

August 21, 2005 by Steve Brandon



Worldly Sorrow

Matthew 27:1-10

1. Responds to Consequences (verse 3).
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 - 1) Feels Remorse
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Matthew 27:1-10

Now when morning had come, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death; and they bound Him, and led Him away, and delivered Him up to Pilate the governor. Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" And he threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood." And they counseled together and with the money bought the Potter's Field as a burial place for strangers. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, "and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one whose price had been set by the sons of Israel; and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."

Our text begins with a brief word concerning the trial of Jesus Christ. These verses are really a continuation of the story from verse 68 of chapter 26, where the religious leaders had just found Jesus guilty of blasphemy. But, Matthew interrupts his account of the trial to tell of the Peter's denials, which took place in the wee hours of the night. In verse 1, we find out that it was morning. Apparently, the court broke session and all of the chief priests and the elders went home for a few hours of rest. But they reconvened early in the morning to officially pronounce the guilty sentence. However, being under Roman rule, the Jews were not permitted by law to put anybody to death. Their worst criminals had to be brought before the Romans, who would decide their fate. It was only when the Romans found them guilty and worthy of death that they would be executed for their crimes. And so, in verse 2 we find Jesus being bound and led away to Pontius Pilate, who alone could decide the fate of Jesus.

Before the Roman trial began, Matthew inserts the story of how Judas responded to the outcome of the trial. Judas experienced what is called, "Worldly Sorrow." It is a sorrow that feels the pain of sin. It is a sorrow that confesses the guilt of sin. It is a sorrow that makes efforts to remove the consequences of sin. But, in the end, it's a sorrow that finds no comfort. Because, it is a sorrow that falls short of repentance and never knows the blessing of forgiveness, where true comfort comes from.

Paul wrote of this sort of sorrow in 2 Corinthians 7. Paul had written to these Corinthians a letter full of rebuke to them for their sinful behavior. This letter pierced them to the heart and convicted them of sin and caused them to mourn. As Paul received news back from the Corinthians that this letter had caused them much grief and turmoil, he said this, ...

2 Corinthians 7:8-10

For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it--for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while--I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

In other words, Paul said that he regretted the letter in that it caused pain to the Corinthians. But, he didn't regret the letter in that it led them to repentance. They turned from the sins that Paul had pointed out to them in their letter. And so, it ended well.

The surgeon doesn't regret the pain made by the incision and the recovery, when the patient is eventually healed. This week, I had an opportunity to play surgeon. Our five year old daughter, Hanna, was playing on some old wood and received a sliver that had ripped a hole through her jean shorts and had penetrated into her skin. She came into the house crying because of the pain. My wife and I took her into the bathroom to see what had happened. When we took off her shorts, we instantly saw what was causing the pain. She had a piece of wood that was an inch and a half long, which went into her skin and back out. It was quite obvious as to why it was so painful to her. I took hold of the sliver and pulled it right out. At that moment, the pain increased even more. But soon, the pain was gone as the sliver was removed.

I did regret causing Hanna more pain than she was in. However, as I knew the result, I did not regret it. The sliver was removed and she would feel much better in a matter of moments. So also with the letter that Paul wrote. In the reading the letter to the church, it caused much pain in some of the members, because they were living in sin and Paul was convicting them of their unrighteousness. And yet, as they repented of their sin, it demonstrated a right response to Paul's correction. As the results were good in the end, Paul didn't regret the letter at

all.

There is a sorrow that is according to the will of God (2 Cor. 7:10). It's the sorrow that leads to repentance, which leads to life. But, in 2 Corinthians 7, Paul alludes to a worldly sorrow. This is the sorrow that "produces death" (2 Cor. 7:10). This is the type of sorrow that Judas had. In our text this morning, we will see three characteristics of worldly sorrow in the life of Judas.

