MATTHEW 27

Mat 27:1 - When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death.

Mat 27:2 - And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

* After a night in the abusive custody of the Jewish elite, Jesus was led to the Roman governor Pontus Pilate.
* Who was Pontus Pilate?
  + We briefly mentioned Pilate at the beginning of chapter 26.
  + Pilate was preceded by Valarius Gratis who had appointed Caiaphas as High Priest.
  + He was the 5th Roman governor of the region.
  + Historical records of his life and rule are sparse and many of the details of his reign are still debated.
  + Pilate had many run-ins with the Jews he governed which eventually led to his removal from office.

Mat 27:3 - Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders,

Mat 27:4 - saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” They said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.”

Mat 27:5 - And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself.

* I find these words about Judas fascinating.
* When Judas saw the end result of his actions (Jesus condemned) the text says “he changed his mind.”
  + His 30 pieces of silver didn’t look as appealing when he saw the damage they caused.
  + APPLICATION:
    - How many sins do people get caught up in that lead to the same result?
    - The devil is so good at blurring the long term effects of the choice made today.
    - Don’t let the devil focus your camera!
      * You can set your camera to have sharp focus on an object immediately in front of you while blurring out the background image (iphone portrait mode). This is called “bokeh.”
      * 
      * Photographers will often use the phrase “blow out the background.”
      * Satan is great at bokeh and frames all his temptations this way.
      * We desperately need to take the lens from him and make sure the foreground and the background of our choices are in focus.
  + Judas had been thinking too short-term to notice where his road was leading him.
  + He went and confessed his sin to the chief priests and elders but they didn’t care.
  + They had used Judas for their purposes and cared nothing for his internal convictions.
  + If only had waited and confessed his sin to Christ.
  + APPLICATION:
    - Contrast Judas’ friends and actions with Peter’s.
    - Judas made friends with sinners.
      * When he betrayed Christ and felt terrible about it, none of them cared to help.
      * They were all to interested in their own selfish interests.
      * Having received no comfort from them, he went out and killed himself.
    - Peter was friends with the 11 Apostles.
      * When he betrayed Christ and felt terrible about it, they supported him because they were all struggling with similar doubts.
      * None of them were perfect but they all loved Jesus.
      * Having their support got him through the next 3 days and he was later able to reconcile with Jesus.
    - Friends matter!

Mat 27:6 - But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money.”

Mat 27:7 - So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.

Mat 27:8 - Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

Mat 27:9 - Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel,

Mat 27:10 - and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.”

* Before killing himself, Judas had thrown the money he received for the betrayal back into the Temple.
* The hypocrisy of the Jews is in full display in this text.
  + They couldn’t decide what to do with money.
  + Apparently it was unlawful to “blood money” into the treasury of the Temple.
  + But apparently it wasn’t unlawful to use money to buy the blood of an innocent person.
  + They decided they would take the money and buy a field (potter’s field) to bury strangers (very charitable don’t you think?)
* The field became known as the “Field of Blood” on account of the money used for the purchase.
* Verses 9 and 10 are worth more of your study than what we can offer in this short overview.
  + Jesus cites the quotation as coming from the prophet Jeremiah.
  + But when we look into the Old Testament, the only prophet in which this quote can be located is Zechariah.
  + Why did Jesus say these were the words spoken by Jeremiah if they are only found in Zechariah 1:12-13?
  + A few options have been proposed and I’ve concluded the 2 I find most likely:
    - (1) These words had originated with Jeremiah and were only later written down by Zechariah (this is chronologically possible).
    - (2) The Jews didn’t divide up their “Old Testaments” the way we do today.
      * Their scriptures were broken up into 3 sections, the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets.
      * Jeremiah was the first book in the prophets.
      * Therefore Jesus could be referencing this specific prophecy by using Jeremiah’s name to make reference to all of the prophetic writings (which would include Zech 1:12-13).

Mat 27:11 - Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You have said so.”

Mat 27:12 - But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer.

Mat 27:13 - Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?”

