

JUDAS ISCARIOT AND JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA:
TWO GENTILE GRAVES FOR TWO JEWISH CORPSES

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This article concerns M's¹ stories in Mt. 26–27 of Jesus and two of his principal supporting actors, Judas Iscariot and Joseph of Arimathea. It is a prequel and sequel to a prior article in these pages concerning Pilate and the crowd (M's Judas story is immediately before Pilate and the crowd, Joseph after). Like Pilate and the crowd, M's Judas and Joseph stories are Greco-Roman in literary style, Jewish in outlook. However, the Judas and Joseph stories contain additional Greco-Roman literary devices and allude to many more, and more arcane Jewish laws.

This article has two principal parts. The first discusses M's literary devices. The second discusses M's use of melodramatic existential perils, encountered and overcome. However, instead of the usual Greco-Roman variety (like Scylla and Charybdis or Dido's embrace), M's perils are Jewish legal transgressions.

This article has two principal purposes: first to appreciate M's literary artistry; second to examine and understand M's law-reverence. M has the law endorse Jesus as the Messiah. In doing so, M endorses the law. A third subsidiary purpose, a full discussion of which must await future consideration,² is to question whether M's law-reverence reads on certain portions of

1. M is the designation used for Matthew's Gospel's final compiler, redactor, editor and author. See Andrew Simmonds, "His Blood on Us and on Our Children" (Mt. 27.25) is Modeled on Oedipus's Unwitting Kinship Oath to His Father in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*, *JGRChJ* 16 (2020), pp. 30-64 (30 n. 1).

2. M's primary intertext is Mark. In my view, Mark's relation to Paul, especially in Mk 7, has been misunderstood, requiring correction, which cannot be accomplished here.

Paul traditionally perceived/regarded as advocating a law-free gospel (e.g. Rom. 3.20, 28; 9.30-32; Gal. 2.19-21; 3.10-13; Phil. 3.7-9).³ I consider this latter issue after M's devices and perils.

The Literary Devices of Brevity and Allusion

M imitates Callimachus's influential style of brevity⁴ and allusion.⁵ Callimachus may be called the (ancient) father of modern post-colonial discourse. On the surface, Callimachus seems profoundly, nay excessively, Greek, densely allusive to Greek mythology, a seeming pro-Greek paean. However, in its hidden transcript, important underlying myths are Egyptian and xenophobic.⁶ The technique is hit-and-run. Because ancient texts were read aloud, there was insufficient time to think about both what you are hearing and what you think you may have just heard. Wearisomely prolix, Callimachus's brief allusions may cause dominants not to pay close attention. However, for subaltern Egyptians' allusions to Horus myths effortlessly evoke the quintessential patriotic event of the Egyptian expulsion of the foreign invaders from across the Red Sea (c. 1550 BCE). The Ptolemies

3. Bernard Jackson, 'Legalism', *JJS* 30 (1979), pp. 1-22. In their sacred law, Romans were more ritualistic than Jews, the most famous example of Roman hyper ritualism being their willingness to repeat sacrifices *ad infinitum* if there was even the slightest ritual flaw or misstep (*instauratio*). Andrew Simmonds, 'Christianity and the Imperial Cult: Jewish and Roman Sacred Law Share a Direct Common Origin' (see online: https://www.academia.edu/16517442/CHRISTIANITY_AND_THE_IMPERIAL_CULT_JEWISH_AND_ROMAN_SACRED_LAW_SHARE_A_DIRECT_COMMON_ORIGIN).

4. Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21–28: A Commentary* (trans. James E. Crouch; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), p. 471.

5. Anne Gosling, 'Political Apollo: From Callimachus to the Augustans', *Mnemosyne* 45 (1992), pp. 501-12.

6. Daniel L. Selden, 'Alibis', *ClAnt* 17 (1998), pp. 289-412 (345-54, 386-406); Iiro Laukola, 'Propagandizing from the Womb: Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* and the *Oracle of the Potter*', *Rosetta* 12 (2012), pp. 85-100 (95); Iiro Laukola, 'Macedonian Kings, Egyptian Pharaohs' (PhD diss., University of Helsinki, 2016), passim; John M.G. Barclay, *Against Apion* (Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary, 10; Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 347-49, 352; Rachel Hallote, 'Does Archaeology Confirm Joseph's Time in Egypt?', *BAR* 47 (2021), pp. 40-47.

(for whom Callimachus worked) whipped up these ancient Egyptian hatreds to defend against the new threat from across the Red Sea (Seleucid).

There is a related literary and rhetorical device called *brevitas*: pregnant/conspicuous brevity produced by a two-step process that gives a word or phrase, by its role and location, heightened prominence—indicating it must be important—then *following up* by saying nothing more about it. Prominence plus truncation implies for its *raison d'être* more.⁷ Called iceberg theory, the tip above the surface is the explicit whose conspicuous brevity suggests that seven-eighths of the story is submerged/implied. For this to work, the narrative must be in 'show, don't tell', physical description not mental impression.

Though imitating Callimachus, M's allusions are not to Gentile mythology, but rather to Jewish law. Nevertheless, the device of allusion, its purpose and effect, are identical. Deeper meanings not evident on the surface shine through implicitly, and these are patriotically hostile to foreign invaders. Thus, M's legal allusions are a cipher for anti-imperial Roman hostility⁸ and, at the same time, are extolling righteous Gentiles.

Legal Allusions Require Legal Analysis

Legal allusions are among M's favorite devices.⁹ Hence, my focus is legal,¹⁰ bottom-up and inductive; on incongruous, puzzling and minute details and exceptions; on *dissimilarities* between M material and the rest of

7. Raymond A. Blacketer, *The School of God: Pedagogy and Rhetoric in Calvin's Interpretation of Deuteronomy* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), pp. 69-72 (see also 63 that presents brevity as a mode of exposition); Kenneth G. Johnson, 'Hemingway and Freud: The Tip of the Iceberg', *Journal of Narrative Technique* 14 (1984), pp. 68-73.

8. 'Anti-imperial' rather than 'anti-Roman' because many Romans were also disillusioned with and oppressed by the dictatorship, such as Cato, Cicero, Seneca, Ovid, Lucan and Petronius.

9. Andrew Simmonds, 'Mark's and Matthew's *Sub Rosa* Message in the Scene of Pilate and the Crowd', *JBL* 131 (2012), pp. 733-54 (750-52); Andrew Simmonds, 'Women Witnesses to the Risen Lord' (see online: https://www.academia.edu/16517406/WOMEN_WITNESSES_TO_THE_RISEN_LORD).

10. Chaim N. Saiman, 'Legal Theology: The Turn to Conceptualism in Nineteenth-Century Jewish Law', *Journal of Law and Religion* 21 (2006), pp. 39-103.

the New Testament. I only analyze a single slice of text (here Judas and Joseph) at a time to gain a solid foundation on which to build. This approach produces insights otherwise unattainable.¹¹ Because of their specificity, almost like fingerprints, legal allusions can be validated/falsified.

As for the canard that rabbinic material is too late, I rely upon the Eighteen Enactments (Jerusalem, 65–66 CE) and the insights of Origen likely garnered from Jewish sages. Moreover, the substantive teachings of Jesus in Mark and Matthew are similar or the same as those rabbinic texts ascribed to first-century Tannaitic sages.¹² Overlapping (or very close to) the time of Jesus, as a young man, for eighteen years, Johanan ben Zakkai lived and taught in a town in Galilee ten miles from Nazareth.¹³ As Ulrich Luz says, the similarity between Matthew and Johanan ben Zakkai is amazing.¹⁴

Moreover, there is a double standard between Jewish and Greco-Roman material. If one presumes rabbinic material too late, to be consistent, half of Roman history must be discounted, the attributions of Athenaeus's *Deipnosophistae* and Justinian's *Digest* dismissed, *Suda* shuttered. When the paucity of surviving historical material makes dating impossible, I take what Herbert Bassler calls a relevance-based approach, trying not to use material out of time.¹⁵

11. James K. Feibleman, 'On the Theory of Induction', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 14 (1954), pp. 332-42 (341), in which he says, 'induction accounts for most of the important discoveries.'

12. Edward P. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies* (London: SCM Press, 1990), pp. 68-70; Herbert W. Bassler, *Studies in Exegesis: Christian Critiques of Jewish Law and Rabbinic Responses 70–300 C.E.* (BRLA, 2; Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 7; Herbert W. Bassler, *The Mind Behind the Gospels: A Commentary to Matthew 1–14* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2009), pp. 115, 279; Susannah Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 230-42, who argues that, judging from Jesus' teachings in Mark and Matthew, Jesus was a Pharisee. In an era when rhetoric was revered, the Pharisees, renowned for their rhetorical skills, were Jesus' favored debate partner/opponent.

13. Jacob Neusner, *A Life of Yohanan Ben Zakkai, 1–80 C.E.* (Leiden: Brill, 2nd edn, 1970), pp. 47-56.

14. Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1–8* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), p. 55.

15. Herbert W. Bassler and Marsha B. Cohen, *The Gospel of Matthew and Judaic Traditions: A Relevance-Based Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. vi, 609, 688; Herbert W. Bassler, 'Planting Christian Trees in Jewish Soil', *Review of Rab-*

The Literary Device of Melodrama

M's form/genre in his Judas and Joseph stories is Greco-Roman melodrama.¹⁶ Fast-moving and action-packed, melodrama frequently uses contrived plots, complicated intrigues, disguise, deception, adventure, exaggeration and sensationalism.¹⁷ Euripides's *Helena* and *Iphigenia Taurica* are examples of lofty melodrama.¹⁸ Plautus uses melodrama, in *Rudens*, for example, but of a more low-culture variety. Jason and the Argonauts and kindred stories like the Labors of Hercules and Homer's *Odyssey* contain elements of melodrama—repeated existential perils, encountered and overcome. Many Egyptian stories use melodrama, which routinely involve good and evil, victims and villains, in which evil gains the upper hand enjoying momentary success, but in the end, is conclusively defeated.¹⁹ The oratory/rhetoric of the early Second Sophistic was frequently melodramatically overblown and delivered as an entertaining rambunctious performance. Melodrama is characteristic of the Greek novel genre, Xenophon's *Ephesian*

binic Judaism 8 (2005), pp. 91-112 (107), who says, 'antiquity and continuity of Rabbinic modes of thought are to be appreciated and validated by the study of New Testament'; David Daube, 'Ye Have Heard—but I Say unto You', in Calum M. Carmichael (ed.), *New Testament Judaism: Collected Works of David Daube* (5 vols.; Berkeley: Robbins Collection, 2000), II, pp. 167-72 (171), who says, 'Matthew's is a Rabbinic gospel.'