Last week in our exposition of Matthew, we looked at Peter's sin of denying Jesus. We found in that text a warning and a hope. It was a warning to us in that we, like Peter, may easily fall into sin as he did. It was a hope to us in that we, like Peter, may be restored and forgiven of our transgressions. The end result of Peter is good news! God used him in mighty ways to build His church. But, with Judas, there is only a warning. See, there is no good news with Judas. There is no window of hope with him. Jesus called him, "the son of perdition" (John 17:12). He was under the control of Satan (Luke 22:3). Jesus said that "It would have been good for [Judas] if he had not been born" (Matt. 26:24). Judas is suffering eternally for his sin. His story contains no happy ending.

And so, the question before us this morning is this: Are you a Peter? Or, are you a Judas? I remember reading the story of a Chinese Christian, named Wang Ming-Dao. He was born into a Christian family in China in 1900. His faith in the Lord was strong. In 1924, he began a Bible study with a hand-full of believers near his home in Peking. It quickly grew into a church which he pastored. In 1937, the congregation built a building that could seat some 500 people for worship. But when the Communist flag was finally hoisted over Peking in 1949, his life was dramatically changed. The government cracked down on him. In 1955, he was imprisoned for preaching the gospel. After a year in prison, he bent to the Communist demands and "agreed to join the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and to preach on its behalf." But, in doing so, Wang Ming-Dao felt that "he had betrayed his Lord and Master before the world" (p. 30). Such a decision caused undue turmoil in his soul. It was said that he would wander the streets near his home and say, "I am Peter. ... I am Peter." (thinking of he had denied his Lord as Peter had done). But at times, in his greatest despair, he would even say, "I am Judas. ... I am Judas." His Lord proved faithful to sustain him. Once released from prison, he never preached on behalf of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement. After a few months when this became clear to the Communist government, they imprisoned him again. He was sentenced to life in prison. His sufferings in prison were great as he was often mistreated. But, in 1979, under new government in China, he was released, having spent 24 years in prison. His testimony was this, "It was the Word of God that gave me the very best moment of my life when I overcame my lies. ... If it were not for God's protection I would be dead by now, but it was the Word of God that rescued me". [1](#)

In His mind, he found comfort that he was a Peter, and not a Judas. Are you a Peter? Or, are you a Judas? As you deal with your sin, do you deal with it like Peter did or like Judas did?

Worldly sorrow ...

1. Responds to Consequences (verse 3).

Look at verse 3, "When Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse." It wasn't the sin of How often does this happen!

A man spends far too much time at the office, neglecting his wife at home and the marriage turns sour. He may well be sorrowful, but sorrowful over the wrong things. He may grieve the difficulties of his marriage, rather than in the sin of loving his work too much. A boy is caught shoplifting from a store and brought down the police station. He may well be sorrowful, but sorrowful over the wrong things. He may grieve that his parents had to come and bail him out of jail. He may grieve that he will be shamed in the family from now on. But, he may not grieve over shoplifting, because he had done it before ... and he will do it again. A child is disciplined and expresses much sorrow. But, it isn't the sin that makes them cry. It is the pain of the discipline that moves their heart to sorrow.

I believe that this was the case with Judas. It wasn't his own sin that led him to sorrow. It was the consequences of his sin that produced his remorse, and not the sin itself. We get a sense from verse 3 that it was only when Judas actually saw what His did that he felt remorse. As far as we know, Judas felt no remorse when he agreed to betray Jesus (Matt. 26:14-16). As far as we know, Judas felt no remorse when he actually betrayed Jesus, by kissing Him on the cheek as a friend would (Matt. 26:48). It was only when Judas actually saw that Jesus had been condemned to die that he actually felt the pain of his sin. This is the point of the word, "When." It was when he saw the effects of his sin that he finally responded.

I'm not sure what he was thinking. Perhaps he didn't think through all of the implications of everything that he was doing when he betrayed Jesus. Perhaps he didn't think that the Sanhedrin would actually find Jesus guilty. Perhaps he didn't think that the Sanhedrin would put him to death. Perhaps he began to think for the very first time about his reputation as a traitor. He knew how tax-gatherers were treated. They were considered traitors against the Roman government. But Judas betrayed a man who had always been faithful to him. Never had Jesus treated Judas badly. Never had Jesus spoken wrongly to him. Never had Jesus sought for his harm. But, Judas turned his back on all of that kindness and betrayed the supreme lover of his soul. His reputation today is so bad that people don't name their children "Judas" anymore. There are a bunch of Peters and Johns and Andrews running around this world. But, there aren't any Judas's running around this world anymore. The name stopped with him.

