

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 44 – February 13th – Matthew 27:32-66

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Matthew

- Hagner, Donald A *Word Biblical Commentary Vols.33a & 33b: Matthew 1-13 & Matthew 14-28*, Word Books, Dallas, 1993 & 1995
- Morris, Leon *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1992

The Crucifixion

Matthew's account of the crucifixion closely follows that of Mark. "A noteworthy feature of Matthew's account is the large number of places where the language echoes Old Testament passages; they show us that Matthew sees the fulfilment of Scripture in what took place that fateful day." Morris.

Verses 32-36

Cf. Mark 15:21-26; Luke 22:33-34; John 19:17b-19.

Verse 32

Ἐξερχόμενοι δὲ εἶδον ἄνθρωπον Κυρηναῖον ὀνόματι Σίμωνα· τοῦτον ἠγγάρευσαν ἵνα ἄρῃ τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ.

εἶδον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl εὗρισκω Κυρηναῖος, ου m a Cyrenian

"The man named Simon (a very common first-century Jewish name) was a Jew originally from Cyrene in North Africa. He may have been either a settler in Jerusalem (where there was a synagogue attended by Cyrenians; cf. Acts 6:9) or a pilgrim there for the festival of Passover." Hagner.

ὄνομα, τος η name
 ἄγγαρευω force, press into service
 ἄρῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s αἰρῶ take, take up
 σταυρος, ου m cross

It was customary for the condemned person to carry the cross beam of his cross to the place of execution. John records that Jesus did carry his cross, at least initially. It seems that the trial and scourging had weakened Jesus so that he was not capable of completing the task. The soldiers conscripted a substitute.

Verse 33

Καὶ ἐλθόντες εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Γολγοθᾶ, ὃ ἐστὶν Κρανίου Τόπος λεγόμενος,

τοπος, ου m place, opportunity
 κρανιον, ου η skull

The place cannot be identified with any certainty. The meaning of the name is not clear, neither is there any indication that it was situated upon a hill.

Verse 34

ἔδωκαν αὐτῷ πιεῖν οἶνον μετὰ χολῆς μεμιγμένον· καὶ γευσάμενος οὐκ ἠθέλησεν πιεῖν.

ἔδωκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3pl δίδωμι
 πιεῖν Verb, aor act infin πινῶ drink
 οἶνος, ου m wine
 χολη, ης f gall (of something bitter)
 μεμιγμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n
 nom/acc s μίγνυμι mix, mingle

Some suggest that the wine was drugged to numb the senses. Others (Carson, Gundry) that the very bitter wine was simply another act of mockery.

γενομαι taste
 θελω wish, will

Jesus wished "to keep his senses undulled as he came to the supreme moment when he would give his life as a ransom for many." Morris.

Verse 35

σταυρώσαντες δὲ αὐτὸν διεμέρισαντο τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ βάλλοντες κλῆρον,

σταυροῦ crucify
 διεμέρισαντο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 pl
 διαμερίζω divide, distribute
 ἱματιον, ου η garment, clothing
 κληρος, ου m lot (of something thrown or drawn to reach a decision)

"Matthew reports this in the words of Psalm 22:18" Morris.

Δ Θ ^{f^{1,13}} it vg^{cl} sy^h mae insert ἵνα πληρωθῆ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ [ὑπό, ^{f^{1,13}}] του προφητου· διμερίσαντο [-σαν, Θ] τὰ ἱμάτιά μου ἑαυτοῖς, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἱματισμὸν μου ἔβαλον κληρον, "in order that the word spoken through [by] the prophet might be fulfilled: 'They divided my garments for themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots,'" almost certainly through the influence of John 19:24, with a Matthean introductory formula added (the quotation is from Ps 22:18). A slight possibility exists that this material was omitted through homoioteleuton (κληρον, end of v. 35 – κληρον, end of inserted quotation), yet the MS evidence is overwhelmingly against its inclusion.

Verse 36

καὶ καθήμενοι ἐτήρουν αὐτὸν ἐκεῖ.

καθημαι sit, sit down
τηρεω keep, observe
ἐκει there

They kept watch to ensure that no rescue was attempted.