16. Do not assume a consistent genre throughout. Matthew is highly intertextual, and writers/performers might demonstrate versatility.

17. Examples of M's sensationalism/hyperbole include (1) five women in Jesus' genealogy were either prostitutes, adulteresses or suspected adulteresses (alludes to covenant); (2) new star appears, Magi arrive, Herod connives to use the Magi, Magi thwart Herod, Jesus escapes to Egypt and Herod massacres the innocents; (3) earthquake, tombs open, dead rise, walk the city, seen by many. Hyperbole does not indicate falsity. For a modern example, Louis C.K.'s date is so repulsed by him that she flees by helicopter, hyperbole, which nonetheless accurately portrays her reaction.

18. See also Elizabeth M. Craik, 'Philoktetes: Sophoklean Melodrama', *L'Antiquité Classique* 48 (1979), pp. 15-29.

19. Steve Vinson, 'The Accent on Evil: Ancient Egyptian "Melodramas" and the Problem of Genre', *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 41 (2004), pp. 33-54. Melodrama need not involve facile Manichaeism but an affirmation of cultural values and identity.

Tale, for instance. Also, professional combat, wrestling, including gladiators, often involved melodrama where one combatant, the villain, seems to be winning only to be defeated by the hero. A *deus ex machina* is melodramatic but is usually considered weak as literature. In Mark, Joseph of Arimathea is a *deus ex machina*. M ameliorates by providing another grave in the story besides Joseph's.

The Literary Device of Doubling

M wrote in the high style of the time. As with Statius, M adores doubles.²⁰ Doubles, like allusion and melodrama, increase and exaggerate (like a coffered ceiling), drawing attention to mechanics and provide expanded roles for supporting actors. Thus, in the other Gospels, *only one* person, the central dominant protagonist, Jesus, is hung up, dies, is taken down and buried in the one-and-only grave in the story. However, M doubles it to two deaths, both hung up, Judas, then Jesus, each needing to be brought down and buried, and doubles the graves. In addition to Joseph's grave, M adds another, the potter's field cemetery for foreigners (*xenois*: 'strangers', 'others')²¹ that the priests buy with Judas's money (Mt. 27.6-7).

M writes in rounds²² where events/conflicts repeat with different results. Thus, melodramatically, in a two-round contest, winner takes all; first, Judas's money buys the cemetery; next, Judas dies; then, Jesus dies. At this point at the end of round one, two corpses need burial, in the story with only one available gravesite. Under the literary principle of Chekov's gun,²³ the

20. Susanna Braund, 'A Tale of Two Cities: Statius, Thebes, and Rome', *Phoenix* 60 (2006), pp. 259-73 (270); Simmonds, "'His Blood'"; Richard Levin, 'The Double Plots of Terrence', *CJ* 62 (1967), pp. 301-5.

21. For the meaning of *xenois*, see Elizabeth Belfiore, 'Xenia in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*', *CJ* 89 (1993-94), pp. 113-29. *xenia* can refer to hospitality. M's Judgment of the Nations uses *xenos* sympathetically (Mt. 25.35, 38, 43, 44).

22. For rounds, see Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek* (Dallas: SIL, 2nd edn, 2000), pp. 216, 236-39, 294.

23. Chekhov's gun refers to the precept of literary economy and dynamics (creating tension) that, if, in the first act, there is a gun on the wall, by the last act, it will have gone off and shot someone. See also Yaakov Elman, 'The Rebirth of Omniscient Biblical Exegesis in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *JSIJ*

two corpses become metaphoric lively ultra-ardent rival suitors for her, the grave.²⁴ In this contest, Jesus will *win* this kryptonite booby prize. ‘In the midst of the uncircumcised you shall lie ... there are Edom, her kings, and all her princes ... with those who go down to the pit’ (Ezek. 32.28-29).²⁵

‘Gather not my soul with sinners’ (Ps. 26.9). Jews buried their dead among Jews, separately from Gentiles.²⁶ Moreover, Gentile Christians adopted Jewish burial customs of burial among co-religionists.²⁷ Burial among foreigners would mean that Jesus is defiled, disgraced and presumptively debarred from being the Messiah.

Round one had only *one* gravesite; round two has two, opposite graves, that is, the tawdry potter’s field versus Joseph’s rich man’s tomb (Mt. 27.57, 60). When Jesus gets Joseph’s grave, the other grave becomes available for equally needy Judas. And, since Jesus is *not* buried in the cemetery, and since one of the story’s corpses implicitly will be buried there, surely Judas is buried there. The grave switching from Joseph’s (intended) to Jesus’ (actual) grave implies in parallel a second grave switching of the other grave in the story—the cemetery, from Jesus’ (intended) to Judas’s (actual) grave.

More marvelous still, M’s Joseph is a foreigner, Gentile. Yet, the grave this foreigner supplies is fit for and endorses Jesus as the Messiah under

2 (2003), pp. 199-249; David Daube, ‘Two Cases of Hypostatizing’, in Calum M. Carmichael (ed.), *Talmudic Law: Collected Works of David Daube* (5 vols.; Berkeley: Robbins Collection, 1992), I, pp. 377-79.

24. Sophocles’s *Antigone* calls her tomb her bridal chamber (see Sophocles, *Antigone, The Women of Trachis, Philoctetes, Oedipus at Colonus* [ed. and trans. Hugh Lloyd-Jones; LCL, 21; repr., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000], pp. 87, 89).

25. In one version of the *Toledot Yeshu*, Judas gives Jesus a disgraceful burial in a cesspool in Judas’s garden. See Ora Limor and Israel Jacob Yuval, ‘Judas Iscariot: Revealer of the Hidden Truth’, in P. Schaeffer, M. Meerson and Y. Deutsch (eds.), *Toledot Yeshu: The Revealer of the Hidden Truth* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), pp. 197-220; Yair Furstenberg, ‘The Midrash of Jesus and the Bavli’s Counter-Gospel’, *JSQ* 22 (2015), pp. 303-24 (317-19).

26. Shaye J.D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishna* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2nd edn, 2006), p. 38.

27. Steve Mason, *Josephus, Judea, and Christian Origins* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009), p. 309. Roman Christians were buried in catacombs, not in columbaria.

strictest Jewish law.²⁸ In a diptych, *both* Judas and Jesus are buried in (opposite) foreigner(s)' graves. Judas is buried disgracefully (impure) among foreigners, while Jesus is buried honorably (pure) in a grave a foreigner made for himself.

Corpses and Burial in Prior and Contemporary Literature

If corpses competing for graves seems ghoulish for canon, for the time being, it was high art. The theme of forbidding dead bodies from burial extends from: Hector's corpse in Homer's *Iliad*; in mythology, the children of Niobe; in theater, the debate over the treatment of Ajax's corpse in Sophocles's *Ajax*, strikingly in Euripides's *Supplikes*, and most famously, Polynices's corpse in *Antigone* and *Phoenissae*. In a biblical context, this theme of concern for corpses is found in Rizpah guarding the corpses of the seven crucified sons of Saul (2 Sam. 21.1-14).

However, imperial Roman epic took corpses and burial to an unprecedented level obsessed with corpses, graves, burial and an absolute horror of being left unburied.²⁹ In Lucan, Caesar manically wants to desecrate/disgrace Pompey's corpse. But needy Pompey *sans* head is supplied a pyre (such as it is) from embers pinched from someone else's (*Pharsalia* 8.740-755). In Silius, disgracefully buried under a pile of corpses, Roman general Paulus is removed and given an honorable burial—by Hannibal. Thus, in Silius, Hannibal is Romanized (from a Roman perspective made "good") in order, by allusion to Lucan, to make Caesar appear (even) worse

28. 'Gentile impurity' is something of a misnomer because the impurity is not from being non-Jewish but from not following certain prescribed purity practices (see *b. Nid.* 33b4-5).

29. Andrew M. McClellan, *Abused Bodies in Roman Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Andrew M. McClellan, 'Dead and Deader: The Treatment of the Corpse in Latin Imperial Epic Poetry' (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2015), pp. 290-91, 296, 301-6, 319; Maud W. Gleason, 'Truth Contests and Talking Corpses', in James I. Porter (ed.), *Constructions of the Classical Body* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), pp. 287-313; Catherine Connors, 'Epic Allusions in Roman Satire', in Kirk Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 123-45 (137). As the most popular genre, satire/mime influenced formal literature. See Costas Panaytakis, *Decimus Laberius: The Fragments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 30-31, p. 31 n. 59.

than Hannibal!³⁰ Petronius's *Woman of Ephesus* story (which may be a Neronian mockery of Jesus' crucifixion and burial) is a graphic example of grave switching.

The Peril of Remaining Hung Up Unburied

Although dead, Jesus' and Judas's corpses undergo a series of existential post-mortem perils based on Jewish law. While probably there were cases where these rules were disregarded, for the Messiah, punctilious compliance supplies corroboration, endorsement and the imprimatur of the law.³¹ First, Jesus must not remain hung up at night (Deut. 21.22). However, he cannot come down before he dies; therefore, he must die quickly. However, hideously cruel, Roman crucifixion could last days. To hasten death, the victim's legs might have to be broken. However, if Jesus' legs are broken, again, inferentially, Jesus is not the Messiah.³² Peril avoided, Jesus dies remarkably quickly; in Mark, Pilate is surprised (Mk 15.44).