We don't know exactly what came into the mind of Judas. But, we do know that seeing Jesus condemned was too much for him to take. Those who wait until the consequences come are often not really repentant.

I remember in my car one time listening to Christian radio. Along came a radio program on the subject of pornography. A man and his wife was being interviewed who had written some type of book on the subject from a Christian perspective. They had counseled many marriages through this devastating sin. I remember an insightful statement that they made. They said that the one who confesses his sin before being discovered has a much higher probability of escaping its grasp than the one who confesses after being caught in the sin. The simple reason for this is that when you are finally found out, there are a host of other circumstances that come. It may very well be that you are sorrowful for your turn of circumstances, rather than for your sin. It may be that you are sad because of the shame that you brought upon yourself, the damage that it has done to your marriage, the effects upon your children, or the embarrassment that you will face.

If those things are what have caused the sorrow, then, it isn't sorrow for sin. It is worldly sorrow. And such sorrow won't lead to repentance. Because such sorrow isn't for sin. It is for the consequences of the sin. And there is a world of difference between the two.

And though we are dealing with the worldly sorrow of an unrepentant soul in our text, the application filters down to us in the sins we commit everyday. Are you sorrowful for your sin before a holy God? Or, are you merely sorrowful for the consequences of your sin? Godly sorrow responds to sin. But, worldly sorrow responds to consequences. Let's look at another characteristic of worldly sorrow. Worldly sorrow, ...

2. May Look Like Repentance (verses 3-4).

Those who have worldly sorrow may feel bad about what they have done. They may confess their what they had done was wrong. They may seek to make restitution for the wrong. But all of this may fall short of true repentance. In the case of Judas, he did all of these things, but failed to do the most important thing: repent.

1) Worldly sorrow may feel remorse.

Look at how Matthew describes the feelings of Judas to his sin. Matthew writes that "he felt remorse." Your translation may say something different. It may say that Judas "changed his mind" (ESV), "seized with remorse" (NIV), or "was remorseful" (NKJV). I think that all of these translations are good ones. This word, translated in the New American Standard, "he felt remorse," signifies an inner attitude of sorrow and regret. It directs its attention upon the emotions. It directs its attention upon a past decision that wasn't such a good one. This is the word that Paul used when talking about regretting the letter that he had written. He said that he didn't regret it in that it was truth. But, he said that he did regret it in that it caused them to grieve. It focuses upon Paul's feelings -- His emotions.

When Judas saw the results of his sin, he was grieved in his heart. It affected his feelings. It made him sorrowful. But it fell short of true repentance. It looked a lot like repentance. When someone repents of their sin, it often comes with a flood of emotions, with the realization of everything that was done. Worldly sorrow may produce feelings of remorse, and thus, look like repentance. But, in the end, it will be found wanting.

2) Worldly sorrow may confess sin.

The feelings of Judas led him to confess his sin. In verse 4 we read that Judas came back to the chief priests and elders and confessed to them, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." What an interesting thing this is! Judas is confessing his sin! He isn't hiding it! He isn't seeking to sweep it under the rug. It is open for the world to see! But his confession didn't mean much. Oh, sure, he got the facts right. He testified to the innocence of Jesus. He confessed His own sin in betraying Jesus. But in the end, he knew nothing of forgiveness.

I believe that his confession was more for us than it ever was for Judas. If anyone was able to testify to the sinfulness of Jesus, it was Judas. He was one of the disciples. He was an intimate companion of Jesus. Who knows your sin better than those who are close to you? It's your brothers and sisters who know your sin. It's parents and children who see things as they really are. It is your close friend who sees your sin. With Jesus, it would have been one of His disciples that knew His sin better than anyone else. Additionally who was more willing to witness against Jesus than Judas? He agreed to betray him in the garden. Certainly, he would be willing to testify against Him at His trial. But, Judas was silent. Why was he silent? Because Judas could find no fault with Jesus. His silence at the trial and his confession before the religious leaders give great testimony for us of the sinlessness of Jesus. He was a spotless lamb, who was offered up for our sins.