Mat 27:14 - But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

* SIDE NOTE: I’m not going to try to piece together all of the gospel accounts in this Matthew study. The other gospels provide us with additional details about Jesus trial, conversation with Pilate, crucifixion, resurrection, etc…
* The Jews took Jesus to Pilate hoping he would provide the death sentence they wanted.
* Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the King of the Jews?”
  + This would have been an important question for a Roman governor who served Caesar and was tasked with keeping peace in the area.
  + If Jesus claimed to be the king of Judaea, Pilate would have had a serious problem with Him.
  + Judaea belonged to Caesar and anyone who was able to gather such large crowds while claiming to be its king was a threat to Rome.
* Jesus responded in the affirmative.
  + John 18:36 records Jesus telling Pilate His Kingdom was “not of this world.”
  + His Kingdom was a spiritual kingdom.
  + Because Jesus sought no earthly throne, Pilate saw no reason for Him to be prosecuted under Roman law.
* Pilate was fascinated by the way Jesus responded to the accusations against Him.
  + It was probably impossible to have an encounter with Jesus and not be fascinated in some way.
  + He was interrogating his Creator.

Mat 27:15 - Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted.

Mat 27:16 - And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.

Mat 27:17 - So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?”

Mat 27:18 - For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up.

* Apparently there was a custom at Passover that the governor would forgive a prisoner of their crimes and release them from prison.
* This may not have been dissimilar to governors and presidents handing out pardons.
* It was up to the people who was released.
* Pilate gives the people a choice, “would you like Jesus or Barabbas?”
  + We are told Barabbas was a “notorious” prisoner.
  + Pilate may have thought he could back them into a corner.
    - Certainly they didn’t like Jesus.
    - But, he may have thought, they won’t ask for the release of a terrible person like Barabbas.
* After investigating, Pilate had figured out the reason Jesus was brought to him.
  + It wasn’t because He had committed a crime.
  + It was because Caiaphas and his friends were envious.
    - Remember, Caiaphas held the high priesthood because Pilate allowed him to stay in office.
    - Pilate evidently knew Caiaphas on some level and could derive his motives.

Mat 27:19 - Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.”

* This record is unique to Matthew’s gospel.
* During the night, Pilate’s wife had had a dream about Jesus which had, in some way, revealed His righteousness.
* When she became aware of the decision with which her husband was wrestling, she sent word to tell him not to convict an innocent person.
* At this point, Pilate has two confirmations of Jesus’ innocence.
  + (1) His own convictions after talking to Jesus.
  + (2) His wife’s dream (which could not have been a coincidence).

Mat 27:20 - Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.

Mat 27:21 - The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.”

Mat 27:22 - Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!”

Mat 27:23 - And he said, “Why? What evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

* Whatever influence the chief priests and elders still had over the people was apparently enough to convince them to ask for the release of a hardened criminal instead of a man who had spent His days healing their sick.
* The crowd asked for the release of Barabbas and for Jesus to be crucified.
* Pilate asked them again, “Why? What evil has He done?”
  + The mob didn’t respond with a coherent answer, they just kept on shouting.
  + How often do leaders relent to permit or even support godless things, not because those supporting the godlessness present a case based on evidence and logic, but because they yell and keep yelling until those in authority, worried about the security of their position, relent?
  + Pilate had at least 2 confirmations of Jesus’ innocent (one miraculous) but didn’t want to incite the Jews for fear of their uproar becoming a stain on his political record.
  + Same things happens all the time today.

Mat 27:24 - So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.”

Mat 27:25 - And all the people answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!”

Mat 27:26 - Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

* Pilate realized he wasn’t going to win, so he had a basin of water brought to him and figuratively washed his hands to excuse himself from the guilt of the injustice.
* Pilate claimed innocence but the truth is, he was the one with the power to stop the injustice.
  + The Bible doesn’t excuse Pilate.
  + Excusing ourselves from a situation and clearing the road for sin to take place isn’t an option God
  + We are put in certain circumstances by God to stand for the truth.
  + If it is within our power to keep sin from happening, we shouldn’t step aside and give way.
  + When we give permission for something to happen, aren’t we complicit with the perpetrator.
* The Jews were more than willing to take responsibility so long as they could rid themselves of Christ.
* It is interesting that the Jews got what they wanted, the pardon of a murderer (Barabbas). and in doing so God made pardon available for their murder.
* That’s a strong picture of grace!
* They were in the act of sinning and God was in the act of offering salvation.

