

JUDAS ISCARIOT (Part II)

Previously, we looked at where Judas Iscariot came from, and how he was an outsider in so many different ways. He was from a different part of the country, he turned out to have different priorities, and there is no indication he tried to integrate with anyone anymore than he had to. Nonetheless, he *was* one of the twelve disciples, - we don't know anything about his calling ... how or where it happened ... but Jesus was fully aware of all that was going on in this man's mind and heart.

Before we go any further, let's notice what Jesus was doing the night before He called Judas Iscariot to be a disciple, **Lk. 6:12** And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. **13** And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve ... *He was praying* ... and that means all of the disciples were chosen, - including Judas Iscariot, - as the consequence of prayer. ... He, along with His Father and the Holy Spirit continued with the plan they had compiled in eternity, before the creation of the world.

If God had wanted to change His plan, He could have ... but He didn't. All the other eleven disciples show us how God can take ordinary people and train, teach and empower them for His service. We can see the value in their examples ... but there is nothing that would commend Judas Iscariot ... and yet, after a whole night of prayer, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit continued with their eternal plan to include him who would be the archetypal traitor. And during their time with Jesus, while the other eleven were becoming more and more committed to God and His work, Judas was becoming more committed in the opposite direction.

In fact, Jesus tells us clearly Judas was *always* a lost soul, **Jn. 6:70** Jesus answered them, **Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?** ... He was born a sinner ... and he thrived on being a sinner! He had no desire on the inside to be anything else, even though on the outside he was pretending to follow Jesus. ... And if we take the word δῆβολος in its most ordinary and basic sense, i.e. a slanderer, a false accuser ... it further gives us the picture of a man who could not say a kind word about anyone. He was no-one's friend and he wasn't even at peace with himself!

Previously we noticed how Judas had come all the way up from the south of the country to the north to be with Jesus. He would have met the Saviour in

the early days when the Lord walked along the banks of the River Jordan ... back in the times of John the Baptist. That is almost certainly where Jesus and Judas first met ... and then Judas kept on following Him to Galilee.

Like the other disciples, Judas would also have been taken with the notion Jesus would eventually establish Himself as King, the Lion of Judah ... but when it was explained He would become a Lamb slain, it was at first difficult for the disciples to comprehend and absorb, but they eventually did. It is not what Judas wanted to believe though, and he was not prepared to accept it.

He wanted a Messiah on his own terms, and when Jesus was not measuring up to what he wanted he went and betrayed Him. Therefore, Judas was a follower of Jesus as long as he thought it suited his purposes. Basically, he was a man with worldly views, in whose heart *nothing* had been changed by the Holy Spirit. ... On the outside it seemed as if he followed Jesus ... but in the inside there had been no change. Instead of his love for Jesus growing, it would eventually come to the fore that he never really loved or cared for Jesus ... he was only following the Saviour for his own selfish purposes. He is the epitome of what the verses mean, [Num. 32:23](#) *be sure your sin will find you out* and [Gal. 6:7](#) *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

And when Judas Iscariot concluded there was no more advantage for him to follow Jesus, the greed and the worldly ambition took over. Increasingly, the words of Jesus 'wrangled' him and, increasingly, he could see no future in following Him. Increasingly, he could see nothing but faults in his fellow disciples ... and increasingly, he saw Jesus as a failure. That is how distorted he had become. ... Imagine, he had been in the Saviour's company, he had listened to the Saviour teaching and preaching, he had seen countless lives changed simply by meeting Him ... and yet, he *gambled* it all and became lost forever. ... And the more he was in Jesus' company, the more he couldn't stand Him! ... The harder his heart was getting! ... It must have done, because you wouldn't betray someone unless you despised them! ... When it comes to Jesus, you either *enthron*e Him, or else you *dethron*e Him! ... He is either Lord of all, or He is not Lord at all! ... There is no half-measures with Him for it is either one thing or the other.

And Judas' character is displayed incontrovertibly when it comes to him taking his place at the table on the evening of the Last Supper, [Jn. 13:1](#) *Now*

before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. ² And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him ... Despite being with Jesus for over three years, his heart had 'officially' and irrevocably become the dwelling-place of Satan, - the devil moved in ... note though that God is still in control for it only happened because He allowed it!