But, here is the great point for us this morning: Confession of sin doesn't mean repentance! Now, it may mean repentance, but not necessarily. It may only mean that the sinner has been cornered and has no other option, but to admit the truth. When a criminal stands before the judge and hears the charges against him, he is asked how he pleads. The criminal can easily say, "guilty" and have no regret about his actions at all. In a similar way, a sinner can confess his sins, but have no heart of repentance. Because, a repentant heart is a change of heart that will lead to a change in behavior.

I don't believe that Judas' heart was ever changed in this matter. We see no signs of him seeking to make things right with Jesus, whom he had betrayed.

3) Worldly sorrow may make restitution.

Notice what Judas did. He took action. His confession went beyond mere words. He tried to make up for his sin. He "returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders" (verse 3). The sense that we get is that these were the exact same pieces of silver that had been given to him. He hadn't yet gone out and spent this money. He knew that it wasn't quite right that he would have the money, and so he tried to return it.

Perhaps Judas remembered back to the time when Zaccheus was converted. Perhaps you remember that Zaccheus was a chief tax-collector, and thus, was very rich. Jesus had come to his home. When Zaccheus repented of his sin, he told Jesus, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much" (Luke 19:8). Judas acted in much the same way. It wouldn't have been difficult for Judas to remember this event. When you look closely into the chronology of events, Jesus visited Zaccheus shortly before entering Jerusalem, riding on a donkey. It was probably no longer than a week ago that these things took place.

Judas knew that the money in his hand was defiled money. He experienced the truth of Proverbs 10:2, "Ill-gotten gains do not profit." He had received it by betraying the Lord. The religious leaders also knew that the thirty pieces of silver was defiled money. In verse 6 we read that they called the money, "the price of blood."

Now, there is nothing wrong with returning the money that you had taken wrongfully from others. In fact, I encourage you to return any money that you have stolen. This past week, I heard a friend of mine tell the story of a pre-Christian experience that he had. He was working at a lumber yard, loading cars with lumber. During the month of December, the lumberyard sold Christmas trees. Quite often the customers would ask those who worked in the yard if they were to pay them or pay inside the store. On a few occasions, he confessed that he accepted the money outside and put it right into his pocket. He said that he was never caught. At one point, he used the money to scalp some terrific seats at a rock concert. When he gave his life to Christ he sought the Lord's forgiveness, but also felt led by the Spirit to make restitution. So 10 years later he marched into that same hardware store, explained his testimony to the manager, placed \$150 dollars in his hand and asked for his forgiveness. [\[2\]](#)

In many ways, this is what Judas was doing. But, Judas was wrong. Not in the things he did outwardly, but because of what was going on inside of him. The reason we know that Judas was wrong is that he was seeking to make restitution for his evil deed, so as to calm his conscience. The Christian who makes restitution doesn't do so because of a guilty conscience. Because, before the Lord, his conscience is at ease. The Christian makes restitution because it is the right thing to do.

But we know that this wasn't the case with Judas. His conscience was never calmed. When they refused to take the money, Judas "threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary" (verse 5). This isn't the action of a calmed conscience. Neither was his suicide that took place shortly after this.

What Judas did here is what is often called, "penance." Penance is an attempt to make up for a wrong that you did. The idea is that you want to show how bad that you feel about what you did. So, you do something to show that you really mean it. It is a means by which you might be helped to calm your conscience. The Roman Catholic Church today practices this very thing. If you commit a sin, you should go and confess it to a priest, who will assign you certain duties to do. Often, the priest will simply tell those who come to confession to recite a given number of prayers, "say 10 Hail Mary's and 10 Our Fathers." In doing so, the priest has been given authority from the church to assure the parishioner that the temporal punishment that is due to you will be removed. You will spend a few less years in purgatory as a result of your deeds. Such a practice is not Biblical.