Mat 27:27 - Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him.

Mat 27:28 - And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him,

Mat 27:29 - and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!”

Mat 27:30 - And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head.

Mat 27:31 - And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

* We will dig into the gruesome details of this process in the other gospel accounts but for now I want to focus on the image Matthew has been building.
* This is the King Matthew is trying to get the Jews to believe in.
* Their vision of the Messiah was too small.
  + They wanted a Messiah to overthrow the Romans.
  + But the Romans weren’t the problem.
  + Sin was what oppressed their nation.
  + God told the Jews in the Old Testament He would make their lives hard and give them into the hands of their enemies if they were not obedient to Him.
  + The Jews were not oppressed because of the big bad Romans, they were oppressed by themselves!
  + They needed saving from themselves!
  + In the murder of Jesus, Matthew is showing them they are exactly like their fathers who killed the prophets.
  + They were still sinful and, like their fathers, were still oppressed because of that sin.
  + What was their solution?
    - “We need a Messiah King who will lead us in victory against our enemies!”
    - Boy, does that sound familiar?
    - That is what they asked Samuel for when Israel initially asked for a king.
    - And how did that go?
    - Did it solve all their problems?
    - No, it created more problems.
  + What had it taken to win the Israelites (Jews) freedom when they were in slavery in Egypt?
    - An act of God!
    - His wrath was poured out on the firstborn of Egypt while the blood of the lamb protected the Israelites from receiving that wrath.
  + What was it going to take to win the Israelites (Jews) their freedom when they were in slavery in sin?
    - An act of God!
    - God’s wrath was being poured out on His Firstborn so the blood of the Lamb (Jesus) could protect the Israelites and ultimately us from receiving that wrath.
  + God sent them the King they needed, not the king they wanted.
    - In doing so, God destroyed the oppressor.
    - The oppressor was not Rome.
    - If the Jews thought Rome was the target they were thinking about small potatoes.
    - The oppressor was sin and Satan.
    - Christ would set up a Kingdom far better than some earthly temporal empire.
    - He was out to conquer the greatest enemy of all.
    - It was a Kingdom that would never be destroyed.
    - It would outlast Rome and every nation after it.
    - And Jesus invited all to join Him in His Kingdom
* Consider the parties present, Jews and Romans
  + The Jews don’t believe Jesus is their king because He isn’t going to deliver them from Roman oppression.
  + The Romans then mock the idea of Jesus as a King because they don’t believe they need saving from oppression, they’re top dogs in the world.
  + This may be why Jesus is always trying to get His Apostles to think more spiritual and less physical
  + Aren’t these the reasons people reject Christ as their King today?
    - People are too concern with the physical they can’t see the bigger picture.
    - People don’t believe they need saving.

Mat 27:32 - As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross.

Mat 27:33 - And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull),

Mat 27:34 - they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.

* Cyrene was a city of North Africa
* Simon was probably in Jerusalem for the Passover celebration.
* 
* You can imagine the pictures of crosses you’ve seen in crucifixes or history books and how heavy they must have been.
* The whole cross probably weighed over 300lbs.
* The crossbeam which many of the condemned were made to carry was likely 100lbs.
* That may not have been an impossible burden for Jesus on a healthy day but after the sleepless night, scourging, and other abuses, it would have felt like a 1,000lbs.
* There is some discussion about the wine and gall offered to Jesus but most believe the gall was a bitter additive to the wine which was offered as a slight painkiller.

Mat 27:35 - And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots.

Mat 27:36 - Then they sat down and kept watch over him there.

Mat 27:37 - And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

* If there was ever a summary so abbreviated as to not capture the full emotion of a situation, it would be “And when they had crucified him.”
  + Matthew shares none of the horror of having nails driven through your hands and being lifted up in the air pinned to a piece of wood.
  + A first century audience didn’t need any explanation of the crucifixion.
  + They were probably more familiar with the process than they wanted to be.
  + For first century audiences, we will dig into the details of crucifixion in the upcoming gospels.
* The soldiers who crucified Jesus cast lots for His clothing.
  + It was not uncommon for prisoners to be crucified naked.
  + Not doubt this would have added to the shame of the whole ordeal.
  + Casting lots is comparable to drawing straws, although it was sometimes guided by divine influence in the Old Testament.
* An additional insult, a sign reading “King of the Jews,” was placed above Jesus’ head.

