



“The *Megillah* of Matthew”

27:27-66

All Scriptures from the TLV

Shalom aleichem Mishpacha! Tonight we continue our Matthew study with Lesson 38. As we begin, it is the morning of Nisan 14, the day on which the lambs were to be slaughtered for Passover. When we ended our last session, Pilate had just agreed to the crowd’s cry to “crucify Him.” In preparation for crucifixion, Pilate had Yeshua scourged, beaten with a special whip, as was customary before being placed on a cross.

27 Then the governor’s soldiers took Yeshua into the Praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around Him. 28 They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe around Him. 29 And after braiding a crown of thorns, they placed it on His head and put a staff in His right hand. And falling on their knees before Him, they mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” 30 They spat on Him, and they took the staff and beat Him over and over on the head. 31 When they finished mocking Him, they stripped the robe off Him and put His own clothes back on Him. And they led Him away to crucify Him. Matthew 27:27-31 TLV). They previously had Yeshua in an area referred to in John 19:13 as “the Pavement.” *Gabbatha*, in Hebrew, it was the location of Pilate’s judgment seat. From there, they took Yeshua into the *Praetorium*, the headquarters building of the Antonia Fortress at the northern end of the Temple Mount. It was from this vantage point that the Roman soldiers maintained their surveillance over what was going on in and all around the Temple. Inside the *Praetorium*, the Roman soldiers mocked Yeshua’s kingship by putting a royal robe on Him, placing a crown on His head, giving Him a scepter and bowing before Him. They then showed what they really thought of Him by removing all those things and spitting on Him, the opposite of worship.

32 As they came out, they found a man from Cyrene, Simon by name. They forced him into service, to carry Yeshua’s cross-beam. (Matthew 27:32 TLV). According to John, Yeshua initially carried His cross-beam: *17 “Then they took Yeshua. He went out, carrying His own crossbar, to the Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.”* (John 19:17 TLV). At some point about which we are not told, Simon began carrying it for Him. We know very little about *Shi’mon*, Simon, but we do know something about [Cyrene](#), his home city. Located in northern Africa in what is now eastern [Libya](#), it was a Greek city in the province of [Cyrenaica](#), and had a sizeable Jewish community. Some three hundred years earlier, one hundred thousand [Judean](#) Jews had been forced to settle there during the reign of [Ptolemy Soter](#) (323–285 BCE), one of Alexander the Great’s generals. The Jews of Cyrene had a [synagogue](#) in [Jerusalem](#) where many went for the annual feasts and it is likely that Simon had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. There is a mention of his sons, Alexander and Rufus in Mark 15:21, but essentially, all we know about Simon is that he was from Cyrene. There is no real evidence that he was either Jewish or black.

33 And when they came to a place called Golgotha (that is to say, Place of a Skull), 34 they offered Him wine mixed with gall to drink; but after tasting, He was unwilling to drink it.

(Matthew 27:33-34. Golgotha was a small hill outside the city wall of Jerusalem. *Gulgoltha* in Hebrew, translated into Latin as Calvary, meant “the place of a skull.” Popular thought is that a rock face outside modern-day Jerusalem’s wall which looks like a skull is the place. But, it is not. The “place of a skull” did not refer to a physical landmark, but to the skulls of the crucified who were left to hang there for days. Similarly, the tomb near that rock face called “the Garden Tomb” is not where Yeshua was buried. Although it’s a beautiful and peaceful place today, it is not possible for it to be Yeshua’s tomb. Israeli archaeologist Gabriel Barkay has dated it to the 7th-8th centuries BCE. It was not a new tomb as Scripture tells us, but one which had been in use for hundreds of years at the time of Yeshua’s death. A majority of theologians agree that both Yeshua’s place of crucifixion and burial tomb are today inside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Both of these places have been so changed by the ornamentation added to them that it is impossible to recognize their original form. Yeshua refused the wine they offered him. Just hours before at His Passover *seder*, He had said: 29 “*But I say to you, I will never drink of this fruit of the vine from now on, until that day when I drink it anew with you in My Father’s kingdom.*” (Matthew 26:28 TLV). Why did He say this? I don’t think anyone really knows, but what comes to my mind is the Nazirite vow. Did Yeshua, by becoming a *Nazir*, if He did, become a more perfect sacrifice for sin? The symbolism of the Nazirite is there. Was Yeshua the fulfillment of a foreshadowing by the Nazirites Samuel and Sampson? I think possibly. He was the perfect fulfillment of what the *Torah* describes for a *Nazir*’s life and by refusing the wine, He further demonstrated it.