Before you jump on the Catholics as having it so wrong, realize that this practice is alive and well in the Protestant Church also. Oh, it's not outward. Nor do we talk about it. But, there is something within all of us that will seek to "make up" for our sins. We naturally want to do something good for God to show that we are really sorry for our sin. "God, I will be faithful in my devotions this week." "God, I will go to church this weekend." "God, I will read my religious book, rather than watching television tonight." We can look forward to our promised righteousness in the future. Or, we look back to our past righteousness and seek to explain to God of our own righteousness.

C. J. Mahaney said it very well. Preaching on the subject of pride, he said, "There is this daily tendency and temptation to seek to receive forgiveness from God, justification before God, and acceptance by God through our obedience to God. ... Is it not a daily tendency ... to assume that when I sin at some point tomorrow, that in order to compensate for that sin, I will now make certain pledges and promises to God in order to quiet my conscience. ... I guarantee at some point tomorrow, you will do this. You will seek to draw comfort and confidence from your obedience to God."

He then warns, "Be careful about using the means of grace as a means of merit. When I say 'means of grace,' I mean all of the wonderful spiritual disciplines that I only want to encourage and promote. ... As I devote myself to the study of God's word, it is possible for me to turn that means of experiencing grace into a means of merit. And to pray more confidently, simply because I have devoted myself devotionally to an hour of studying the Scripture."

Mahaney suggests that whenever you finish any sort of devotional exercise that you "close your Bible, and make this declaration to God, 'Lord, thank you for how I have benefited from my study of Your Word. But, I want to declare to you that that practice is not a means of meriting forgiveness, justification, or acceptance. I can never through my obedience merit what only Christ could achieve in light of your holiness and my sinfulness.'" [\[3\]](#)

Do you know what he is talking about? It rings a truth in my own heart. How easy is it for me to look at my own diligence in following hard after God and to think that it will in some way balance the sin that I do. Do you feel this tendency as well? In doing so, we are just like Judas, who was seeking to make up for his sin, by returning the money in an effort to calm his conscience.

Worldly sorrow will seek to make restitution, and just may look like repentance. But, it fails to deal with the inner conscience, which is the key to repentance. The chief priests and elders would have nothing to do with it. They said in verse 4, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" In other words, they were saying, "What is done is done. This is your money. You deal with it as you see fit." Sadly, he followed their advice exactly as they suggested it. He sought to deal with it himself.

Verse 5 tells us what he did. "He threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself." This shows us the third characteristic of worldly sorrow. Worldly sorrow, ...

3. Ends in death (verses 5-10).

The result of the sin of Judas was that it ended in him taking his own life. Now, I'm not saying that worldly sorrow always produces suicide. But, I am saying that worldly sorrow is on the path to death. This is what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 7:10, "the sorrow of the world produces death."

There are two paths in this life. You are walking on one of them. You will either walk on the path that leads to life and immortality. Or, you will walk on the path that leads to death and destruction for eternity. The path of worldly sorrow is the path of sin. The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). The only way to remove such a sentence of death is through genuine repentance. It is a turning from

one path to the other path. This is the message of the Bible: repentance and forgiveness. Repentance is a turning from sin and a turning to God. It is a turning from trusting your own righteousness to trusting in the righteousness of another. Genuine repentance leads to life. But worldly sorrow only leads to death.

How appropriate it is that our text ends with five verses talking about death and burial. In verse 6, the chief priests picked up the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood." They weren't about to take the silver and put it into the offering box in the back of the room. They knew that it was defiled money. They called it "the price of blood."

Rather than contributing the funds to the needs of the temple, they purchased a field, which they transformed into a cemetery. So stained was this money that they wouldn't even bury Jews in this field. It would be for the Gentiles alone. So stained was this money that it even influenced the name of the field which was bought. The name changed from the "Potter's Field," to the "Field of Blood," which remained its name for years. Most scholars believe that Matthew wrote his gospel some thirty years after the crucifixion. This cemetery still testified to the wickedness of the religious leaders. This is the point of Matthew writing that the name had been changed "to this day" (verse 8).

They knew that the money they had given to Judas was used to betray innocent blood. This is yet another testimony to the innocence of Jesus.

