

“Why Did He Do it? (Judas Iscariot)

Jim Shepherd - August 16th, 2020

Matthew 26:14-16 (NASB)

- ¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests
¹⁵ and said, “What are you willing to give me to betray Him to you?” And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him.
¹⁶ From then on he *began* looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus.

1.) Perplexing Questions:

Why did he do what he did?

Judas is most hated person because of what he did.

Read: Matthew 26:14-16 (NIV 1984)

Two perplexing things about Judas:

- 1) why did he do what he did?
- 2) after he had done it, why did he feel so guilty?

An inigma

Ordinary / everyday sins (lying, deceit, stealing, betrayal) – common –

He was so evil he sold the Lord Jesus for 30 silver coins

Afterwards he felt such remorse he committed suicide

Many hate him, pity him and some even think he’s a hero

Mystery

We understand the other apostles – not Judas

- 1) Was he crooked from the beginning?
- 2) Why did Jesus say Judas was doomed to destruction so the scripture might be fulfilled?
- 3) What do Luke & John mean when they say Satan entered Judas?

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2.) Where does the story start?

Start at the end of the story:

Early Friday morning in Jerusalem – (midnight to dawn)

Jews are done with Jesus (kangaroo court, trumped up charges, false witnesses).

Verdict is Jesus guilty of blasphemy (death sentence)

Take Jesus to Pilate (Roman Governor) who is the only one to approve a death sentence.

Go to the praetorium where Pilate passes judgment

Shadows – Judas is alone and a forgotten man who watches by night – 6 to 7 hours since the last supper.

He had gone straight to the chief priests

Short walk to the garden of Gethsemane
Said a few words to the guards – Judas was angry
Words by Peter – Jesus arrested
(5 minutes for a plan to be executed)

Received the money
Now alone
No one had any use for him now (a traitor)

Judas waited at midnight and he wanted Jesus dead, then he had changed his mind

Memories gripped his mind, things Jesus had said over 3 years, little jokes told by the apostles around the fire, Jesus' stories.

Remembered smile on Jairus' daughter when raised from the dead.
Peter's face showing astonishment when he walked on water.
12 baskets of food left over after feeding the 5,000

Memories Too Much to Bear (it was crushing Judas)
Heard Jesus was condemned to die

Overwhelmed –
He had made a great mistake
He must find a way to make things right

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He threw the money back in the temple
The priests didn't want it and laughed at him.
Judas said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood."

True, worst sin imaginable.
Judas lost his Lord, money, life. (hanged himself)
Ultimate irony – Judas died before Jesus did.

-After he did it, why did he feel so guilty?

3.) Where is Judas today? (heaven or hell?)

John 17:12

"¹²While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled."

Scripture said Messiah would be betrayed

Judas is in hell today, for the past 2,000 years and forever.
Judas paid the ultimate price for betraying the Son of God.

Did Judas lose his salvation? (he was an apostle)
(NO) he never had it, so he never lost it.
he never truly committed himself to Jesus.

Did Judas repent?

(NO) He was gripped with remorse, but he never asked for forgiveness.
(no repentance, no salvation)

Many people are sorry for their sins but they never come to God and ask for forgiveness
(so not forgiven by God).

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4) Was he always a traitor? (Was Judas Always This Way?)

(NO) – facts about him:

He was personally chosen to be an apostle by Jesus

He spent 3 years traveling with Jesus.

He forsook all to follow Jesus.

He saw Jesus’ miracles in person.

He heard Jesus give all his famous discourses.

He watched Jesus heal the sick, raise the dead and cast out demons.

He was sent out to preach the Gospel.

He was a leader of the group.

No one suspected him of treason. (His conduct was above suspicion)

Judas experienced all the same things the other apostles experienced.

Other apostles heard a call to serve God

Judas heard a call of opportunity and gain.

35 years after the crucifixion:

MATTHEW wrote his gospel and describes Judas as last of the apostles and said, “Judas who betrayed Him.”

MARK wrote, “Judas who betrayed Him.”

LUKE wrote, “Judas who betrayed Him.”

30 years later:

JOHN (now in his 80s or 90s) wrote: “Judas who was later to betray Him.”

They never got over Judas’ betrayal.

Passage of time did not diminish the enormity of his crime.

Jesus knew that Judas would betray him.

5.) The problem with emotions

Did Judas join Jesus with the intention of betrayal?