35 *And when they had crucified Him, they divided His clothing among themselves by casting lots. 36 And they sat down and kept guard over Him there. 37 Over His head they put the charge against Him, which read: “THIS IS YESHUA, THE KING OF THE JEWS.”* (Matthew 27:35-37 TLV). David foresaw this when he wrote this Psalm: 19 “*They divide my clothes among them, and cast lots for my garment.*” (Psalm 22:18 TLV). John also gives us more information about the sign placed over Yeshua’s head: 20 “*Many Judeans read this sign, because the place where Yeshua was executed was near the city; it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.*” (John 19:20 TLV). Some Bibles say Aramaic rather than Hebrew. However, the Greek word used is *Hebraisti*. Regarding it, Strong’s states: “in the Hebrew, or rather, in the Aramaic dialect.” Aramaic is not a dialect of Hebrew. They are both individual semitic languages with Hebrew containing certain loan words from the Aramaic, the language of Babylon. Incidentally, the letters INRI which some Christian denominations place in their sanctuaries are the initials of the Latin words for Yeshua, the King of the Jews.

38 *Then two outlaws were executed with Him, one on the right and one on the left. 39 Those passing by were jeering at Him, shaking their heads 40 and saying, “You who are going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If you are Ben-Elohim, come down from the stake!”* (Matthew 27:38-40 TLV). The place where the crosses were lined up outside the city was a regular thoroughfare and people were constantly walking by. Thousands of years before, David foresaw this: 8 *All who see me mock me. They curl their lips, shaking their heads.*” (Psalm 22:8 TLV). Curling their lips, that is, jeering at Yeshua and shaking their heads, they mocked Him.

41 *Likewise the ruling kohanim, along with the Torah scholars and elders, were also mocking Him. 42 “He saved others,” they were saying, “but He can’t save Himself? He’s the King of Israel! Let Him come down now from the stake, and we’ll believe in Him! 43 He trusts in God; let God rescue Him now, if He wants Him. For He said, ‘I am Ben-Elohim.’”* (Matthew 27:41-43 TLV). Again, we have David’s words: 9 “*Rely on Adonai! Let Him deliver him! Let Him rescue him— since he delights in Him!*” (Psalm 22:9 TLV). These mockers were obviously

not the many hundreds who had welcomed Yeshua into the city just days before. Those earlier crowds were unaware of what took place at Yeshua's sham trial and were unaware of His execution. Caiaphas was afraid of the crowds and had masterfully carried out his plan to have Yeshua crucified without their knowledge.

44 Even the outlaws who were executed with Him were ridiculing Him in the same way. (Matthew 27:44 TLV). Matthew and Mark report that both thieves ridiculed Yeshua while John does not mention it at all. Luke says that only one thief ridiculed Him: *39 One of the evildoers hanging there was jeering at Him, saying, "Aren't You the Messiah? Save Yourself—and us!" 40 But the other one, rebuking him, replied, "Don't you fear God, since you are under the same sentence?"* (Luke 23:39-40 TLV). How do we reconcile this? Matthew was an eyewitness and Mark may have been, but Luke got his information from other eyewitnesses. As we well know, multiple witnesses often tell conflicting stories, not necessarily intentionally, but because they may have been there at different times or because of faulty memory. In this case, the second thief also may have earlier mocked Yeshua and then had a change of heart. There is not sufficient evidence in these accounts to suggest conflicting stories. They were just accounts from different people who may have witnessed these things at slightly different times.

45 Now from the sixth hour, darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. (Matthew 27:45 TLV). Sixth and ninth hours were Jewish time. Converted to Roman time, the sixth hour would have been from noon until 1 PM and the ninth hour would have been from 3-4 PM. The darkness occurred during the time of Yeshua's extreme anguish on the stake, something which ADONAI caused.