Then, *before* the Passover meal (v.1) Jesus demonstrated the lesson of humility by washing the feet of His disciples, ⁴ He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. ⁵ After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded ... including the feet of Judas, about whom the Saviour commented, ¹⁰ ... and ye are clean, but not all. ¹¹ For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

So, Judas Iscariot is sitting there, with his sandals off ... and the perfect and pure hands of Jesus had washed the feet of this man who hated Him so much that he was planning to make money by betraying Him ... And he is sitting there, allowing Jesus to wash his feet. He's pretending ... but Jesus was aware of his pretence. ... *ye are clean, but not all* ... Jesus knew what was 'going on', and He added, ¹⁸ I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. ... He was quoting from Ps. 41:9, Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

... And panic set in, "Who is He talking about?!" ... One by one they looked at each other, and He continued, **Jn. 13:19** Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. ... *ἐγώ εἰμι, I AM!* ... The I AM Who is God ... The I AM Who spoke to Moses out of the burning bush in the wilderness ... **I AM!**

And, in case they were in any doubt as to what He was saying, He repeated, ²¹ When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. ²² Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. ... They did not have a clue *who* He was referring to! ... And Jesus, troubled in spirit (v.21), continued ... ²⁶ He it is, to whom I shall give a sop [*i.e. the piece of matzah bread*], when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. ²⁷ And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest,

do quickly. **28** Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. **29** For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. **30** He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. ... Judas went out into the darkness! ... He could have said ‘there and then’ to Jesus, “I’ve done a terrible thing. I have collaborated with the enemy to betray You ... but I am ashamed, I repent and I will *not* betray You for I love You and I want to remain faithful to You” ... But no, unless the grace of God touches the heart, there will be no softening ... instead, a deeper hardening imprisons the soul ... and that is what happened to Judas Iscariot.

Yes, but even at that point the other disciples had not ‘put two and two together’ and come up with how treacherous Judas was! They did not see what he was planning because it was not only ‘night’ outside, but it was also ‘night’ in that upper room.

Another interesting part of this story is that Jesus did not institute the Lord’s Supper until Judas Iscariot had departed, **Jn. 13:1** ... before the feast of the passover. If Judas would have remained, he would have been eating and drinking unworthily ... so the Lord sent him away for He would not have the traitor take part in such a sombre memorial.

Where did he go? ... Where did Judas go? He did not go back down-south to Cherieth ... Instead, he made his way, - in the darkness of the night ... through the cobbled streets and up the steps, - to the Sanhedrin, and to those Jewish leaders he had entered into league with, **Mt. 26:16** And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him ... **Mk. 14:11** And he sought how he might conveniently betray him. ... He had deliberately planned it. He did not betray Jesus ‘on a whim’. It didn’t just ‘happen’, - it was premeditated. He orchestrated how he would sell Jesus to these religious rascals for a paltry thirty pieces of silver. ... And Luke tells us how he went about it, **Lk. 22:6** And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude. ... Behind backs, conniving, conspiring, colluding ... two-faced and underhanded!

Thirty pieces of silver ... sure he wasn’t even a good business man! ... He should have got more than that for Jesus! He was a failure on every level. Thirty pieces of silver (Mt. 26:15) was only the price of a slave (Ex. 21:32) ... Jesus was worth far more than that, but that was all this miserable excuse for a man could ‘wheel and deal’ for the life of the Saviour, the Son of God! ...

Even the Jewish leaders with whom he was trying to do business treated him with contempt. ... He was hopeless and pathetic no matter what way you looked at him! He simply settled for any price he could get!

So, he has been looking for his opportunity ... and it arrives, **Jn. 18:1** When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. **2** And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. **3** Judas then, having received a band [*σπεῖρα, about 600 men ... they were expecting the worst*] of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. **4** Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? **5** They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

After Judas had left the upper room and went out into the night ... the dark path before him led him into the company of the vile enemies of the Saviour, who he brought into the Garden of Gethsemane, **And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.** ... *There* was Jesus and His eleven disciples ... and against Him were over 600 angry and violent men ... and Judas Iscariot who had brought them. **6** As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. ... They could not stand in His holy presence ... and they fell on their backs *away* from Him, because they would not fall on their faces, which would indicate the position of worship.

... Notice how Judas is included with them, for he also fell backwards, **5** They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. **6** As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. ... Then they get up and try to settle themselves ... and Judas Iscariot, - into whom the devil had entered, - continued by going up to Jesus, **Mt. 26:47** And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. **48** Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. **49** And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. **50** And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. ... *What betrayal!* ... But the Saviour was not taken unawares for in the glory of Heaven it had all been planned, as the Psalmist had prophesied, **Ps. 41:5** Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish? **6** And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it. **7** All that hate me whisper together against me: against me

do they devise my hurt ... ⁹ Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

In the darkness of the night, Judas Iscariot stepped forward from the crowd and with a feigned and sham form of devotion, he kissed the Saviour. Masquerading as a friend he pretended to respect the Lord. ... What would the other disciples have been thinking?! ... The temple priests knew exactly what was happening, and that was their signal to move forward, arrest Jesus, and take Him away.