Verse 37

καὶ ἐπέθηκαν ἐπάνω τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ τὴν αἰτίαν αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένην· Οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

ἐπέθηκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἐπιτιθημι
place on, place, put, add
ἐπάνω prep with gen. on, over, above
κεφαλή, ης f head
αἰτία, ας f reason, cause, accusation
γεγραμμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s
γραφω write
βασιλευς, εως m king

"The charge itself, written in the superscription, Οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, 'This is Jesus the King of the Jews,' reflects the question of Pilate and Jesus' affirmative answer in v. 11, and thus from the Roman perspective the crime was a political one, probably perceived as treason or insurrection (all four Gospels agree at least in the words 'king of the Jews'). To the Jews, on the other hand, the title had a distinctly religious ring, for it pointed to the Messiah as Son of David (cf. the question of Caiaphas in 26:63 and Jesus' affirmative answer; the protest of the chief priests to the superscription recorded in John 19:21 is particularly revealing in this respect). At the end of the crucifixion pericope the superscription stands as a declaration of the crime for which Jesus is executed and, paradoxically, as a statement of the truth: this Jesus is the king of the Jews." Hagner.

Verses 38-44

Cf. Mark 15:27-32; Luke 23:35-39.

Verse 38

Τότε σταυροῦνται σὺν αὐτῷ δύο λησταί, εἷς ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ εἷς ἐξ ἐναντύμων.

τοτε then, at that time
δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυοισιν two
ληστης, ου m robber, insurrectionist
εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξιά right hand
ἐναντύμος, ον left (hand side)

Cf. Isa 53:12. "The incongruity of this righteous man crucified between two nefarious criminals is striking." Hagner.

Verse 39

οἱ δὲ παραπορευόμενοι ἐβλασφήμουν αὐτὸν κινεῦντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν

παραπορευομαι pass by

Cf. Lam 1:12; 2:15

βλασφημew slander, insult, blaspheme

Here it means, 'they jeered at him.'

κινew move, shake

Verse 40

καὶ λέγοντες· Ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις οἰκοδομῶν, σῶσον σεαυτὸν· εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, κατάβηθι ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ.

καταλυω destroy, tear down
ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary
τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
οικοδομew build, build up

Cf. 26:61.

σῶσον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s σωζω save
σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself

Many MSS (κ² B L W Θ ^{f^{1,13}} TR lat sy^h co) omit καὶ. Those including it are κ* A D it sy^{(s)p}. It may have been accidentally omitted because of the κατ- beginning the next word, or it may have been inserted by someone who took the preceding clause, 'if you are the Son of God,' as modifying the preceding words, 'save yourself.'

κατάβηθι Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s

καταβαινω come down, descend

"We hear in their taunt an eerie reprise of Satan's 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down' (4:6)" LT Johnson.

Verse 41

ὁμοίως καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ἐμπαίζοντες μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων ἔλεγον·

ὁμοίως likewise, in the same way

ἐμπαίζω ridicule
 γραμματεὺς, εὼς m scribe, expert in
 Jewish law
 πρεσβύτερος, α, ον elder

Verse 42

Ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι·
 βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ ἐστίν, καταβάτω νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ
 σταυροῦ καὶ πιστεῦσομεν ἐπ' αὐτόν.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
 σῶζω see v.40

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself
 δυναμαι can, be able to, be capable of

"There is a profound truth in their ... words, though they were quite unaware of it. If he would bring salvation to others, then *himself* he cannot save. They were witnesses to the greatest saving act in the history of the world and indeed had taken a leading part in the events that brought it about, but they were quite unaware of its significance." Morris.

Many MSS (A W Θ f^{1,13} TR lat sy mae bo) insert εἰ before βασιλεὺς. But κ B D L 33 do not have the word. Metzger suggests that it may have been added by copyists who missed the irony.

καταβάτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s
 καταβαίνω see v.40

σταυρος, ον m cross
 πιστεῦω believe (in), have faith (in)

"The claim is hardly a true one. So set were they against him that had he come down from the cross they might well have charged him with sorcery (which, indeed, was their explanation of his miracles; cf. 10:25; 12:24). Indeed, when confronted with an even greater miracle in the resurrection, they demonstrated how deep and immovable their unbelief was (cf. 28:11–15; Luke 16:31)." Hagner.
 "Their outlook was wrong. They said they would have believed He was the Son of God had He come down from the cross. We believe He was the Son of God because He stayed up [on the cross]." Morris.