46 About the ninth hour Yeshua cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, *"My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?" 47 When some of those standing there heard it, they began saying, "This Man is calling for Elijah."* *48 Right away one of them ran and took a sponge. He filled it with sour wine and put it on a stick, and was offering it to Yeshua to drink. 49 But the rest were saying, "Leave Him alone! Let's see if Elijah comes to save Him."* (Matthew 27:46-49 TLV). It was at about 3 PM that Yeshua cried out *"Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani,"* but He was not calling for Elijah. He was using *remez* and hinting at a Scripture which described the physical torment which He was going through. Those people who made this comment were obviously not familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures. The Pharisees would have known immediately that Yeshua was quoting a Psalm of David: *2 "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Distant from my salvation are the words of my groaning."* (Psalm 22:2 TLV). ADONAI did temporarily forsake Yeshua. He had to look away as Yeshua's life ebbed from Him under the pressure of the sins of the world upon Him. Without that brief moment of turning away, there would be no redemption. *Sha'ul* explained: *21 "He made the One who knew no sin to become a sin offering on our behalf, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."* (2Corinthians 5:21 TLV). By quoting verse 2 of Psalm 22, Yeshua essentially said to those around Him, "read Psalm 22." It described many of the things which took place while He was on the stake. Yeshua did not take the wine offered to Him. Was it offered as an act of compassion or was it something else? It could have been *HaSatan's* use of the bystander to try to get Yeshua to go back on His word about not drinking the fruit of the vine? We don't know.

50 And Yeshua cried out again with a loud voice and gave up His spirit. (Matthew 27:50 TLV). Yeshua gave up His human spirit at the ninth hour, about 3 PM. As the Lamb of God, sacrificed for the sins of the world, He died at the exact time that ADONAI prescribed that

the Passover lambs were to be killed. Referring to the Passover lambs, Exodus 12 says: 6 “*You must watch over it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to slaughter it at twilight.*” (Exodus 12:6 TLV). The day that Yeshua died was Nisan 14. And, it was the whole assembly of Israel who killed Him, their Passover Lamb, because He died for their sins. Twilight is translated from the Hebrew word *hā‘ar-bā-yim*, “the evenings,” or more precisely, “between the evenings.” Between the evenings was the time period which began when the sun began to go down, about 3 PM, until twilight. Yeshua fulfilled exactly what was foreshadowed by the *Torah* and the Egyptian Passover lambs.

51 “*And behold, the curtain of the Temple was split in two, from top to bottom. And the earth quaked and rocks were split apart.*” (Matthew 27:51 TLV). The curtain, *parokhet* in Hebrew, was torn by ADONAI’s mighty power. He tore it to show that a change in access to Him had been made. It also possibly signified the beginning of the priesthood of Yeshua but in addition to show that under His priesthood, sinners could now approach G-d directly for redemption. Under the Levitical priesthood, there was always the human High Priest who had to do it for you. Now with the *parokhet* split, a person can go directly to the High Priest, Yeshua, who is Himself, G-d incarnate.

52 *And the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the kedoshim who were sleeping were raised to life.* 53 *And coming forth out of the tombs after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.* 54 *Now the centurion, and those with him keeping guard over Yeshua, when they saw the earthquake and what was happening, they became terribly frightened and said, “This really was the Son of God!”* (Matthew 27:52-54 TLV). The tombs were opened at the moment Yeshua died, but the holy ones did not come out and go into the city until after His resurrection three days later. Why? Perhaps as evidence of His resurrection. Rocks were split at the site of the crucifixion which caused the eyes of the overseeing Roman officer to be opened, allowing him to understand that Yeshua really was G-d’s Son.

55 *Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Yeshua from the Galilee, serving Him.* 56 *Among them were Miriam from Magdala, Miriam the mother of Jacob and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.* (Matthew 27:55-56 TLV). These women were some of Yeshua’s most faithful followers. They observed from a distance at the crucifixion and would continue to observe as events continued to unfold.

