIST

“Remember the Field of Blood”

(Matthew 27:1-10)

Decision: *the act of deciding; determination, as of a question or doubt; final judgment or opinion in a case which has been under deliberation or discussion; unwavering firmness.*

What is the big variable in defining decision?

Was it a good decision or was it a bad decision?

Both are know as a decision.

συμβουλιον – *consultation* (“*counsel took all the chief priests and the elders*” vs. 1 . . . “*so counsel taking they bought*” vs. 7)

Active form of root word: advise and to give advice.

Middle form (to oneself) of root word: consult or plot . . . to meditate on and consider.

Actual word: form a plan . . . to decide.

Matthew 12:14 – and held counsel against him (Jesus healing on the Sabbath) – “plotted”.

Matthew 22:15 – and took counsel how they might entangle him (They ask Jesus if should pay taxes) – “laid plans”.

Matthew 28:12 – and had taken counsel they gave the soldiers a large sum of money (bribe to cover up the resurrection) – “devised a plan”.

Matthew 27:1 and 7

How many decisions did you make today? In one way we can’t measure how many because we are finite. Yet we can isolate and measure important decision.

To remember the field of blood, we need to trace the impact of decisions.

- I. The religious leaders make the decision to put Jesus to death (Matthew 27:1).
- II. The religious leaders put physical action to their decision (27:2).
- III. The religious leaders are confronted for their decision (27:3-4a).

IV. The religious leaders become entrenched mockers because of their decision (27:4b-10).

- Calloused ability to shift responsibility: What is that to us? That is your responsibility.
- Calloused failure to accept responsibility: Those who should have had compassion on the desperate Judas, turned away.

[Do we know how twisted that is? In the world this will be normal plan of operation – dog eat dog . . . “hated and hating one another” (Titus 3:3) . . . “But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us”. This is not to be so in spiritual leaders in God’s Kingdom. Never!]

James 2:14-17

James says “never” for all children of God.

- Calloused loyalty to their religious law: Picking up the 30 pieces of blood money, piece by piece, contemplating all the while the lawlessness of putting it in the religious treasury.

[Not only was innocence and justice being denied . . . that would have been enough. They had just made the decision to kill the Son of God – holy angels would have to be held back . . . the old earth would have to be stilled to keep from splitting apart at the injustice of death of the Son of God. The turning point in time for all of human history (call it what you want!) was taking place. I don’t

think it is possible that they did not have any sense of this, but they were calloused.]

- Calloused fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy: Blood money for the Christ used to buy a burial field.

Jeremiah 19:1-13 (Jeremiah buys a clay jar from the potter and breaks it in the valley of Ben Hinnom near the entrance of the Potsherd Gate).

Jeremiah 32:6-9 (Jeremiah buys the field at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin).

Zechariah 11:12,13 (Zechariah is paid 30 pieces of silver and he “throws it to the potter” by throwing the 30 pieces into the house of the Lord to the potter).

Fatal religious error doesn’t happen overnight.

Mistakes happen overnight and can be amended for at about the same rate; if we will humble ourselves and ask for forgiveness.

Falling away and denial can happen overnight but the rooster can crow by morning and shock us into bitter weeping and repentance.

Big fights over religious issues can erupt and even carry on for a season, but that is not the fatal religious error taking place at the crucifixion of Jesus the Christ.

Fatal religious error like this takes time to be planted, incubated, grown, and nurtured before it can bear this kind of fruit.

But it happens.

And it is very calloused.

[Calluses are very helpful if you are going to play a guitar . . . rake leaves . . . dig a ditch . . . split wood . . . hoe a garden . . . throw 1000 square bales . . . etc.; but they are fatal when doing spiritual work]

Anywhere along the four points of this process, the religious leaders should have been able to stop.

Why didn't they?

Providence – they were as destined for the fulfillment of prophecy as was Judas the betrayer (26:23-25).

Practically speaking, they were the fruit of generations of religion that had gone bad. It was at one time sincere but it had died – *without fruit and uprooted – twice dead.*

Jude 1-13

Calloused entrenched mockers who pick up all 30 pieces of silver paid out for the betrayal of the Son of God . . . thinking as each piece clinked its way down into a blood stained bag . . . we must be careful not to offend God's law by putting this into the temple treasury.

To remember the field of blood, we need to trace the impact of decisions made by the religious leaders.

- V. The religious leaders make a final fatal religious error – the decision to buy the field of blood (27:7-8).

“Remember the Field of Blood”

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There is an old spiritual song that says: “Lord I want to be a Christian inna my heart.” “I don't want to be like Judas inna my heart.”

I have a new verse to add: “I don't want to make fatal religious errors, inna my heart.”

There is a common thread of hypocrisy through all the decisions.

Hypocrisy leads to fatal religious error.

But the grace of God interrupts this.

I don't want to be a hypocrite! For many reasons!

The greatest reason for the sake of the field of blood is this: Hypocrisy leads to fatal religious error.

Remember the field of blood.