Verse 43

πέπειθεν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ῥυσάσθω νῦν εἰ θέλει
 αὐτόν· εἶπεν γὰρ ὅτι Θεοῦ εἰμι υἱός.

πέπειθεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s πειθω
 persuade; perf trust, have confidence
 ῥυσάσθω Verb, aor midd imperat, 3 s ῥυομαι
 save, rescue

Many MSS (A^{*vid} D W Θ f^{1,13} TR lat) include αὐτόν. Although the pronoun, which is unnecessary in the Gr., could have been deleted by an Alexandrian editor, the UBSGNT committee thought it more likely that it was added through the influence of the LXX passage (LXX Ps 21:9).

θέλω wish, will

Cf. Ps 22:8 (LXX 21:9).

Verse 44

τὸ δ' αὐτὸ καὶ οἱ λησταὶ οἱ συσταυρωθέντες
 σὺν αὐτῷ ὠνειδίζον αὐτόν.

ληστής, ον m see v.38

Morris says that these "were probably freedom fighters and may well have been exasperated with people like Jesus who were strong enough critics of the establishment but did nothing to help those who risked their lives against the enemy."

συσταυρωθέντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom
 pl συσταυροομαι be crucified together
 (with someone else)

ὠνειδίζω reproach, insult, abuse

Verses 45-50

Cf. Mark 15:33-37; Luke 23:44-46; John 19:28-30.

Verse 45

Ἀπὸ δὲ ἕκτης ὥρας σκότος ἐγένετο ἐπὶ πᾶσαν
 τὴν γῆν ἕως ὥρας ἐνάτης.

ἕκτος, η, ον sixth

σκοτος, ος n darkness, evil

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι

γῆ, γης f earth

ἕως until, up to

ἐνατος, η, ον ninth

I.e. darkness from noon until 3.00 p.m. This was no natural phenomenon but was supernatural. "Darkness is associated with judgement in several places in Scripture (Isa. 5:30; 13:10-11; Joel 3:14-15 etc.), and it appears that we are to understand it here as pointing to God's judgement on sin that is linked with the cross." Morris. Hagner adds, "The idea of the sun going down at midday is an apocalyptic image for a time of great sorrow and mourning employed in Amos 8:9 (cf. Jer 15:9)."

Verse 46

περὶ δὲ τὴν ἐνάτην ὥραν ἀνεβόησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς
 φωνῇ μεγάλῃ λέγων· Ἥλι ἤλι λεμὰ σαβαχθάνι;
 τοῦτ' ἐστίν· Θεέ μου θεέ μου, ἰνατί με
 ἐγκατέλιπες;

ἀναβοᾶω cry out

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

Jesus meant these words from Ps 22:1 to be heard.

ηλι (Hebrew word) my God

Ἡλι ἡλι (representing the Heb. יהוה יהוה, is the reading of most MSS (A D [L] W Θ^f.¹³ TR). The important MSS κ B 33 co have ελωι ελωι (representing the Aram. ܐܠܗܐ ܐܠܗܐ), but probably by conformity to the parallel in Mark 15:34. On the other hand, the reading ἡλι ἡλι could be secondary, caused by the influence of the reference to Ἠλίαν, 'Elijah,' in v. 47.

λεμα (Aramaic word) why?

κ B 33 700 have λεμα (representing the Aram. ܠܡܐ). The Aram. is also reflected in the variant spellings λιμα (A K U Γ Δ Π) and λειμα (E F G H M S V). λαμα, on the other hand, is the equivalent of the Heb. למה (D Θ)

σαβαχθανι (Aramaic word) you have forsaken me

Almost all MSS have σαβαχθανι (representing the Aram. ܣܒܚܚܢܝ) or a spelling variant thereof, σαβαχθανει (κ A Δ), σαβαχτανει (B). Only D*, the single MS with all three words in their Heb. form, has the equivalent of the Heb. צאθחנני (representing the Heb. ܥܒܪܚܢܝ).