Mat 27:38 - Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

Mat 27:39 - And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads

Mat 27:40 - and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

Mat 27:41 - So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying,

Mat 27:42 - “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.

Mat 27:43 - He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

Mat 27:44 - And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

* In His death, Jesus was associated with common criminals. Two thieves were hung beside Him.
* To make matters worse, the Jewish elite came by to mock Jesus one last time.
* Can you imagine the self-discipline it must have taken for Him to keep the 12 legions of angels in heaven?
* Jesus had the power and the right to come off the cross.
  + It was within His rights to come off the cross but He didn’t in order to bring good news to men.
  + This principle will appear in later epistles for Christian application.
  + Sometimes we surrender our rights to make a way for the gospel.
* The two thieves who were crucified with Him mocked Him too.
  + Talk about the pot calling the kettle black.
  + Matthew’s gospel doesn’t tell us one of the thieves would later change his attitude and acknowledge Jesus as a King.

Mat 27:45 - Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.

Mat 27:46 - And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

* Miraculous darkness covered the land when the mid-day sun should have been shining.
  + 6th hour = 12pm
  + 9th hour =3pm
* Around 3pm, Jesus cried out “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,”
  + This statement is not Greek or Hebrew.
  + It is recorded in the common spoken language (generally referred to as Aramaic)
* The meaning of the statement is provided as, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”
  + There has been a tremendous amount of debate surrounding this verse.
  + What does Jesus intend to communicate in this?
  + I think the first thing to recognize is Jesus doesn’t pull these words out of thin air.
    - These words are a quotation from Psalm 22:1
    - Psalm 22 was written by David in a time of despair.
    - He begins by expressing his feeling of being abandoned by God but closes with the realization he has not been abandoned (Psalm 22:24).
    - Several other verses in Psalm 22 prophecy of Jesus (We already looked at 22:18).
  + If I said to you, “The Lord is my Shepherd,” where would your mind immediately go?
  + Psalm 23, right?!
  + If I am a 1st Century Jew familiar who knows the Psalms and someone said to me, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me,” where is my mind going to lead me?
  + Psalm 22, right?!
* Why does He want the people to remember Psalm 22?
  + (1) Jesus is showing the people Psalm 22 is being fulfilled on His cross, even verse 28, “For kingship belongs to the LORD, and He rules over the nations.”
  + (2) To reveal to the people that even in this moment when it appeared God had forsaken Him, God was worthy of praise, because as the psalmist wrote, “For He has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and He has not hidden His face from Him, but has heard, when He cried to Him (Psalm 22:24).
  + My understanding is that Christ was not abandoned by God and He quotes Psalm 22 for the benefit of those listening who were under the impression they were observing a Godless scene.

Mat 27:47 - And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, “This man is calling Elijah.”

Mat 27:48 - And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink.

Mat 27:49 - But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.”

* Evidently, there were some who were confused about Jesus’ words.
* They thought He was crying out for Elijah.
* Several reasons have been given for this misunderstanding.
  + The similarity of “Eli” with the Elijah’s Greek name.
  + Jesus not articulating the words clearly due to His bodily weakness.
  + The people who misunderstood were foreigners visiting for the Passover and weren’t proficient in the language.
* Someone then took a sponge and filled it with sour wine, put it on a reed, and lifted it to Jesus’ mouth for Him to drink.
* Some of the crowd then waited to see if Elijah would show up to save Him.

Mat 27:50 - And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

Mat 27:51 - And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.