Next peril is this: it is not enough that Jesus dies quickly; ordinarily the crucified were left hung up, proverbially for birds by day and for dogs by night. Horace calls crucifixion slaves feeding crows (*Ep.* 1.16.48-49). In Petronius's *Woman of Ephesus* story, the Roman soldier guards a crucified corpse to prevent its removal. Normally, what was left was disposed of by burial 'in the manner of an ass', that is, dragged away and discarded without burial (Jer. 22.19, 23; *b. Sanh.* 104a3 and n. 18).³³

However, peril avoided, the Roman governor could permit for the crucified to be taken down and buried (Philo, *Flacc.* 83; Justinian, *Digest* 48.24).³⁴ The Jewish law required that Jews bury any otherwise unattended

30. McClellan, 'Dead and Deader', p. 295.

31. David Daube, 'Disgrace', in Calum M. Carmichael (ed.), *New Testament Judaism: Collected Works of David Daube* (5 vols.; Berkeley: Robbins Collection, 2000), II, pp. 617-34, 622-26.

32. Daube, 'Disgrace', pp. 622-23.

33. Note that the footnote numbers of the Babylonian Talmud in this article come from the Schottenstein Edition of the Babylonian Talmud of the ArtScroll Series published by Mesorah Publications, Brooklyn, NY.

34. Craig A. Evans, 'Jewish Burial Tradition and the Resurrection of Jesus', *JSHJ* 3 (2005), pp. 233-48.

corpse whether or not the deceased was Jewish.³⁵ Josephus says Jews took such care of the burial of the dead that they took down the crucified and buried them before sundown (*War* 4.317). In Acts, Paul says the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their rulers took Jesus down and laid him in a tomb (Acts 13:27-29).

The Peril of No Place to Bury Jesus

The next peril is that there is a severely restricted choice of where to bury Jesus. These restrictions are based on the level of disgrace, which essentially means the severity of the disfigurement of the outward appearance of the corpse; the worse the appearance, the worse the prospects for bodily resurrection.³⁶ This may seem artificial. To understand it, the ancient Egyptians had the notion of enhanced/double death where the worst miscreants were both killed and had their corpses destroyed to foreclose their afterlife. The classic means were being thrown into the fiery furnace or eaten by animals and reduced to their feces. This notion gave rise to the famous biblical curse, 'May his bones be ground to dust!'³⁷ Presumably because their religious system did not include an afterlife, the Indo-European Hittites practiced enhanced/double death by family slaughter (in practice usually limited to males).

The manner of death was not talismanic. However, to physically express an abstract concept, it was common for villains approaching death to be portrayed in a grotesquely hideous condition, bloated, putrid and worm-ridden, as, for example, Herod in Josephus (*Ant.* 17.65) or Judas in Papias (*Frag.* 3).³⁸ Virtue has often been depicted as physical beauty and vice as ugliness. Pharisaic/rabbinic Judaism taught physical bodily resurrection and so carried this physical concept to life after death. The impetus for these ideas was the belief in bodily resurrection.

35. Jonathan K. Crane, 'Jews Burying Gentiles', *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* 10 (2007), pp. 145-61.

36. Daube, 'Disgrace', pp. 617-26.

37. Daube, 'Disgrace', p. 618.

38. B.J. Oropeza, 'Judas's Death and Final Destiny in the Gospels and Earliest Christian Writings', *Neot* 44 (2010), pp. 342-61 (345-47).

Although God might improve the corpse's condition after death, the *condition at death* was the usual starting point.³⁹ This concern purportedly went so far that execution by burning was performed by pouring molten material down the throat to produce burning within, leaving the outside in good condition.⁴⁰ Strangulation was performed placing a soft cloth around the neck to prevent bruising and so forth (*m. Sanh.* 6.5; 7.2-3). Under increasing Roman domination, these rules became increasingly artificial because Jewish authorities were not entirely allowed to perform executions (Jn 18.31; cf. Origen, *Ep. Afr.* 14). Over time, Jewish executions were increasingly performed by strangulation, which was easily accomplished without arousing attention, leaving the corpse in good condition.⁴¹ Nonetheless, the very artificiality may have allowed for greater literary development.

There was a major exception. Martyrs were not denied resurrection, no matter how disfigured, even if left unburied, and they could be buried with their relatives.⁴² On the other hand, because of the disgrace of criminal execution, 'Even if the criminal were a king of kings, he may not be buried in the grave of his fathers' (*t. Sanh.* 9.8).⁴³ Because Jesus is convicted on charges by both Jewish and Roman courts, he is not a martyr. Had he been, the restrictions on his burial would have been obviated.

In this schema of levels of disfiguration, burying a more disfigured corpse with a less disfigured was thought to visit unconscionable harm on the less disfigured. Humorously irreverent, illustrating this principle, the first-century Jewish hagiography *Lives of the Prophets* describes that—this is based on 2 Kgs 13.20-21 and is repeated in *b. Yom.* 9b and *b. Sanh.*

39. Daube, 'Disgrace', p. 618.

40. Daube, 'Disgrace', p. 620.

41. Daube, 'Disgrace', pp. 620-21.

42. Daube, 'Disgrace', p. 625; *b. Sanh.* 47b1; David Biale, *Blood and Belief: The Circulation of a Symbol Between Jews and Christians* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), pp. 9, 74-78; Shmuel Shepkaru, 'From after Death to After-life: Martyrdom and its Recompense', *AJSR* 24 (1999), pp. 1-44 (17 n. 56); H.A. Fischel, 'Martyr and Prophet (A Study in Jewish Literature) (Continued from JQR, XXXVII [1947], 265-280)', *JQR* 37 (1947), pp. 363-86 (363-68); J. Petruccione, 'The Martyr's Death as Sacrifice: Prudentius' *Peristephanon* 4.9-72', *VC* 49 (1995), pp. 245-57 (245-50, 252, 254-55; 254 n. 14; 255 n. 21); Heb. 9.12-23; Rev. 7.15. Jose ben Joezer may have been left unburied (1 Macc. 7.17; Ps. 79:1-3).

43. Daube, 'Disgrace', p. 625.

47a2—mourners were taking out a corpse to be buried, but, when they were obliged to flee, they hid the corpse in the nearest cave, which happened to be where Elisha was buried. Evidently based upon this principle that corpses with different levels of disfiguration must not be buried together, the corpse that was unable to be buried with Elisha immediately came back to life and left Elisha's grave (see also *b. Yeb.* 93b1). Purportedly, Elisha marveled because while, in life, he had only resurrected the dead with difficulty, in death, he did so with ease.⁴⁴

Parenthetically, in the Jewish schema of expressing the prospects for resurrection by the condition of the corpse, in Mark and Matthew, the resurrected Messiah does not have *any stigmata* (in Jewish conception blemishes) such as are prominently found on resurrected Jesus in Luke and John. *Stigmata* are decidedly culturally Roman.⁴⁵ From a Jewish perspective, even a proverbially minor but permanently disfiguring blemish to the servant of the high priest's ear was legally disabling, extending to his master.⁴⁶

Because executed criminals could not be buried with non-criminal dead, purportedly, the Sanhedrin (whose main component were priests) bought separate, segregated communal cemeteries for criminals it executed. However, because more disfigured should not be buried with less (*m. Sanh.* 6.5; *b. Sanh.* 46a4; 47a2-3 and n. 26; 47b1), the Sanhedrin bought *two separate* cemeteries for those executed by the severer Jewish methods (i.e. stoning or burning) and another for those executed by the less severe (i.e. beheading or strangulation) (*m. Sanh.* 6.5; *t. Sanh.* 9.9; *b. Sanh.* 46a4; 47a3 and n. 26).

For contemporary Jewish readers/hearers, M's datum that the priests bought a communal cemetery (Mt. 27.7) alludes to the Sanhedrin buying communal cemeteries for executed Jewish criminals, and, since Jesus was adjudged a criminal and was Jewish, this implies that Jesus would be buried in the cemetery that the priests bought. Also, the cemetery is named for Jesus. The name 'Field of Blood' references Jesus' blood.⁴⁷

44. Induction tends to be playful, which may put off a stolid mien.

45. R.J. Evans, 'Displaying Honourable Scars: A Roman Gimmick', *Acta Classica* 42 (1999), pp. 77-94.

46. Benedict T. Viviano, *Matthew and His World: The Gospel of the Open Jewish Christians—Studies in Biblical Theology* (NTOA, 61; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), pp. 220-28. Ear injuries are a legal category like eye, tooth and cheek.

47. Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, p. 469.

However, normatively, Roman crucifixion was more disfiguring than the worst Jewish methods. Jews executed by Roman crucifixion are not recorded as having been buried in these specific communal cemeteries. Problematically, Jesus could not be buried in the communal cemeteries for executed Jewish criminals.

The Peril of Burial Among Foreigners

In a narrative twist, unlike the communal cemeteries for executed Jewish criminals (where Jesus could not be buried), the priests buy a communal cemetery for foreigners—where Jesus could be buried, though with disastrous consequences.⁴⁸ Other than in M, there is no record of the Sanhedrin or priests buying a communal cemetery for foreigners. For contemporary Jewish readers/hearers, M's datum that the cemetery was for foreigners would have been puzzlingly incongruous. Using *brevitas*, M gives the cemetery for foreigners heightened prominence and then never mentions it again. Such *brevitas* is particularly striking in Greek where emphasis is usually produced by repetition, such as M's repetition of the word 'blood',⁴⁹ or (discussed below) M's thrice-repeated 'so you say' and 'see to it.'

Emphasizing the 'cemetery for foreigners' suggests that the priests had some purpose in mind for using Judas's money to buy a communal cemetery, specifically for foreigners. The priests beforehand thought about and discussed what to do (Mt. 27.7). Since there are two corpses in the story, presumably, the cemetery is purchased with one or the other in mind. However, the corpses are Jewish and should be given Jewish, not Gentile, burial. The priests have no inkling that Judas will die, take no interest in Judas's well-being (Mt. 27.4) and have no reason to inter Judas among foreigners.