57 *Now when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had also become a disciple of Yeshua.* 58 *This man went to Pilate and asked for Yeshua’s body. Then Pilate ordered it to be given up.* 59 *And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth.* 60 *And he laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. Then he rolled a large stone up to the door of the tomb and went away.* 61 *Now Miriam from Magdala was there, and the other Miriam, sitting opposite the tomb.* (Matthew 27: 57-61 TLV). Yosef of Ramatayim, Joseph from Arimathea, a disciple of Yeshua, was a wealthy man as evidenced by being able to afford his own tomb. Mark gives us a little more information about Joseph: 43 “*Joseph of Arimathea, a respected council member who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Yeshua’s body.*” (Mark 15:43 TLV). Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin, the body which condemned Yeshua. Luke has additional information about him: 50 “*Now there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and righteous man.* 51 *(He had not been in agreement with the council and their action.) He was from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he was waiting for the kingdom of God.*” (Luke

23:50-51 TLV). Joseph was not in agreement with what the council did at Caiaphas' house which means that most likely he was not there. Scripture does not say that any person spoke favorably for Yeshua there. Matthew 26:66 tells us that the people in attendance at Caiaphas's house cried "guilty; he deserves death," something which Joseph disagreed with. He had recently had a new tomb cut out of the rock for himself. It was nearby and he had Yeshua's body placed in it and the stone rolled shut. Yeshua's other disciple who was a member of the Sanhedrin was also there assisting Joseph. John said: 39 "*Nicodemus, who had first visited Yeshua at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.* 40 *Then they took the body of Yeshua and wrapped it in linen with the spices, as is the Jewish burial custom.*" (John 19:39-40 TLV). The two *Miryams* had followed and watched as all this happened.

62 "*Now on the next day, which is after the preparation, the ruling kohanim and Pharisees were gathered before Pilate.*" (Matthew 27:62 TLV). The day on which Yeshua died, *Nisan* 14, was the preparation day. Luke also described it: 54 "*Now it was the Day of Preparation, and Shabbat was approaching.*" (Luke 23:54 TLV). Some have misunderstood Luke's statement, not realizing that he wasn't referring to the seventh day weekly Sabbath. John also describes it: 31 "*It was the Day of Preparation, and the next day was a festival Shabbat.*" (John 19:31a TLV). Festival makes it clearer. The Sabbath which followed the preparation day on *Nisan* 14 was the Sabbath of *Nisan* 15. It began at sundown with the Passover *seder* and meal that evening. *Nisan* 15 is also the first day of *Chag haMatzah*, the Festival of Unleavened Bread and is a special Sabbath which occurs on the same calendar day each year. It wasn't the weekly Sabbath that was referred to by Luke, but the Sabbath of the First Day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The Judean officials who went to see Pilate on this day did something which was not lawful according to *Torah*. They conducted business on the Sabbath.

63 "*Sir,*" they said, "*we remember how that deceiver said while He was still alive, 'After three days I'm to be raised.'* 64 *Therefore, order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, so His disciples do not come and steal Him away. They will tell the people, 'He is risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first!"* 65 "*You have a guard,*" Pilate said to them. "*Go, make it as secure as you know how.*" 66 *So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone along with the soldiers of the guard.* (Matthew 27:63-66 TLV). These men broke the rules of *Shabbat* in order to try and prevent Yeshua's disciples from moving His body. But, by doing this, they actually helped to prove that Yeshua was really dead. They had heard Yeshua speak about the sign of Jonah. Just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so Yeshua said He would be three days and three nights in the belly of the earth. Jonah was alive in the belly of the whale while Yeshua was dead in the belly of the earth. This showed the mighty power of ADONAI who after three days and nights would resurrect His Son and bring Him back to life.

Chapter 27 ends here on the morning of *Nisan* 15, the first Sabbath of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, a festival which has not just one, but two Sabbaths. The second occurs on the seventh and concluding day of the festival. Yeshua was hung on a cross to die, symbolically, a tree, and was taken down before sundown in accordance with what *Torah* requires. 22 "*Suppose a man is guilty of a sin with a death sentence and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree.* 23 *His body is not to remain all night on the tree—instead you must certainly bury him the same day, for anyone hanged is a curse of God. You must not defile your land that Adonai your God is giving you as an inheritance.*" (Deuteronomy 21:22-23 TLV). Yeshua took G-d's curse of being hanged on a tree for us. After being taken down

from the stake before sundown, he was wrapped in linen with spices by Joseph and Nicodemus and placed in Joseph's newly constructed tomb. A special seal was placed on the large rolling stone and guards were there to make sure no one tried to open it. *Shalom aleichem!*