ινατι why? for what reason?

εγκατέλιπες Verb, aor act indic, 2 s

εγκαταλειπω forsake, abandon

"There must always be a mystery here. We who are finite and sinners do not understand, and cannot even begin to understand, how evil appears to a holy God. The prophet Habakkuk could say in his prayer, 'Your eyes are too pure to behold evil, and you cannot look on wrongdoing' (Hab 1:13). And the apostle Paul adds, 'him who knew no sin, he [i.e. the Father] made sin for us' (2 Cor 5:21; and again, Christ became 'a curse for us, for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree' (Gal 3:13). When we put such passages of Scripture together, it seems that in the working out of salvation for sinners the hitherto unbroken communion between the Father and the Son was mysteriously broken. It is surely better to accept this, knowing that we do not understand it fully, than to attempt some rationalisation of the saying so that it becomes more palatable to the prejudices of modern Westerners." Morris. Hagner says, "This is one of the most impenetrable mysteries of the entire Gospel narrative."

Verse 47

τινες δε των εκει εστηκωτων ακουσαντες ελεγον οτι Ηλιαν φωνει ουτος.

εκει there

εστηκωτων Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s

ιστημι stand

Ηλιας, ου m Elijah

φωνεω call, call out

Verse 48

και ευθεως δραμων εις εξ αυτων και λαβων σπογγον πλησας τε οξους και περιθειεις καλαμο εποτιζεν αυτον.

δραμων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s τρεχω run

εις, μια, εν gen ενος, μιας, ενος one

λαβων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λαμβανω

σπογγος, ου m sponge

πλησας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s πιμπλημι fill

τε enclitic particle and

οξος, ους n sour wine

περιθειεις Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

περιτιθημι put on

καλαμος, ου m reed, rod, cane

ποτιζω give to drink

Cf. Ps 69:21.

Verse 49

οι δε λοιποι ελεγον· Αφες ιδωμεν ει ερχεται Ηλιας σωσων αυτον.

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other

αφημι leave, let go

ιδωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl οραω see

σωσων Verb, fut act ptc, m nom s σωζω

The future participle was used to convey purpose in classical Greek. Apart from the writings of Luke, this is the only place it is used in the New Testament.

Some important MSS (κ B C L Γ vg^{mss} mae) add άλλος δε λαβων λογχην ενυξεν αυτου την πλευραν, και εξηλθεν υδωρ και αιμα, 'and another man took a spear and pierced his side, and water and blood came out,' which is, however, probably an insertion from John 19:34. "It is probable that the Johannine passage was written by some reader in the margin of Matthew from memory ... and a later copyist awkwardly introduced it into the text" (Metzger).

Verse 50

ο δε Ιησους παλιν κραξας φωνη μεγαλη αφηκεν το πνευμα.

παλιν again, once more

κραξας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s κραζω

cry out, call out

Morris thinks this to be the cry "It is finished!" recorded in John 19:30

αφηκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s αφημι see v.49

The unusual use of this verb for death indicates that there was a voluntary element in it. Even here, it was Jesus who was in control.

Verses 51-54

"While the insertion of vv 52–53 is without parallel in the other Gospels, coming either from tradition or from Matthew himself, vv 51, 54 are derived from Mark (Mark 15:38–39; cf. Luke 23:45, 47)." Hagner.

Verse 51

καὶ ἰδοὺ τὸ καταπέτασμα τοῦ ναοῦ ἐσχίσθη ἀπ' ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω εἰς δύο, καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐσεισθη, καὶ αἱ πέτραι ἐσχίσθησαν,

καταπετασμα, τος n curtain

Probably the second, innermost curtain that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple. Cf Heb 9:1-14.

ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary, inner part of Jewish Temple

ἐσχίσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s σχίζω split, tear

ἀνωθεν from above

κάτω down, below, beneath

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δύοσιν two

"Matthew is indicating that symbolically the way into the holy place was opened by the death of Jesus (cf. Heb 10:19-20)." Morris. Hagner comments that this sign is also "a type of apocalyptic sign pointing, on the one hand, to the wrath and judgment of God against the Jewish authorities ... and, on the other, to the end of the temple, where God is no longer present."