Mat 27:52 - The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised,

Mat 27:53 - and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

* After hanging on the cross for hours, Jesus cried out with a loud voice and died.
* Jesus’ last words as recorded in the other gospels were “It is finished.”
* His death was accompanied by some significant events.
  + (1) The curtain in the Temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom.
    - The Jewish Temple had two “rooms” inside, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.
    - God’s presence dwelt in the Most Holy Place and only one man in Israel (the high priest) was permitted to enter the Most Holy Place once a year.
    - The rooms were separated by a curtain/veil.
    - Exo 26:31-33 - “And you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. It shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it. And you shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, with hooks of gold, on four bases of silver. And you shall hang the veil from the clasps, and bring the ark of the testimony in there within the veil. And the veil shall separate for you the Holy Place from the Most Holy.
    - What is the significance of the curtain tearing?
      * After the death of Jesus, all men have access to God through Jesus.
      * You don’t need to be a special kind of priest to talk to God or “draw near” to Him.
      * The dividing curtain, the division between God and man, had been removed.
    - Its tearing from top to bottom may indicate this change came as a result of God’s action in heaven, not man’s action on earth.
  + (2) There was an earthquake.
  + (3) Some dead people resurrected (notice this occurred “after His resurrection).
    - We know Jesus had the power to raise the dead.
    - Like Lazarus (who we haven’t met yet), these people were called out of their tombs.
    - The resurrected appeared to many people in the city as evidence to Jesus’ own resurrection.

Mat 27:54 - When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

Mat 27:55 - There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him,

Mat 27:56 - among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

* What could prompt a hardened roman soldier to confess Christ as the Son of God?
* Apparently, it was the same thing that changed the mind of a thief who mocked Christ one moment and confessed Him the next!
* Matthew records the names of three women present at the scene:
  + Mary Magdalene
  + Mary, mother of James and Joseph
  + And Salome, Zebedee’s wife, mother to of James and John.
* John and Mark’s gospel give us a bit more information.
  + Mark 15:40 reveals James and John’s mothers name, Salome.
  + John 19:25 records the presence of Jesus mother, Mary, and informs us her sister (Jesus’ aunt) was there.
* It is difficult to imagine how horrible this scene would have been for them to observe.

Mat 27:57 - When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus.

Mat 27:58 - He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.

Mat 27:59 - And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud

Mat 27:60 - and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away.

Mat 27:61 - Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

* The text now introduces us to a new disciple, Joseph of Arimathea.
  + We don’t know a whole lot about Joseph but we know he was rich and had a tomb.
  + Luke 23:50 says he was a member of “the council,” which is probably a reference to the Sanhedrin (the Jewish council comprised of Pharisees and Sadducees).
  + Joseph’s action in this passage may have endangered his position on that council.
* Joseph went to Pilate and asked to take Jesus’ body off the cross for burial. Without objection, Pilate gave his permission.
* Joseph took Jesus’ body and laid it in his own tomb.
  + This wasn’t a grave like you’d find in a modern cemetery, it was a tomb cut out of a rock formation.
  + A “great stone” was rolled in front of the mouth of the tomb to keep animals and grave robbers out.
* Mary of Magdala and “the other Mary” (probably the mother of James and Joseph) accompanied Joseph at the tomb.

Mat 27:62 - The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate

Mat 27:63 - and said, “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise.’

Mat 27:64 - Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.”

Mat 27:65 - Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.”

Mat 27:66 - So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

* The day of Preparation was the day Jesus died (Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:14).
* The chief priests and Pharisees approached Pilate and asked him to set a guard at Jesus’ tomb for three days to ensure no one stole His body and claimed He resurrected.
* It is interested that the chief priests and Pharisees remembered Jesus’ words about rising again but His own Apostles didn’t.
  + I wonder if it was by God’s divine guidance they remembered Jesus’ prophecy.
  + Because their actions, although designed to stop squelch any rumors of resurrection, ended up strengthening the case for the resurrection.
* Pilate gave the order for the tomb to be secured.
* The text says the tomb was sealed.
  + The seal would have indicated if the tomb had been opened.
  + It is difficult to know the exact nature of the seal but it was probably done with wax.
  + When the stone had been rolled into place, a short piece of rope could have been sealed on either end, one to the stone and the other to the tomb. That way if the seal was pulled too hard by someone attempting to role the stone away, the hardened wax on either end would break and provide evidence of the break in.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pontius_Pilate>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Zechariah>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crucifixion#:~:text=In%20some%20cases%2C%20the%20condemned,45%20kg%20(100%20lb).>