That evening Judas Iscariot managed to profane the Passover ... and he profaned the Son of God ... and he profaned the place of prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. ... He *sold* Jesus, and immediately it troubled him, - he had a conscience after all! ... **Mt. 27:1** When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: ² And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. ³ Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, ⁴ Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.

Too late though, and not enough ... You have 'made your bed, Judas, now go and lie in it'! ... ⁴ ... And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. But instead of falling down on his knees and crying out to God for forgiveness, ⁵ ... he cast down [*flung*] the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. ... Judas could not pacify his conscience ... He knew he had done wrong, and he could not live with the consequences, the unbearable burden he had brought upon himself ... and he chose the path described by King Solomon, **Prov. 11:19** he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death.

In Acts chapter one we are now with the 120 believers, - including the eleven disciples, - in the upper room in Jerusalem. This is after the crucifixion, the resurrection, and Christ's ascension into glory ... and Peter is speaking about Judas Iscariot, ¹⁶ Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. ¹⁷ For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. ¹⁸ Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. ¹⁹ And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. ²⁰ For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

... He purchased a field with the reward of iniquity ... Now obviously Judas did not do it personally for the Gospel of Matthew explains to us the chief priests gathered up the thirty pieces of silver Judas flung on the floor before running out ... Their religious laws forbid them to put it back in their coffers because it was considered ceremonially unclean, so they used it to buy a field for poor people and for wicked people, **Mt. 27:6** And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. **7** And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. **8** Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. **9** Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; **10** And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

Some people would see a problem concerning the death of Judas. Both Matthew (27:5) and Mark (9:42) record that he hung himself, while Luke in Acts 1:18 says he fell and 'burst himself open' ... and that is how he died. But there's no problem, for it actually explains how Judas Iscariot could not even kill himself the way he intended for he set out to hang himself ... He went to a tree on the hillside, threw a rope over the branch, placed the noose around his neck, and was about to do the deed ... he jumped ... and either the rope broke, or the branch broke, ... for whatever happened he made such a mess out of it that he fell **Acts 1:18** ... headlong [*i.e. down the hill*], he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. ... He couldn't even kill himself the way he intended!

... And that is the last that's said about Judas Iscariot. What a tragedy of a life! He had all the opportunities of following Jesus, but he wasted them ... He threw them all away and his story concludes with the devastating epitaph, **Acts 1:25** ... Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. ... That place by which Jesus referred to him specifically, **Jn. 17:12** While I was with them [*the disciples*] in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition ... That is Judas Iscariot. He betrayed Christ. He turned His back on forgiveness. He lost his opportunity. He wasted his energies in pursuing a futile end. ... Jesus appealed to him one last time in the upper room, but he walked away and would not receive God's offer of mercy.

Everything he did as a disciple was pretence ... It was nothing more than a façade, a charade ... he was masquerading as something he wasn't. He faked it all! The other disciples were completely unaware, - they had been taken in, - ... I could imagine all the eleven disciples with Jesus ... and through the olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane appears Judas at the head of the crowd. Those poor disciples did not know what was happening ... but Jesus did.

In fact, is it not significant that out of all the heathen and anti-Christ society of that day, the person that was used to betray Christ came from within His own ranks ... one of the disciples! ... Yes, Judas Iscariot was associated with Christ. He had been with Jesus since the early days down by the River Jordan. He had been with Jesus in Galilee, and up into Tyre and Sidon, and down the eastern coast of the Sea of Galilee. He had been with Jesus in Jerusalem ... constantly at His side ... and yet, the tragedy of Judas Iscariot is of one who walked with Jesus merely as a pretence.

What a similar tragedy it is for many to pretend to follow Jesus, and yet within their hearts they know no work of grace has been effectuated. When they search and examine themselves, they *know* they are strangers to God's grace ... and like Judas Iscariot, they have no excuse for they know the Gospel.

In our study of each of the other disciples we considered how they ended their days on earth, - the majority of them were martyred. Judas Iscariot, though, was the only disciple to have died at his own hands.

Do you genuinely know Jesus as your Saviour, and is your walk with Him showing it? Judas Iscariot fooled the other eleven disciples but he didn't fool God for Jesus knew the true state of his heart. ... Coming to church doesn't make you a Christian ... neither does carrying a Bible or being a Baptist. ... Being a Christian means belonging to Christ and living for Him. It does not mean you have to enter a monastery or a convent, but it means you live every day with Him beside you.

It is a serious matter to consider, - one which Judas Iscariot at this very moment wishes he had responded to differently. And here there is a warning to each of us, as Peter wrote to the churches, **II Peter 1:10** give diligence to make your calling and election sure ... For as Paul wrote, **Gal. 6:7** ... God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. **8** For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. ... I trust there is none here like Judas Iscariot, but that each of us knows for certain Jesus Christ is indeed truly our Saviour and our Lord. Amen.