Verses 51b-53 are unique to Matthew.

γῆ, γῆς f earth

ἐσεισθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s σειώ shake

πέτρα, ας f rock, solid rock

ἐσχίσθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl σχίζω

"Earthquakes are particularly important apocalyptic portents for Matthew (see 24:7; 28:2; for OT background, cf. Isa 24:19; 29:6; Jer 10:10; Amos 8:8; and many other texts)." Hagner.

Verse 52

καὶ τὰ μνημεῖα ἀνεόχθησαν καὶ πολλὰ σώματα τῶν κεκοιμημένων ἁγίων ἠγέρθησαν,

μνημειον, ου n grave, tomb, monument ἀνεόχθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl

ἀνοίγω open

πολύς, πολλή, πολυ gen πολλοῦ, ἡς, ου much, many

σώμα, τος n body

κοιμαομαι sleep, fall asleep, die

ἅγιος, α, ον holy, consecrated, set apart

to/by God; οἱ ἅγιοι God's people

ἠγέρθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl ἐγειρω raise

"For the raising of the dead 'in their tombs,' see the LXX of Isa 26:19. See especially, however, Ezek 37:13, which is possibly the basis for the present passage... The death of Jesus breaks the power of death itself." Hagner.

Verse 53

καὶ ἐξεληθόντες ἐκ τῶν μνημείων μετὰ τὴν ἔγερσιν αὐτοῦ εἰσηλθον εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν καὶ ἐνεφανίσθησαν πολλοῖς.

ἐξεληθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m pl nom

ἐξέρχομαι

ἐγερσις, εως f resurrection

It would seem that the breaking of the tombs occurred on 'Good Friday' while the rising of the saints was on 'Easter Day'. But Matthew portrays it as a single event.

Blomberg comments, "All kinds of historical questions remain unanswered about both events [the tearing of the temple curtain and the raising of the saints], but their significance clearly lies in the theology Matthew wishes to convey." Hagner goes further and says that "this passage is a piece of theology set forth as history."

πολις, εως f city, town

ἐνεφανίσθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl

ἐμφανίζω make known, report, reveal; pass appear

Verse 54

Ὁ δὲ ἑκατόνταρχος καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ τηροῦντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἰδόντες τὸν σεισμὸν καὶ τὰ γενόμενα ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα λέγοντες· Ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς ἦν οὗτος.

ἑκατονταρχης, ου and ἑκατονταρχος, ου m centurion

τηρεω keep, observe

Mark and Luke record the reactions of the centurion but only Matthew includes those with him.

ἰδόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ὁραω see

σεισμος, ου m earthquake

γενόμενα Verb, aor midd dep ptc, n nom/acc pl γινομαι

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

σφόδρα very much, very, greatly

ἄληθως adv truly, in truth

"The centurion's confession amounts to an admission of both Jesus' innocence and Roman guilt (thus Pobe). There is both irony and tragedy in the fact that the statement is made by Roman soldiers (cf. 8:10–11) and not the Jews to whom Jesus had come – just as in 2:2, 11 it is Gentiles who acknowledge the truth and not the Jews, anticipating the salvation-historical shift that will be articulated in 28:19." Hagner.

Verses 55-56

Cf. Mark 15:40-41; Luke 23:49; John 19:25-27.

Verse 55

Ἦσαν δὲ ἐκεῖ γυναῖκες πολλαὶ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν θεωροῦσαι, αἵτινες ἠκολούθησαν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας διακονοῦσαι αὐτῷ·

ἐκεῖ there

γυνή, αἰκός f woman, wife

μακροθεν far off, at a distance

θεωρεω see, watch, observe, notice

ὅστις, ἡτις, ὅτι who, which

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany

"They had 'followed' ... Jesus both literally and in discipleship, but now all seemed to have come to an end. They have no more hope than do the men." Hagner.

διακονεω serve, wait on, care for

"At the very end it is the women, and not the disciples, who are there at the cross. They thus reflect a greater loyalty to their master. As they had faithfully supported him during his ministry, so now it is they who remain with him, even if at a distance, to the bitter end. They therefore deserve this special note of recognition as witnesses of his crucifixion and death. And it is they who will soon convey the message concerning the resurrection of Jesus to the disciples, for it is to the women that he first appeared." Hagner.