However, the priests have an abiding interest in Jesus' corpse, arranging to have Jesus' grave sealed and guards posted (Mt. 27.64-66). The priests have two motives to want to bury Jesus among foreigners. Benignly, that way Jesus' more disgraced/disfigured corpse will not taint other less disgraced/disfigured Jewish corpses, and malevolently, buried among foreign-

48. J. Spencer Kennard, 'The Burial of Jesus', *JBL* 74 (1955), pp. 227-38 (229) notes the Field of Blood makes better sense as the place where Rome buried those who had been crucified than as the purchase of Judas.

49. Simmonds, 'His Blood', pp. 48-50 and 48 n. 66.

ers, Jesus is not the Messiah. We can also infer that the priests wanted and planned to disgrace Jesus' corpse because that is what, in Greco-Roman-style high literature, stereotypical arch-villains did.

Having reached the end of round one, Jesus' situation is/seems hopeless. Destined for the cemetery, his enemies have won. However, in a melodramatic reversal, Jesus could be honorably buried—in a solitary grave—like Joseph's. To the rescue: solitary burial removes corpses from the schema of more or less disfigured and imposes no impediment for Jesus being the Messiah.⁵⁰

Peril avoided. On to the next: to be permitted for the Messiah, Joseph's grave and burial of Jesus must meet exacting Jewish purity standards.⁵¹ Increasing this peril, in M, Joseph is Gentile not Jewish, for whom law-observance/compliance presumably is challenging. So, first, we must consider the purity of Joseph's grave; then, we must consider Joseph being a Gentile.

The Peril of an Impure Grave

While few readers today know, all Jews in the region then knew the meaning of rock-hewn. That Joseph's grave is rock-hewn (quarried, cut, dug) means it is pure/permitted. Indeed, in a telling (if not hairsplitting) legal dis-

50. Some scholars have postulated that, *not* condemned by a Jewish court for a Jewish crime, Jesus was entitled to an honorable burial, which meant that he would be gathered with his ancestors. Therefore, the Gospels show that Jesus is not buried honorably. Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave* (2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1994), II, pp. 1207-11; Byron R. McCane, 'Where No One Had Yet Been Laid: The Shame of Jesus' Burial', in B.D. Chilton and C.A. Evans (eds.), *Authenticating the Activities of Jesus* (NTTS, 28; Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 431-52; Jodi Magness, 'Ossuaries and the Burials of Jesus and James', *JBL* 124 (2005), pp. 121-54 (143-45 and 143-44 n. 105). Particularly for those from humble backgrounds, there are burial places better than with ancestors: e.g. Abraham's tomb, the tombs of the Jewish prophets, Safed, Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey, Pantheon, Arlington National Cemetery or Vatican. Moreover, there was (and is) nothing disgraceful in solitary burial (e.g. Khufu, Khafre, Mausolus, Alexander or Napoleon).

51. Catherine Sider Hamilton, 'The Death of Judas in Matthew: Matthew 27:9 Reconsidered', *JBL* 137 (2018), p. 419-37 (422), who recognizes that the entire narrative contains a theme of purity and pollution.

tion, had the grave been *constructed*, even from the *identical* stones from which it was hewn/quarried, it would have been impure/not permitted (*b. Sanh.* 16b2-3 and n. 21; 47b2-3 and nn. 20-22).

Though comparatively few could aspire to a ‘rich man’s’ rock-hewn tomb (Mt. 27.57), Jews considered rock-hewn vessels impervious to impurity, and prior to 70 CE, they were produced in enormous quantities for Jews in Judea and Galilee⁵² replacing Roman red slipware pottery (discussed below in relation to the potter’s field) ubiquitous elsewhere in the Empire.

That Joseph (a rich-man stonecutter⁵³) personally made the grave (Mt. 27.60) negates the possibility that some impure workman produced defilement. Joseph also supplied—he did not buy, which is an important distinction—the simple linen burial cloth—in Mk 15.46 it is bought (note the anti-commercialism/globalism, a feature of Jewish anti-imperialism, *b. Šabb.* 33b3). In dictum, M says the cloth is clean/pure (*kathara*, Mt. 27.59). That Joseph made the grave specifically for himself as his own grave means it is new, never used, proverbially, even for a stillbirth (*b. Sanh.* 47b3) and hence can serve as a solitary grave; another peril avoided.

The Peril That the Grave Is Designated for Another

Next peril is that Joseph designated the grave for himself; ordinarily someone cannot be buried in a grave designated for someone else. However, is this a situation where designation is significant? Whether designation is or is not significant (*hazmanah [lav] milta*) is a legal area arising prominently in situations involving graves, shrouds, appurtenances and money for burials. If a son builds a grave for his father, the designation for his father means that the son cannot use it (*b. Sanh.* 48a2-3 and n. 20). The same holds true even if it is designated for a complete stranger. Hence, all else equal,

52. Mira Balberg, *Purity, Body, and Self in Early Rabbinic Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), p. 41; Mark A. Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 68 and 68 nn. 16-17; Yitzhak Magen, ‘Ancient Israel’s Stone Age: Purity in Second Temple Times’, *BAR* 24 (1998), pp. 46-52.

53. To show their religiosity, Near Eastern kings were depicted as carrying rocks in baskets on their heads.

Jesus cannot use Joseph's grave. However, in an exception, since Joseph designated the grave for himself, he can change it (*b. Sanh.* 47b2–48b2).⁵⁴

However, which is determinative: the designated purpose or actual use? For instance, is an object made (designated) for idolatry but not used for it pure? Or is an object made/designated for sacred purposes but used for profane defiled? In seeking answers to questions such as these, the identity, whether Jew or Gentile, of the person who makes/constructs or designates an object, or performs a task, or ultimately uses it may determine whether it is pure/permitted or not. Thus, for example, according to *m. Sabb.* 23.4, if on the Sabbath a Gentile constructed a grave intended for a Gentile, a Jew may be buried in it (after the Sabbath). But, if he had constructed it on the Sabbath for a Jew, no Jew could be buried in it. In *t. Sabb.* 17.14-15, the particular Jew for whom the Gentile made it could not be buried there but other Jews could.

The Peril of Gentile Impurity

Having established that Joseph's grave is wondrously pure by contemporary exacting Jewish purity standards, observe, more wondrous still, Joseph is a Gentile with Gentile impurity a controversial topic as shown, for example, in Gal. 2.11-14.⁵⁵ The other evangelists indicate that Joseph is Jewish (Mk 15.43; Lk. 23.50-51; Jn 19.38-42). But M conspicuously gives no explicit indication that he is (Mt. 27:57), while indicating in various subtle ways he is not. Joseph is an outsider⁵⁶ from a town apparently in Samaria.⁵⁷ Matthew 27.57 deletes Mark's reference that Joseph is a member of the council

54. Leib Moscovitz, "'Designation Is Significant": An Analysis of the Conceptual Sugya in bSan 47b–48b', *AJSR* 27 (2003), pp. 227-52 (235, 241-43). These laws are old from the Tannaitic period; *b. Sanh.* 48b1.

55. Adolph Buchler, 'The Levitical Impurity of the Gentile in Palestine before the Year 70', *JQR* 17 (1926), pp. 1-81; Jonathan Klawans, 'Notions of Gentile Impurity in Ancient Judaism', *AJSR* 20 (1995), pp. 285-312.

56. Luz, *Matthew* 21–28, p. 577.

57. Adela Yarbo Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), p. 777. Luke 23.51 says Arimathea was a city of the Jews, which would have been unnecessary had Arimathea really been.

(Sanhedrin)⁵⁸ explaining Joseph is a disciple. Unlike Jesus' Jewish male disciples, who flee, remarkably, Joseph has no fear of Pilate (Mt. 27.58; cf. Mk 15.43 where Jewish Joseph 'courageously' went) or of the priests. Joseph's separation from Jesus' Jewish women followers is so extreme that, seated nearby, they watch Joseph bury Jesus and roll the stone across the entrance, and yet, neither Joseph nor the women so much as acknowledges the other's existence.⁵⁹

Any doubt that M's Joseph is a Gentile is removed by the Acts of Peter, Passion of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul (*Passio*) in which, copying M, a rich Gentile disciple Marcellus takes crucified Peter down, purifies his corpse and honorably buries Peter *in Marcellus's own tomb* (Acts of Peter 40).⁶⁰ There was a longstanding Jewish tradition of Gentiles associated with Jewish tombs and burials. Abraham bought the tomb of the patriarchs and their wives from a Gentile (Hittite). And, particularly on or around Jewish holidays, Jews might have their dead buried by Gentiles (*b. Besah.* 6a1 and nn. 1, 9; *b. 'Ed.* 7b1 and n. 23).

Ulrich Luz reckons that M's portrayal of Joseph as Gentile is from Gentile influence reflecting the increased gulf between Christians and Jews between the time of Mark, for whom Joseph is Jewish, and that of Matthew, for whom Joseph is Gentile.⁶¹ But, M's contemporaries Luke and John agree with Mark that Joseph is Jewish, and therefore, in this instance, do not reflect this postulated increased Gentile influence.

In fact, M's trope of Joseph as a Gentile is from a Jewish tradition of Gentile paragons/exemplars in the performance of areas of universal law (*nomos koinos*). The Tannaitic figure of the noble Gentile, a Good Samaritan-like figure, is implied⁶² by M in three places. First, in Mt. 15.3-6 (from

58. The seat of the great Sanhedrin in the Temple area was called the 'Chamber of Hewn Stone' (*m. Sanh.* 11.2; *b. Sanh.* 104a1 and n. 3).

59. Raymond E. Brown, 'The Burial of Jesus (Mark 15:42-47)', *CBQ* 50 (1988), pp. 233-45 (243).

60. Alberto Ferreiro, *Simon Magus in Patristic, Medieval and Early Modern Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 63.

61. Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, p. 577.

62. *Explicitly* the Gentile who says, 'I am unworthy, say but the word' is extolled as the unequaled paragon (Mt. 8.8-13). 'I am unworthy under your roof' could reflect humility or an acknowledgment of impurity, a nuance that would not have gone unnoticed.