(NO) – He was a sincere follower.

(Why this story is important to us?)

Judas saw Jesus as a great hope for Israel, just like most of the people.

Jesus was the miracle working king who would throw off the yoke of Rome.

Over time, feelings of anger and despair began to take over Judas’ heart.

Those feelings had grown considerable one year before the betrayal.

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He was a potential traitor in the beginning and circumstances finally converted him into an actual traitor.

No one suspected Judas as a traitor.

6.) Why did Judas do it?

Lots of theories, Judas doesn't tell us and the apostles don't explain.

Apostles probably didn't know and maybe why they never got over the betrayal.

Three Primary Theories:

Theory 1) He betrayed Jesus for money / greed.

Judas was a thief but the problem was that 30 pieces of silver was not very much. It was the price of a slave.

Theory 2) He betrayed Jesus because he was disillusioned.

This is the most popular theory. He looked at Jesus as a political Messiah who would overthrow the yoke of Rome.

Jesus popularity waned as he started marching toward the cross.

His death was eminent.

Jesus was opposed by powerful people.

Jesus discussed his death and this would be an admission of weakness and defeat.

Judas didn't want a kingdom in the next world. He wanted a kingdom here and now.

Do we have the same problem?

Potential crucifixion would not be good for a career move.

Perhaps Judas was looking out for number one.

Theory 3) He betrayed Jesus because he as frightened.

Judas saw the handwriting on the wall. He betrayed Jesus to save his own skin, to save himself.

All 3 theories might have contributed. (greed, disillusionment, fear)

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7.) Was Judas guilty?

(YES) – He is guilty as charged.

His motives really don't matter. The record is perfectly clear about what he did:

He thought up the plan to betray Jesus.
He approached the chief priests with the plan.
He made the deal.

He took the Money.
He left the last supper to meet the soldiers.
He led the soldiers to Jesus.

He kissed Jesus on the cheek, betraying Him.
He thought it up, he planned the details and he carried it out.
He betrayed the Messiah (The Son of God) and he knew it.

8.) What did Jesus mean? (“What Thou Doest, Do Quickly”)

At the end of the last supper the mood was somber.

Suddenly Jesus announces, “One of you will betray me.”
Shocking statement, and the apostles wonder, “who would do this?”
They each asked, “Lord, is it I?”

Jesus said, “The one to whom I give the bread, he is the one who will betray me.”

Jesus gave the bread to Judas with these words, “What you are about to do, do quickly.”

With these words Jesus identifies Judas as the betrayer.

What else?

He was making one last appeal to Judas to change his mind (to save his soul).
This was Jesus' final offer of grace to him.

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9.) What did Judas choose?

There's **a line** there that Judas crossed. How close are you to that **line**?

Judas chose the darkness of Satan instead of the Light of the World (Jesus).

Judas is in hell today, 2,000 years and forever.
He is dead but his spirit lives on in hell.

We see it in those who play the religious game.

Those who come to church for what they can get out of it.
Those who pretend to make a commitment to Jesus.
Those who go through the Christian motions.
Those who really don't love the Lord Jesus.
Those who are very religious but not loving.

10.) What is the lesson of Judas' story? (Hard truths.)

Judas does us a favor if his story causes us to rethink our basic commitment to Jesus

Are you a true believer or going through the motions?

Are you a pretender or a true believer?

These are hard and searching questions but the lessons of Judas are lost unless we ask these questions to ourselves.

In the end most of us will search our hearts and find we are Christians even though we fail him in many ways.

The hope is that maybe some will realize the folly and step back from the line.

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Conclusion:

Gospel song “**I’d Rather Have Jesus**” lyrics:

I’d rather have Jesus than silver or gold,
I’d rather be His than have riches untold,
I’d rather have Jesus than houses or land,
I’d rather be led by His nail pierced hand.

I’d rather have Jesus than men’s applause,
I’d rather be faithful to His dear cause,
I’d rather have Jesus than worldwide fame,
I’d rather be true to His holy name.

Maybe you’re here today pursuing so many worldly prizes but you’re drifting away from Jesus.

This song captures the story of Judas.

He wanted the world, the silver and gold and he betrayed Jesus thinking he would get it. He got despair and death.

Are you in that place?

God warns us that you can either follow the world or Jesus.

Which is it going to be?

It’s too late for Judas, but you can still choose.

Which is it going to be?

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