Verse 56

ἐν αἷς ἦν Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ Μαρία ἡ τοῦ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωσήφ μήτηρ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ τῶν υἱῶν Ζεβεδαίου.

Cf. Jn 19:23 for others with Jesus' mother.

Verses 57-61

Cf. Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42.

Verse 57

Ὀνίας δὲ γενομένης ἦλθεν ἄνθρωπος πλούσιος ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας, τοῦνομα Ἰωσήφ, ὃς καὶ αὐτὸς ἐμαθητεύθη τῷ Ἰησοῦ·

ὄνια, ας f evening

Before sunset, at the end of the day.

πλούσιος, α, ον rich, well-to-do

τοῦνομα (το ὄνομα) named, by name

ἐμαθητεύθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s

μαθητεω make a disciple of; pass be a disciple

Verse 58

οὗτος προσελθὼν τῷ Πιλάτῳ ἠτήσατο τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. τότε ὁ Πιλάτος ἐκέλευσεν ἀποδοθῆναι.

προσερχομαι come or go to, approach

αἰτεω ask, request

σῶμα, τος n body

τοτε then, at that time

κελευω order, command

ἀποδοθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ἀποδιδωμι

give, give back

Mark adds that Pilate checked first that Jesus was indeed dead (Mk 15:44).

Verse 59

καὶ λαβὼν τὸ σῶμα ὁ Ἰωσήφ ἐνετύλιξεν αὐτὸ σινδόνι καθαρᾷ,

λαβων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λαμβανω

John says he was accompanied by Nicodemus (Jn 19:39).

ἐντυλισσω wrap in, fold or roll up

σινδων, ονος f linen cloth (for clothing or burial)

καθαρος, α, ον pure, clean

Verse 60

καὶ ἔθηκεν αὐτὸ ἐν τῷ καινῷ αὐτοῦ μνημείῳ ὃ ἐλατόμησεν ἐν τῇ πέτρᾳ, καὶ προσκυλίσας λίθον μέγαν τῇ θύρᾳ τοῦ μνημείου ἀπῆλθεν.

ἔθηκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s τιθημι place

καινος, η, ον new

μνημειον, ου n grave, tomb

λατομεω cut, hew (of rock)

πετρα, ας f see v.51

προσκυλίσας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

προσκυλιω roll against or to

λιθος, ου m stone

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

θυρα, ας f door, gate

"Jesus, crucified as a criminal and from the Jewish point of view cursed by God, is nevertheless given an honorable burial. Indeed, he is buried in the tomb of a rich man (cf. Isa 53:9)." Hagner.

Verse 61

ἦν δὲ ἐκεῖ Μαριάμ ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ ἡ ἄλλη
Μαρία καθήμεναι ἀπέναντι τοῦ τάφου.

ἐκεῖ there, in that place, to that place
ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

The mother of James and Joseph (v.56).

καθῆμαι sit, sit down
ἀπέναντι prep with gen opposite, before
ταφος, ου m grave, tomb

"This note functions to certify correct knowledge concerning the specific tomb into which Jesus had been placed. Thus the empty tomb these same two women (i.e., the two witnesses; cf. 18:16) encounter in 28:1, 6 could not have been the wrong tomb." Hagner.

Postscript to verse 57-61

"Joseph of Arimathea, otherwise unknown to us, by his act of love provides the venue for the first experience of the news of the resurrection of Jesus – the revolutionary event that makes possible the faith we call Christianity. In the kerygma of the early church it is not only the death of Jesus that is important but also his burial (see 1 Cor 15:3-4; Acts 13:29). The burial is further confirmation of the reality of Jesus' death; together they provide the necessary prelude to the resurrection itself. As with the death and resurrection, the burial of Jesus is applied spiritually to the life of the Christian in the Pauline letters (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12)." Hagner.

Verses 62-66

This passage is unique to Matthew. "Calling attention to the irony in the passage, Gnilka aptly concludes: 'The laughter of God roars through the pericope'... Such must be said also of the pericope that completes this one (28:11-15)." Hagner.