Mk 7.9-12), Jesus teaches the overriding importance of caring for parents. In Tannaitic tradition, the paragon among humans for excellent support of parents was a Gentile (y. *Peah* 1.1, 5b2–6a1; b. *Kidd.* 31a1–32a3). Second, in Mt. 27.24, Pilate, washing his hands, employs the Deut. 21.1-9 ritual which the Tannaitic sages associated with preventing the death. In that case as well, the paragon for having prevented harm was a Gentile (b. *Sotah* 46b3). Third, Jews regarded burial of the dead as a common obligation of all people, that is, a universal law (Josephus, *Apion* 2.30). In M, a Gentile supplies the example. Thus, these three are all examples of universal laws or customs (*nomos koinos*) of all peoples: caring for parents; guiding/protecting the wayfarer; burying the dead—in which, stereotypically, in Jewish tradition, individual Gentiles were paragons.

The Peril of Jesus' Responsibility in Judas's Death

The next peril involves the possibility that Jesus may be responsible in Judas's death. In the other Gospels, Jesus' responsibility for Judas's death is just that, being omniscient, hiring and not firing Judas were HR failures.⁶³ M exponentially increases Jesus' potential responsibility by having Jesus affirmatively mislead Judas into continuing his betrayal. When Judas asks, 'Is it I?' Jesus pretends he does not know Judas is his betrayer answering evasively, '(it is) you (who) says it,' 'so you say' for short (Mt. 26.25). The would-be deceiver is deceived back; who would rook by a ruse is rooked by that ruse in a beautifully just injustice; *de corriger une illegalite par une illegalite nouvelle* ('to correct an illegality by another').⁶⁴

Ancients condoned clever deception more than modern Westerners.⁶⁵ In Jewish tradition, while to lie is bad, there are occasions when lying is the

63. Samuel Laeuchli, 'Origen's Interpretation of Judas Iscariot', *CH* 22 (1953), pp. 253-68 (265-66).

64. David Daube, 'Fraud on Law for Fraud on Law', in Calum M. Carmichael (ed.), *Biblical Law and Literature: Collected Works of David Daube* (5 vols.; Berkeley: Robbins Collection, 2003), III, pp. 297-309.

65. Daniel Friedmann, *To Kill and Take Possession* (Peabody, MA: Henderson, 2002), pp. 66-67. Josephus brags about deceiving his troops into committing suicide (*War* 3.8); Cicero brags about deceiving judges, 'throwing dust in their eyes' (Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 2.17.21). Ingenious and resourceful deception was the hallmark of Greek novel heroines.

lesser of two evils.⁶⁶ Examples range from simple politeness,⁶⁷ to humor,⁶⁸ to saving lives (others' or one's own).⁶⁹ However, because normatively lying is bad, legally to be justified, the liar must attempt to mitigate by telling half-truths and evasive answers, not bold falsehoods,⁷⁰ and, if possible, lying in private, not in public.⁷¹ 'So you say' meets the criterion for evasion, not outright lying.

'So you say' is emphasized by repetition; Jesus uses it three times, in each case to a hostile questioner, to Judas (Mt. 26.25), to the high priest (Mt. 26.64) and to Pilate (Mt. 27.11). In two of these three, in danger, Jesus is legally justified: to Pilate and to the high priest. However, answering Judas in the upper room at the Last Supper, Jesus is not in sufficient danger to justify deception. According to developments in the Jewish law (alluded to in M's depiction of Pilate, Mt. 27.24), Jesus had to prevent Judas's death, not to be complicit.⁷²

66. Aryeh Citron, 'Telling the Truth and When It Is Permissible to Be Less than Honest', see online: https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/1049008/jewish/Telling-the-Truth-and-When-It-Is-Permissible-to-Be-Less-Than-Honest.htm; *b. Ketub.* 16b4–17a2; *b. B. Mes.* 23b–24a; David Daube, 'Collaboration with Tyranny in Rabbinic Law', in Calum M. Carmichael (ed.), *Talmudic Law: Collected Works of David Daube* (5 vols.; Berkeley: Robbins Collection, 1992), I, 63-135; David Daube, 'Limitations on Self-Sacrifice in Jewish Law and Tradition', in Calum M. Carmichael (ed.), *Talmudic Law: Collected Works of David Daube* (5 vols.; Berkeley: Robbins Collection, 1992), I, 47-48; David Daube, 'Appeasing or Resisting the Oppressor', in Calum M. Carmichael (ed.), *New Testament Judaism: Collected Works of David Daube* (5 vols.; Berkeley: Robbins Collection, 2000), II, 93-117; Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, p. 455 and 455 n. 20.

67. There is an example of praising a bride at her wedding (*b. Kes.* 16b4–17a2). In *b. Sotah* 47a2-4 and n. 13, Jesus is portrayed as a rabbinic student who truthfully (but tactlessly) corrects his teacher's compliment of their host's wife.

68. *b. Bava Met.* 23b3–24a2 and nn. 28-29.

69. Daube, 'Collaboration'.

70. Citron, 'Telling the Truth'. Matthew contains many evasive answers (e.g. 12:1-8; 15:1-20; 21:23-24; 26:21-25, 63-64, 70-74; 27:11, 25; see also Jn 18.29-30).

71. Daube, 'Limitations', pp. 47-48; Daube, 'Appeasing or Resisting', pp. 93-117; Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, p. 455 and n. 20.

72. Simmonds, 'Mark's and Matthew's *Sub Rosa* Message', p. 749. In the first century, the law surrounding the hand-washing ritual (that Pilate performs) evolved

Even though Jesus' deception is not justified, it is portrayed sympathetically because 'so you say' was a Jewish (and Greek) and un-Roman expression.⁷³ Thrice-repeated, 'so you say' is further emphasized by—this is an inverse parallel—the thrice-repeated stereotypically Roman expression, *tu videris* '(You), see to it' (or 'Do it'): priests to Judas (Mt. 27.4), Pilate to the crowd (Mt. 27.24) and Pilate to priests (Mt. 27.65).⁷⁴ Therefore, Jesus' unjustified deception is ameliorated (i.e. made *good*) by Jesus' thrice-use of a characteristically Jewish (and Greek) expression. Conversely, by thrice-using a Roman expression, the priests and Pilate act Roman, that is, badly. However, it takes more than *talking Jewish* and un-Roman to absolve Jesus in Judas's death. Peril is not (yet) entirely avoided.

Jose ben Joezer/Jesus Exonerated: Peril Avoided

The problem of Jesus' responsibility for Judas's death is modeled on and solved by the story of Jose ben Joezer and Alcimus.⁷⁵ Alcimus is his Greek name; his Hebrew/Aramaic name Yakim *Ish Tzorot* may be the model for Judas *Ish Kariot*. In Maccabean times, Alcimus was a/the archetypal collaborator, who secured the high priesthood by foreign invasion. Alcimus betrayed his uncle, Jose ben Joezer, a/the archetypal Jewish patriot.⁷⁶ In an ex-

so that to claim non-involvement meant not having had the opportunity to prevent the harm.

73. David Daube, *The Deed & the Doer in the Bible: David Daube's Gifford Lectures Volume 1* (ed. Calum Carmichael; Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2007), pp. 237-38. On literary 'rabbinizing', see James A. Diamond, 'King David of the Sages: Rabbinic Rehabilitation or Ironic Parody?', *Proof* 27 (2007), pp. 373-426 (377, 389-91 and 406 n. 16); *b. Yom.* 28b2.

74. Jennifer K. Berenson Maclean, 'Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Passion Narrative', *HTR* 100 (2007), pp. 309-34 (327).

75. David Daube, 'Judas', in Calum M. Carmichael (ed.), *New Testament Judaism: Collected Works of David Daube* (5 vols.; Berkeley: Robbins Collection, 2000), II, pp. 791-92; Bassler and Cohen, *Matthew*, p. 690; Luz, *Matthew* 21-28, p. 488.

76. Benjamin Edidin Scolnic, *Alcimus: Enemy of the Maccabees. Studies in Judaism* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005), pp. 83-86 and passim; Uriel Rappaport, 'Alcimus', in David Noel Freedman (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1992), I, p. 145; Abraham Schalit,

change recalling Haman and Mordecai, Alcimus mocks Jose's 'reward' for his righteousness, being 'raised up' on the cross, compared to Alcimus being 'raised up' on horseback. Jose counters rhetorically asking, if the righteous are treated so, how the wicked will be treated.

Chastened by Jose's/Jesus' rhetorical rejoinder, overcome with remorse, Alcimus/Judas commits suicide. As with what Jose said to Alcimus producing Alcimus's death, analogously, Jesus' unjustified and evasively deceptive 'so you say' to Judas produced or contributed to Judas's death. Jose/Jesus hanging on the cross sees Alcimus's/Judas's spirit precede Jose/Jesus to heaven. The moral of the story is that the traitor, Alcimus's/Judas's reward for collaboration is death before his patriot victim.

However, the remorseful traitor goes to heaven—for his victim's sake as well as his own. Jose/Jesus is not liable in Alcimus's/Judas's death because Alcimus/Judas killed himself (Alcimus's/Judas's intent) *in the hope* that he, Alcimus/Judas, could get to heaven before Jose/Jesus to be the first to meet him to have the best opportunity to ask his forgiveness. Ingeniously, in this lone obscure hairsplitting instance, hinging on Alcimus's/Judas's intent—namely, *hope*—Jose/Jesus is not at fault for failing to prevent Alcimus's/Judas's death.⁷⁷ Hope versus despair; peril avoided.

Jose as Precedent in 65–66

Jose ben Joezer was extremely important in life and again a hundred years later at the outbreak of the first Jewish-Roman war. In life, together with

'Alcimus', in Fred Skolnik and Michael Berenbaum (eds.), *Encyclopedia Judaica* (22 vols.; Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2nd edn, 2007), I, p. 603; Moshe David Herr, 'Jose ben Joezer of Zeredah', in Fred Skolnik and Michael Berenbaum (eds.), *Encyclopedia Judaica* (22 vols.; Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2nd edn, 2007), XXI, p. 396-97; 1 Macc. 6.55-57.

77. Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 13.117; Origen, *The Commentary of Origen on the Gospel of St Matthew* (trans. Ronald E. Heine; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), p. 727 and p. 727 n. 18; Laeuchli, 'Origen's Interpretation', p. 259. It is also found in Theophanes and Theophylact. J. Rendel Harris, 'Did Judas Really Commit Suicide?', *AJT* 4 (1900), pp. 490-513 (494-95). A similar later story concerns the torture execution of Chananya ben Teradyon in which his Roman executioner joined him in death in order to secure a share in the World-to-Come (*b. Avod. Zar.* 18a). Jonathan K. Crane, *Narratives and Jewish Bioethics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 46-66, 78-84.

Jose ben Johanan (the two Joses), Jose was a member of the first of the five successive pairs (*zugos*), of whom Hillel and Shammai were the last. Purportedly, Jose participated in the first halakhic debate, and, in that sense, may be regarded as beginning the line of Talmudic sages.

In Jose's time, relations between Jews and Gentiles reached a nadir. In response, Jose declared the lands (ground, dirt) of the Gentile nations impure (on account of purported danger of contracting corpse impurity from unmarked graves: ref. Lk. 11.44; cf. Mt. 23.27; Acts 23.3) and even *glass* of a Gentile impure (*b. Shab.* 14b3-4; 15a4-5).

Jose's strictness on issues of Gentile impurity seems connected to his crucifixion by them. He was not a stickler on purity. On issues of *Jewish purity* (in contradistinction to *Gentile impurity*) Jose had a reputation as the permitter (*m. 'Ed.* 6.4). Post-biblical purity rules go far beyond biblical. Purity became preeminently, even stereotypically the most important legal topic in rabbinic exegesis⁷⁸ producing an enormous increase in the traditions-of-the-fathers. The evident impetus for this expansion is not the Bible. Nor is it legalism, merit theology, works-righteousness. Rather, purity law is a cipher for opposition to monstrously cruel, culturally destructive, despotic foreign invaders, formerly Seleucid, now Roman.⁷⁹

With war imminent, in 65–66 CE, Jose's condemnation of Gentile impurity was invoked as precedent for the most comprehensive and extreme anti-Gentile Jewish promulgation of antiquity, namely, the Eighteen Enactments (Edicts, Ordinances, Decrees; *b. Shab.* 13b–17b; *b. Avod. Zar.* 35a–36a; this is not to be confused, of course, with the Eighteen Benedictions). Its most famous line was that which says that Samaritan women are impure menstruants from the cradle. Essentially a boycott of interaction between

78. Jonathan Klawans, 'Moral and Ritual Impurity', in Amy-Jill Levine, Dale C. Allison and John Dominic Crossan (eds.), *The Historical Jesus in Context* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 275; Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 94-96.

79. The Qumran sect regarded Jewish non-members as though they were impure (Gentiles). Aharon Shemesh, 'The Origins of the Laws of Separatism: Qumran Literature and Rabbinic Halacha', *RevQ* 18 (1977), pp. 223-41. In history, purity may have links to persecution and threaten cultural identity more than theology. Mehrdad Arabestani, 'Ritual Purity and Mandaean's Identity', *Iran & Caucasus* 16 (2012), pp. 153-68.

Jews and Gentiles,⁸⁰ the Eighteen Enactments came to be viewed as a calamity for the nation⁸¹ (later Jewish writings blame the Sadducees and violent coercion); it was as grievous to Israel as the day on which the golden calf was made (*b. Shab.* 17a3). Nevertheless, it is an invaluable source for historical dating and locating (65–66 CE in Jerusalem)⁸² and explaining M's Judas and Joseph narratives. As indicated above, M's Jesus-Judas story reprises Jose-Alcimus. However, in addition, in relation to Joseph, the Eighteen Enactments made prosaic foodstuffs (e.g. wine, bread and oil) or goods supplied by Gentiles impure/not permitted. Nevertheless, in an exception that proves the rule, the grave and shroud of the Messiah, even if it was supplied by a Gentile, is pure, even by the most extreme Gentile impurity standards of the time.⁸³

The Peril That Judas Must Be Buried and Resurrected

In the Jose-Alcimus story, Alcimus goes to heaven, and so, too, by extension, must Judas. M's portrayal of Judas is fulsome and sympathetic. M does not delete the negative information about Judas in Mark; M, however, does not include the additional negative information about Judas in Luke and John, either. M does not have Judas as the keeper of the purse and thief from it (Jn 12.6). M does not have Satan enter Judas (Lk. 22.3; Jn 13.27),

80. Christine E. Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 4-7, 141-42, 199-214, 219-21.

81. David Daube, 'Samaritan Woman', in Calum M. Carmichael (ed.), *New Testament Judaism: Collected Works of David Daube* (5 vols.; Berkeley: Robbins Collection, 2000), II, p. 635; Cecil Roth, 'An Ordinance against Images in Jerusalem, A.D. 66', *HTR* 49 (1956), pp. 169-77.

82. Gunter Stemberger, 'Dating Rabbinic Traditions', in Reimund Bieringer et al. (eds.), *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), p. 91; Klawans, 'Notions', p. 310.

83. Furstenberg, 'Midrash', who says, in Jewish law, burial trumps purity. M is for Gentile inclusion, in the epiphany to the Magi and admonition in the Judgment of the Nations, for example.

nor is Judas called by Jesus a devil (Jn 6:70-71).⁸⁴ At the anointing at Bethany, Judas is not identified as having objected (Mt 28.8; Jn 12.4).

M adds considerable positive information. Only M has Judas show remorse, repent, make a public confession, attempt to undo his crime, return the money (which is later used for charity) and sincerely atone by his death no less (Mt 26.14-16; 27.1-8; cf. Mk 14.10-11).⁸⁵ M implies that Judas enjoys resurrection because otherwise why would Judas do the things required?⁸⁶ M also expresses that Judas is resurrected by the favorable condition of his corpse. This is an example of ‘show, don’t tell’. Hanging was ranked as a relatively good death because of the corpse’s intact outward appearance (*b. Pesah*. 118b1 and nn. 8-10).⁸⁷ And, since burial was ordinarily necessary, or certainly highly desirable, for resurrection, M implies Judas was buried—the obvious place being the cemetery bought with Judas’s money.

In Acts, explicitly, Judas’s corpse lies on the field bought with his money (Acts 1.18-19). Yet this is only one way in which Acts’ Judas story is related to M’s. In both Acts and M, Judas’s money buys the field whose

84. In M, at Jesus’ arrest, Judas kisses Jesus calling him Rabbi, and Jesus calls Judas friend: ‘Friend, why are you here?’ (Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 475-77, 481-85 and 481 n. 27 [the words after ‘friend’ are variously translated]); Mt. 26.48-50; cf. Mk 14.44-49. Compare Luke where Jesus rejects Judas’s kiss (Lk. 22.47-48). In M, Jesus explains that he could have easily escaped, but says (twice) that he does not do so in order that Scripture might be fulfilled (Mt. 26.53-56; cf. Mk 14.49; Jn 13.8; 18.9, 32). Mt. 19.28 says the twelve shall sit on twelve thrones.

85. Rick van de Water, ‘The Punishment of the Wicked Priest and the Death of Judas’, *DSD* 10 (2003), pp. 395-419 (402); B.J. Oropeza, ‘Judas’s Death’, p. 351; Daube, ‘Judas’, p. 787.

86. Daube, ‘Judas’, pp. 783-99 (785 n. 23); Daube, ‘Disgrace’, pp. 622-24; Calum Carmichael, ‘The Divine in the Law’, in Richard O’Dair and Andrew Lewis (eds.), *Law and Religion* (Current Legal Issues, 4; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 27-44 (27, 34-36); Hamilton, ‘Death of Judas’, p. 433; *b. Sanh.* 52b3-4 and n. 43; 106b5-6; 107a and n. 36; 108a2; *b. Sotah* 7b2-3; *b. Meg.* 25b1; *b. Mak.* 11a5; *m. Sanh.* 6.2; *t. Sanh.* 9.5 (criminals about to be executed offered the opportunity to secure resurrection by confessing). Unlike Judas, Ahithopel does not confess, does not feel remorse, but sought to justify himself; hence Ahithopel does not enjoy resurrection (2 Sam. 17.23; *b. Sanh.* 105a; Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 471, 473 and 473 n. 67). Judas and Ahithopel are *inverse* parallels.

87. Many Christian scholars have postulated incorrectly that hanging was a bad form of death. Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 472.

name is an etiology (also used in ‘Valley of Slaughter’ in Jer. 19.6) based on blood. Also, both express Judas’s fate vis-à-vis resurrection by the condition of his corpse: in M, hanged (resurrected),⁸⁸ and in Acts, ‘fell headlong and burst asunder and all his bowels gushed out’ (KJV) (not resurrected).⁸⁹ Given their relatedness, particularly, given the similarities between the Judas stories in Matthew and Acts, persons knowing of the tradition in Acts that has Judas’s corpse on or in the field bought with Judas’s money, could imply in Matthew that Judas is buried in the field.

In rabbinic tradition, with relatively few exceptions, most can enjoy resurrection.⁹⁰ Under the normative Jewish position (Joshua), righteous Gentiles (unconverted) share in the World-to-Come (*t. Sanh.* 13.2). Even a preeminently grievous sinner might yet be resurrected (*b. Sanh.* 82a1-2; 103b3, 104a2-3 and n. 18). The Jewish God is remarkably giving and forgiving—even toward those who grievously sin against God. Contrariwise, the Greek gods act extremely badly towards humans (e.g. Pentheus, Actaeon and Prometheus).⁹¹ In Statius’s *Thebaid*, Jupiter cares nothing for human wellbeing.

Of course, that Judas achieves resurrection does not mean immediate eternal bliss. In rabbinic tradition, flawed persons tainted by sin may yet enjoy resurrection, but his or her corpse’s condition, burial, resurrection and life in the World-to-Come will be less than ideal (*b. Mak.* 11b1 and nn. 1-10, 13-15; *b. Sotah* 7b3 and nn. 24-25; *b. B. Qam.* 92a4 and nn. 42, 47-49).⁹² The path to heaven for remorseful betrayers is not easy. Judas’s model Alcimus went to heaven. However, expressed by the condition of his corpse, Alcimus had a difficult afterlife. Committing suicide by *all* four

88. Both Jesus and Judas are hanged; therefore, it would not do for one to be resurrected and the other not.

89. Harris, ‘Did Judas Really Commit Suicide?’, pp. 490-513; Daube, ‘Judas’. In Acts, Judas shows no remorse and does not return but spends the money.