All of this was in the prophetic plan of God. Consider verses 9-10, "Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, 'And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one whose price had been set by the sons of Israel; and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.'"

There is much discussion in the commentaries about this quotation. It has led many to believe that the Bible isn't inerrant. For, it seems to some that the wording of this quote comes from the prophet Zechariah, rather than Jeremiah. Zechariah is the only prophet to mention the thirty pieces of silver. And yet, the parallels to Jeremiah 19 are many. ^[4]

Jeremiah was told by the Lord to purchase "a potter's earthenware," to gather elders and the chief priests together, and to tell them of what the Lord was going to do to Judah. Jeremiah was to tell of the great calamity that would take place.

Jeremiah was instructed to say, "Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Behold I am about to bring a calamity upon this place, at which the ears of everyone that hears of it will tingle. Because they have forsaken Me and have made this an alien place and have burned sacrifices in it to other gods that neither they nor their forefathers nor the kings of Judah had ever known, and because they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent and have built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal, a thing which I never commanded or spoke of, nor did it ever enter My mind; therefore, behold, days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when this place will no longer be called Topheth or the valley of Ben-hinnom, but rather the valley of Slaughter.'" (Jeremiah 19:3-6).

What a good picture this is of the end of worldly sorrow. It is death, destruction, burial, and disaster. How important it is for us to sorrow for the right things in the right way. When we sin, may we fill our hearts with godly sorrow and not with worldly sorrow.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on August 21, 2005 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

[1] This story was taken from Faith Cook's excellent book entitled, *Singing in the Fire*, which tells of fourteen Christians who faced tremendous difficulties in their lives, and yet, rejoiced through them. The quotes were taken from pages 30-32.

[2] This story was taken Randy Smith's sermon from August 7, 2005 at The Grace Tabernacle in Lake Como, New Jersey. The sermon can be read at http://www.thegracetabernacle.org/sermon_text/gtst_05.0807.html.

[3] C. J. Mahaney delivered this message at the PDI Leadership Conference in 2002. The thrust of this quote can also be found in his wonderful book, "The Cross-Centered Life."

[4] Many solutions to this difficulty have been given. I will propose several of them and then give a good perspective of this knotty problem.

1. Some believe that these words refer to Zechariah 11:12-13. They point out how only Zechariah mentions the thirty pieces of silver. Those who believe this come up with several solutions solving Matthew's mention of Jeremiah.

- a. Matthew is referring to the scroll in which the prophet Zechariah was written. Since this scroll is headed by Jeremiah, the entire scroll can be called by the title, "Jeremiah."
- b. Jeremiah actually wrote these words, but it was only Zechariah who actually penned them. (Acts 20:35 is used as an example, where Paul penned some otherwise unrecorded words of Jesus).
- c. Jeremiah wrote these words, but they are now lost. (See Jude 14 for an example of this).
- d. The word, "Jeremiah," was inserted by an ignorant transcriber. They claim that the original text simply says, "The prophet."

2. Others believe that Matthew was referring to Jeremiah. They point out that Jeremiah frequently deals with potters (Jer. 13:5; 17:1-11; 19:1-13; 32:6-15). This view has several difficulties, the largest of which seeks to explain the "thirty pieces," which is nowhere mentioned in Jeremiah.

3. Others believe that Matthew fused together the words of Jeremiah and Zechariah into one quote, which is done elsewhere in Scripture (i.e. Mark 1:2-3, which pulls from both Isaiah and Malachi). The reason for claiming that it comes from Jeremiah, is simply one of the importance of Jeremiah over Zechariah in fulfillment. The lack of word-by-word quotation is best explained by D. A. Carson, who says, "Matthew sees in Jeremiah 19 and Zechariah 11 not merely a number of verbal and thematic parallels to Jesus' betrayal but a pattern of apostasy and rejection that must find its ultimate fulfillment in the rejection of Jesus, who was cheaply valued, rejected by the Jews, and whose betrayal money was put to a purpose that pointed to the destruction of the nation" (Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 8, p. 566).

J. C. Ryle provides us with a good perspective: "A question of this sort, which has puzzled so many interpreters, is not likely to be settled at this date" (Matthew: Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, p. 274).