Verse 62

Τῇ δὲ ἐπαύριον, ἣτις ἐστὶν μετὰ τὴν
παρασκευὴν, συνήχθησαν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ
Φαρισαῖοι πρὸς Πιλάτου

ἐπαυριον the next day
ὅστις, ἣτις, ὅ τι who, which
παρασκευη, ης f day of preparation (before
a sacred day)

There is an extraordinary irony in the chief priests and Pharisees organising such a meeting with Pilate *on the Sabbath*.

συνήχθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
συναγω gather, gather together,
assemble

Verse 63

λέγοντες· Κύριε, ἐμνήσθημεν ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ὁ
πλάνος εἶπεν ἔτι ζῶν· Μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας
ἐγείρομαι·

ἐμνήσθημεν Verb, aor pass indic, 1 pl
μιμησκομαι remember
ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that
πλανος, ον deceitful; ὁ π. deceiver
ἔτι still, yet, moreover
ζωω live, be alive
τρεῖς, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
ἐγειρω raise

The words imply that the leaders understood very well what Jesus meant when he said 'destroy this temple and I will build it again in three days'. Yet this was the charge brought against him at his trial!

Verse 64

κέλευσον οὖν ἀσφαλισθῆναι τὸν τάφον ἕως
τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας, μήποτε ἐλθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ
αὐτοῦ κλέψωσιν αὐτὸν καὶ εἰπωσιν τῷ λαῷ·
Ἠγέρθη ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν, καὶ ἔσται ἡ ἐσχάτη
πλάνη χειρῶν τῆς πρώτης.

κέλευω order, command
ἀσφαλισθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ἀσφαλιζω
secure, fasten
ταφος, ου m see v.61
τρίτος, η, ον third
μήποτε conj. lest, otherwise
μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower
κλεπω steal

Some MSS (C³ L S Γ sy^{s-p}) include νεκτος, 'by night,' either before or after 'steal him.' This is probably an addition prompted by 28:13.

εἰπωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl λεγω
λαος, ου m people, a people
ἠγέρθη Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγειρω
see v.63
νεκτος, α, ον dead
ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἰμι
ἐσχατος, η, ον adj last, final
πλανε, ης f error, deceit, deception
χειρων, ον gen ονος worse, more severe
πρωτος, η, ον first, earlier

"The imagined statement ἠγέρθη ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν, 'he has been raised from the dead,' becomes ironically the central element of the church's kerygma (e.g., Acts 2:24; 3:15; 10:40; 13:30). And the fear expressed in the words καὶ ἔσται ἡ ἐσχάτη πλάνη χειρῶν τῆς πρώτης, 'and the last deception will be worse than the first' (for the same idiom, cf. 12:45; 2 Peter 2:20), proves ironically true in the sense that the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus brought forth a more positive response to Jesus than his actual ministry, limited in space and time, could ever have produced. It seems clear that the material of this and the preceding verse has been formulated with a degree of hindsight on the evangelist's part." Hagner.

Verse 65

ἔφη αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· Ἐχετε κουστωδία· ὑπάγετε ἀσφαλίσασθε ὡς οἶδατε.

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say
κουστωδία, ας f a guard (of soldiers)

The meaning is probably, 'Take a guard.'

ὑπαγω go, go one's way, depart
ἀσφαλίσασθε Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 2 pl
ἀσφαλιζω see v.64
οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know

Verse 66

οἱ δὲ πορευθέντες ἠσφαλίσαντο τὸν τάφον σφραγίσαντες τὸν λίθον μετὰ τῆς κουστωδίας.

πορευομαι go, proceed
ἠσφαλίσαντο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 pl
ἀσφαλιζω
σφραγιζω seal, secure with a seal

"Although it is not impossible that σφραγίσαντες τὸν λίθον μετὰ τῆς κουστωδίας is meant metaphorically, i.e., 'sealing the stone with the presence of a guard' ... it is perhaps more likely that the stone was actually sealed shut with official seals that if broken would attest the opening of the tomb (cf. the practice referred to in Dan 6:17)." Hagner.

λίθος, ου m see v.60

"But in doing this they did more than they knew. They ensured that there could be no nonsense about disciples stealing the body when in due course Jesus did rise from the dead." Morris.