90. *b. Pesah.* 118b1 and nn. 8-10. Only two imperial Roman aristocrats enjoy the World-to-Come.

91. Paul L. Maier, ‘The Fate of Pontius Pilate’, *Hermes* 99 (1971), pp. 362-71; Simmonds, ‘His Blood’, pp. 61-62.

92. There was a Jewish tradition that there were several heavens with the greatest being the famous seventh heaven. In Hebrew and Aramaic, the ‘heavens (plural) open up’ (see David Halperin, ‘Origen, Ezekiel’s Merkabah, and the Ascension of Moses’, *CH* 50 [1981], pp. 261-75); 2 Cor. 12:2-4.

Jewish methods of execution (stoning, burning, hanging and beheading), Alcimus was resurrection challenged.⁹³

Judas is reminiscent of his namesake Judah. Judas and Judah both betray someone very close, seek to undo their wrong, make a public confession (Gen. 38.26; 44.16; Mt. 27.4; *b. Sanh.* 107a and n. 36; *b. Sotah* 7b2; *b. Meg.* 25a). The plight of Joseph's brothers finding their money returned in their saddlebags is like Judas having his money cast into the Temple returned in the form of burial in the land bought with it. Judah had difficulty in achieving a blissful afterlife (*b. Mak.* 11b1 and nn. 1-10, 13-15; *b. Sotah* 7b3 and nn. 24-25; *b. B. Qam.* 92a4 and nn. 42, 47-49). Rabbinic tradition about Judah's difficult afterlife (and Alcimus's) predicts that Judas would also have a difficult afterlife. Burial among foreigners fits.

The Peril That Judas's Money Was not Returned

The final two (unnecessary and contrived) perils arise from M adding the detail that Judas was paid in advance (Mt. 26.15). For Judas to gain resurrection, he cannot benefit from his crime.⁹⁴ Therefore, he must return the money. If he benefited by burial in the cemetery bought with it, he may not have returned it. This dilemma is solved: had the cemetery been for Jews, the benefit to Judas would have been great, and, therefore, Judas's money would not have been returned. But, because the cemetery was for foreigners, its inferior quality makes its benefit to Judas slight, and his money is returned.

Yet, the residual problem remains: Judas is an outsider, *other*, from Judea, the only disciple who is not Galilean. Galileans spoke differently and, to a degree, Judeans regarded them condescendingly (Mt. 26:73; *b. Eruv.* 53a3-b3). However, worse than Galilean-Judean resentment, M Romanizes Judas by alluding to Judas engaged in the Roman *legis actio sacramento* ('legal action by sacred oath').⁹⁵ This stereotypically old and originally

93. Bassler and Cohen, *Matthew*, p. 690; Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, p. 473.

94. Daube, 'Judas', p. 785.

95. On 'Romanizing', see Holger Michael Zellentin, *Rabbinic Parodies of Jewish and Christian Literature* (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism, 139; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), pp. 138-66, 172 (rabbinic literature 'Romanizes' Gentile Christianity).

venerable procedure involved litigants making sacred oaths and placing money deposits into a temple (not a court), with priests deciding (not judges), with the winner of the case *getting his money back* from the temple.⁹⁶

Having Judas deposit/throw his money *into* the Temple, M alludes to (Second) Zechariah's allegory of the shepherds (Zech. 11.4-17), where the identical amount (thirty silvers) goes into the Temple and stays there. Judas's money coming back out of the Temple is a departure from Zechariah, alluding to the *actio*. Like the Jose-Alcimus theme (patriot/collaborator) and linking Judas with the *actio* (Judas Romanized), Zechariah's allegory is anti-foreign despot.

As for the monetary amount, thirty in the sexagesimal system of Egypt and the Near East—fifty in the Roman decimal system—was auspicious. The proverbial slave price—unrelated (thankfully) to market price (Gaius, *Inst.* 4.12-17)⁹⁷—was intentionally set low to favor, encourage, indeed *presage* manumission;⁹⁸ it was a paradigmatically worthy sum (Zech. 11:13) for its liberating purpose.

By M's time, sacred legal forms generally, and the *legis actio sacramento* specifically, were disreputable (Cicero, *Phil.* 3.26).⁹⁹ The *actio* was

96. Gaius, *Inst.* 4.21-25; A. Arthur Schiller, *Roman Law: Mechanisms of Development* (Malta: Mouton Publishers, 1978), pp. 189-96; Tamás Nótári, 'Comments on the Origin of the *Legis Actio Sacramento* in Rem,' *Acta Juridica Hungarica* 47 (2006), pp. 134-55; George Mousourakis, *The Historical and Institutional Context of Roman Law* (Laws of Nations Series; Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), pp. 133-34; Alan Watson, *The Spirit of Roman Law* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008), pp. 53-54; Erwin J. Urch, 'The Origin of the *Actio per Formulam*', *Classical Weekly* 26 (1933), pp. 169-71; David Johnston, 'Three Thoughts on Roman Private Law and the *Lex Irnitana*', *JRS* 77 (1987), pp. 62-67 (67); Albert Kocourek, 'The Formula Procedure of Roman Law', *Virginia Law Review* 8 (1922), pp. 337-55.

97. David Daube, 'Two Early Patterns of Manumission', *JRS* 36 (1946), pp. 57-75; Edgar Shumway, 'Freedom and Slavery in Roman Law', *The American Law Register (1898-1907)* 49 (1901), pp. 636-53 (642).

98. Erica Reiner, 'Thirty Pieces of Silver', *JAOS* 88 (1968), pp. 186-90 (187, 190).

99. Cicero, *Mur.* 26; Tamás Nótári, *Law, Religion and Rhetoric in Cicero's Pro Murena* (Passau: Schenk Verlag, 2008), p. 63; Nathan Rosenstein, 'Sorting out the Lot in Republican Rome', *AJP* 116 (1995), pp. 43-75 (49, 62-63, 70-71).

associated with fraud, dishonesty and fixed gambling (Plautus, *Cas.*).¹⁰⁰ Thus, alluding to the *actio*, M portrays Judas placing his money in the Temple as placing a dishonest bet. *Casina* supplies the template. The undeserving crook wins. In proper law, Judas should lose—his oath is a confession of guilt (Mt. 27.4) and his money is impure (I will discuss more about that later). However, in this stereotypically crooked Roman *actio*, Judas *wins!* His Roman award/*reward*: suicide and dishonorable burial.

In parallel to the disrepute of the *actio*, in the mid-first century, the Sotah ordeal and heifer/hand washing ritual were increasingly disfavored and finally abolished. M alludes to all three, Pilate with the hand washing ritual, the crowd with the Sotah ordeal and Judas with the *actio*.¹⁰¹

The Peril That Judas's Impure Money Makes Jesus Impure

Judas's money is impure (Mt. 27.6) and contagious for Jesus.¹⁰² Commentators agree that the impurity prohibiting it from being brought into the Temple derived from a 'harlot's wage or dog's exchange' (*esnan zonah*) (see Deut. 23.17-18).¹⁰³ Purportedly a first-century Christian street preacher taught that his teacher (Jesus) taught, 'May a harlot's wage or dog's ex-

100. Nótári, *Law*, pp. 103-8; J.C.B. Lowe, 'The Lot-Drawing Scene of Plautus' *Casina*', *CQ* 53 (2003), pp. 175-83. The *sacramentum* oath in later literature was often used sarcastically. Daniel G. van Slyke, 'Sacramentum in Ancient Non-Christian Authors', *Antiphon* 9 (2005), pp. 167-206 (175); he speaks of thieves/criminals (pp. 189-92), gladiators (pp. 193-94) and bacchanalian (p. 201).

101. Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 14.19; Simmonds, 'His Blood' pp. 40, 50; Simmonds, 'Mark's and Matthew's *Sub Rosa* Message', pp. 749-53.

102. Contrariwise, defending his urine tax, Vespasian declared money not tainted by its source (*Suetonius, Vesp.* 23).

103. Furstenberg, 'Midrash', p. 322; Maarten J.J. Menken, 'The Old Testament Quotation in Matthew 27, 9-10: Textual Form and Content', *Bib* 83 (2002), pp. 305-328 (314); Bassler and Cohen, *Matthew*, p. 691; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, p. 473; Mic. 1.7; *b. Nid.* 30b1-2; *b. Abod. Zar.* 16b3-17a1; Daniel Boyarin, 'The Talmud Meets Church History', *Diacritics* 28 (1998), pp. 52-80 (57-62, 60-61), who says that even though Judas's money was not precisely a harlot's wage, it was the product of a sort of prostitution by collaboration with a foreign despot.

change go into the Temple? Certainly. From filth to filth, to (build) (in the Temple) the (quisling) high priest's toilet' (*b. Avod. Zar.* 17a1).¹⁰⁴

Paradigmatically, a Paschal lamb, bought with *esnan zonah*, is impure and is thus an unacceptable sacrifice (*b. Pesah.* 90a1-2 and nn. 4, 10; *b. Zebah.* 71a and n. 7). If, as the Paschal lamb (1 Cor. 5.7), Jesus is purchased with *esnan zonah*, Jesus is impure and his sacrifice defective/ineffective.¹⁰⁵

To create this existential disaster, M changes the result in Zechariah, where the money goes into and stays in the Temple.¹⁰⁶ In Zechariah, the money goes in; in M, the money goes in and out. Yet, in a diptych, in both Zechariah and M, the money goes to a potter. In Zechariah, to a potter in the Temple. Prior to the advent of standardized coinage, deposits into temples were melted down, refined and poured into pottery casts for uniform purity and weights.¹⁰⁷

In M, although the money comes back out (*actio*), it still goes to a potter (Jeremiah)—just a different potter—to buy his field. In each case, is the money's impurity removed? According to the school of Hillel, an impurity could be removed by the thing being converted, for example, flour to bread, olives to oil or grapes to wine. As to metal (silvers), beating into plates would not suffice (*b. Tem.* 30b3-4; *b. B. Qam.* 65b4–66a1), but implicitly from Zechariah (LXX), being refined in the fiery furnace would.

104. Joshau Schwartz and Peter J. Tomson, 'When Rabbi Eliezer Was Arrested for Heresy', *JSIJ* 10 (2012), pp. 145-81; Furstenberg, 'Midrash', pp. 303-24.

105. Christine M. Thomas, 'Locating Purity: Temples, Sexual Prohibitions, and Making a Difference in Thessalonike', in Laura Nassaralla, Charalamos Bakirtziz and Steven J. Friesen (eds.), *From Roman to Early Christian Thessalonike* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), p. 126 and n. 68. For Paul moral impurity is contagious.

106. Regarding money going in and out of the Temple, according to midrash, Jose's son swindled the Temple treasury out of its money, so Jose donated his wealth to the Temple treasury disinheriting his son (*b. B. Bat.* 133b2 and nn. 23-25).

107. Charles C. Torrey, 'The Foundry of the Second Temple at Jerusalem', *JBL* 55 (1936), pp. 247-60 (255-58); Mark J. Boda and Michael Floyd (eds.), *Bringing Out the Treasure: Inner Biblical Allusions in Zechariah 9-14* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2004), p. 13; Robert L. Foster, 'Shepherds, Sticks, and Social Destabilization: A Fresh Look at Zechariah 11:4-7', *JBL* 126 (2007), pp. 735-53 (749-51); Hugh Ross Hatch, 'The Old Testament Quotation in Matthew XXVII 9, 10', *Biblical World* 1 (1893), pp. 345-54 (348-49).

Then only way to remove Judas's money's impurity is to transfer it to another impure object.¹⁰⁸ Had the field bought with Judas's (impure) money been pure, the money's impurity would not have been removed. The impurity is removed like the unclean spirits in the demoniacs living among tombs removed into unclean pigs (Mt. 8.28-33; Mark's Roman legion in Mk 5.1-17). Similarly, the (Jewish/Greek) scapegoat is a receptacle for impurity. The name 'potter's field' denotes an impure Gentile communal cemetery. Being impure, it is an appropriate receptacle for the impurity of the money.

The Implied Impurity of a Potter's Field

The name potter's/potters' field (emphasized by repetition, Mt. 27.7, 10)¹⁰⁹ refers, not as commonly thought to clay taken from it,¹¹⁰ but rather funerary pottery placed into it. Allusion to Jeremiah associates Judas's field with a Tophet and Gehenna (Ben Hinnom) (Jer. 7.31-34; 19.1-14; 32.35),¹¹¹ the worst sort of grave, of pottery containing human remains. Sensitive to M's writing style, Robert Gundry perceives in M's allusion tying Judas's potter's field to Ben Hinnom that Judas is disgracefully buried there.¹¹²

Archaeologically, when M wrote, the presence of pottery in a gravesite, in the form of cinerary urns and pottery objects, indicates Romanization or Roman colonization.¹¹³ In an example of Roman commercial globalization,

108. Furstenberg, 'Midrash', p. 323; Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (ZECNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), p. 1012 (unclean money for unclean cemetery for unclean people).

109. Menken, 'Old Testament Quotation', pp. 315-16.

110. Robert H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel: With Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), p. 125.

111. Luke mentions Gehenna once, Mark three times, Matthew seven. In an emphasis by repetition with variation, Jeremiah offers a menu of potter/pottery archetypes: Tophet; molder (Jer. 18.1-6; Rom. 9.21); storage place for preserving documents (Jer. 32.14; ref. the Dead Sea scrolls, for instance). But the Tophet archetype is accorded the most space.

112. Gundry, *Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel*, p. 125; Hamilton, 'Death of Judas', p. 423 n. 13.

113. Viorica Rusu Bolindet, 'Pottery in Funerary Contexts—Some Aspects of Conviviality in Roman Dacia', *Studia Universitatis 'Babeş-Bolyai', Historia* 59 (2014), pp. 239-84 (251); Howard Williams, 'Potted Histories—Cremation Ceramics and Social Memory in Early Roman Britain', *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 23 (2004), pp. 417-27; Philippe Bohstrom, 'Cremated Soldier Found in a

Italy mass-produced and exported in the millions pottery table dining pieces and sets in a stunning shiny red color. The manufacture of Roman slipware ('Terra-Sig'), most associated with Arrezo, spread to Gaul, Libya and Anatolia, but not to Judea or Galilee. Outside of the Roman-friendly aristocracy, prior to 70 CE, most Jews in the region boycotted Roman red slipware in favor of ritually pure rock-hewn vessels.¹¹⁴ The names of the cemetery, Field of Blood and Akeldama, evoke the red color of blood. M's allusion to a potter's field evokes red Roman (funerary) pottery contrasted with patriotically Jewish rock-hewn vessels and tombs.

We can tell a different way that Judas's money, the price of Jesus, is purified. In Greek, the phrasing 'they priced the price of him having been priced, on whom they set a price the sons of Israel' (Mt. 27.9) is a breathtakingly sweet tintinnabulation, which, in Greek euphonic conception as a formal certainty, conveys a decidedly positive meaning.¹¹⁵

M's Judas and Joseph Stories as Reading on Paul

Three elements bring Paul to mind: Gentiles, the law and its works and the specific context of gaining the afterlife. His faith weak, Judas erroneously believes Jesus' blood is innocent blood rather than, as Jesus taught, the sacred sacrificial blood of the covenant.¹¹⁶ Judas's commendable works, remorse, confession, giving back the money and so forth are prerequisite for Judas gaining heaven.

Cooking Pot at Vast Roman Camp in Israel', *Haaretz*, December 26, 2017. Per Yotam Tepper, Roman soldiers were commonly interred in cooking pots throughout the Mediterranean world. Lucan contrasts confined in stone and in lowly (pottery) urns (*Pharsalia* 6.537-539; 7.819, 856-858; 8.770). Contrast also Roman columbaria cinerary urns with Jewish and Christian catacombs.

114. Andrea M. Berlin, 'Jewish Life before the Revolt: The Archaeological Evidence', *JSJ* 36 (2005), pp. 417-70 (431-33, 454); Andrea M. Berlin, 'Romanization and Anti-Romanization in Pre-Revolt Galilee', in Andrea Berlin and J. Andrew Overman (eds.), *The First Jewish Revolt: Archaeology, History, and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 57-74 (63-65, 69-70). The color came mainly from the liquid coating and firing process.

115. William Bedell Stanford, 'Sound, Sense and Music in Greek Poetry', *GR* 28 (1981), pp. 127-40.

116. Simmonds, 'His Blood', pp. 33-37, 49-50, 63.

Joseph is a Gentile disciple unconverted to Judaism. From this we may infer (M is telling us) that Jesus engaged in Gentile outreach, not requiring circumcision. Otherwise, nothing is explicitly said of Joseph's faith/beliefs. Joseph's law-compliant works are presented as incomparably commendable, all the more because they are performed entirely for another. Joseph receives no recompense in this world. However, in Tannaitic tradition, his reward in the next world would be so much greater for it.¹¹⁷ M's Judas and Joseph stories seem in the pro-works trope: of God pleased by his own works in the six days of creation (*1 Clem.* 33); Abraham justified by works offering his son (*Jas* 2.20); Rahab justified by works (*Jas* 2.25); M's Judgment of the Nations, 'What you do for the least ones, you do for me, and what you did not do, you did not do *for me*' (*Mt.* 25:40). Three elements (i.e. corpses, the law and the afterlife) bring to mind the saying, 'just as the body without the spirit is dead, so too faith without works is dead' (*Jas* 2.26 KJV).

Conclusion

Jesus' and Judas's corpses encounter and overcome a series of legal melodramatic existential perils. Jesus dies quickly, legs unbroken, is taken down and buried before sunset, and avoids burial in the cemetery for foreigners, which Judas gains. Joseph's tomb exudes purity, while the potters' field cemetery for foreigners exudes impurity.

The contrasts include (1) solid rock versus fragile pottery; (2) individual versus communal; (3) made versus bought (anti-commercialism/globalism); (4) no money involved (Joseph) versus dirty money (Judas); (5) designation by Joseph for himself versus designation by the priests for foreigners; (6) re-designation by Joseph from for Joseph to for Jesus and re-designation by the priests from for Jesus to for Judas; (7) grave switching, from Joseph's intended to Jesus' actual grave and from Jesus' intended to Judas's actual grave; (8) Judas must return the money to not benefit from his crime; Jesus must have the money's impurity removed; (9) beyond Judas's responsibility for Jesus' death, Jesus' (non)-responsibility for Judas's death; (10) thirty silvers went to the potter in the Temple (*Zechariah*) but then came out again

117. In his legendary afterlife, Joseph performs more works: escorting Mary Magdalene to Provence where she is buried and bringing the Holy Grail to Britain.

(*actio*) to buy the potter's (pottery) field (Jeremiah); (11) the diptych of both Jesus and Judas buried in foreigner(s)' graves.

The style is Greco-Roman, and the fixation on corpses, burial and graves was influenced by Roman epic. Melodramatically, Jesus' enemy, the chief priests, nearly discredit him, but fail. M's Judas is a dramatic foil; the excellence of Jesus' burial is inversely mirrored in Judas's. Having the Judas story merely implied prevents it from impinging upon (taking attention from) the Jesus story while acting as a dramatic foil. The purity of Jesus' burial is reflected and amplified in its implied opposite. M's style is masterful, patriotically Jewish, anti-imperial Roman, entertaining, educational, engaging both intellectually and emotionally and satisfying; good wins over evil.

Beyond the artistry, M's overarching purpose was for the law to endorse Jesus. However, for our purposes of scholarship even more important, *M endorses the law*. This finding raises broader questions about the rest of Matthew, Mark, its primary intertext, M's and Mark's relationship to Paul, Paul's relationship to Judaism and the law, first-century history and appropriate Christian doctrine then and now.