



# SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS ISCARIOT

# INTRODUCTION

- Within the Bible, there are certain names that stir up within us some very strong and unpleasant thoughts and emotions
  - ❖ Satan, the serpent of old (Gen 3, Job 1 & 2, Matt 4:1-11)
  - ❖ Cain (Gen 4:1-15, 1 John 3:12)
  - ❖ Pharaoh of Egypt in the time of Moses (Ex 1:8-14, 15-22, 5:1-2)
  - ❖ Jezebel, wife of King Ahab (1 Kings 18:4, 19:1-2, 21:1-16)
  - ❖ King Herod Antipas (Matthew 14:1-12)
  - ❖ Pontious Pilate (Luke 13:1-3, Matthew 27:24)

## INTRODUCTION

- And then there is the Bible character who is the focus of tonight's lesson : **Judas Iscariot**
  - ❖ He too stirs up within us some unpleasant thoughts and emotions
- Judas is one of the most **infamous** characters mentioned in the Bible
- “**Infamous**” describes someone very well known for a bad quality or deed, often wicked or disgraceful
- To be “**infamous**” is polar opposite of being honorable & reputable
- If you were to compile a list of the top 10 most infamous characters in the Bible, Judas Iscariot would likely be near the top of your list

# INTRODUCTION

- Sadly, when we see the name Judas or Judas Iscariot mentioned in the NT, it is often accompanied by an unpleasant word:

- ❖ **Betrayer (traitor)**

- ⇒ **Betray:** To be disloyal. To deliver or expose someone to an enemy by treachery or disloyalty.

- ⇒ **Betrayer:** A betrayer is a person who is not loyal to their country or to another person, often doing something harmful such as giving information to an enemy.

- ⇒ **Betrayal:** Is the act of faithlessly turning against someone, breaking trust, or acting treacherously, often with profound personal, social, and spiritual consequences.

## INTRODUCTION

- The word “**betray**” or one of its forms [**betrays, betrayer, betrayed, betraying**] is used multiple times in all (4) gospels
  - ❖ **Matthew: 13X, Mark: 10X, Luke: 6X, John: 9X**
  - ❖ See **Matthew 10:4; Mark 14:44**
  - ❖ See **Luke 6:16 (traitor); John 12:1-5\***
- Jesus Himself identified Judas Iscariot as His **betrayer**
  - ❖ See **Matt 26:19-25\*, John 13:18-30**
- Even Judas himself ultimately admitted he had **betrayed** innocent blood, before going out and hanging himself (**Matt 27:3-5**)

## INTRODUCTION

- Read with me **Luke 22:1-6** where Luke records how **Judas**, under Satan's influence, **became the catalyst** that set in motion a tragic series of events leading to the death of Jesus
  - ❖ Because the religious leaders feared the people, they dared not openly seize Jesus in the sight of the people because it would have turned the people against them
  - ❖ Jesus was at the height of His popularity among the people
  - ❖ Judas secretly went to the religious leaders and told them he could deliver Jesus to them out of the view of the people
  - ❖ This made them extremely happy and they gladly agreed to pay Judas money for his assistance, (30) pieces of silver (**Matt 26:15**)

## INTRODUCTION

- **John 18:1-5** records that Judas made good on his promise to the religious leaders to deliver Jesus into their hands
  - ❖ Late at night under the cover of darkness, Judas led a detachment of soldiers and officers to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus and the other eleven apostles were alone
  - ❖ The soldiers and officers arrested Jesus, bound Him and led Him away to Annas the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest (V12-V13)
  - ❖ After being questioned by Annas, Jesus was then sent bound to Caiaphas for further questioning (V24)

## INTRODUCTION

- **Matt 27:3-5** records Judas later became remorseful when he saw Jesus was condemned to die
  - ❖ He took back the (30) pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders and confessed to betraying Jesus, an innocent man (V3-V4a)
  - ❖ They were not interested in his confession or his attempt to return the money and told him it was his responsibility to deal with the consequences of his actions (V4b)
  - ❖ Judas then threw down the (30) pieces of silver in the temple and went out and hanged himself (V5)
  - ❖ Thus, concluding one of the most tragic accounts documented in the biblical record

# INTRODUCTION

- With these introductory thoughts in mind, I now want us to consider (10) observations & lessons from the life of Judas Iscariot

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #1

- Judas actually did some good things during his time spent with Jesus (Matthew 10:1-8\*, Luke 9:1-6)
  - ❖ He preached the gospel of the kingdom and healed the sick
  - ❖ He willingly sacrificed 3+ years of his life to accompany Jesus
  - ❖ These good things we tend to forget because his betrayal of Jesus greatly overshadowed all the good things he ever did
- In the example of Judas, we are reminded of the importance of good name and how quickly just one evil deed can destroy a good name forever (Proverbs 22:1, 10:7, Ecclesiastes 7:1)
- To be described as a “*Judas*” is a horrible thing

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #2

- The example of Judas demonstrates how outward appearances can sometimes be deceiving
- On the surface Judas appeared fully committed to Jesus and perhaps in the beginning he was, but his actions in the end proved otherwise
- Numerous times Jesus condemned the religious leaders for their outward show of holiness and devotion to God, while inwardly they were corrupt & filled with hypocrisy (Matt 23:25-28)
- Like the religious leaders, the actions of Judas in betraying Jesus proved his heart was filled with corruption and hypocrisy
- Whether Judas was fully committed to Jesus from the beginning or not doesn't really matter in the end because he failed to finish what he started

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #3

- The example of Judas teaches us the dangers of fraternizing with the Lord's enemies
  - ❖ Judas was fully aware of the corrupt character of the people he chose to deal with, yet he went ahead and did it any way
    - ⇒ Fraternizing with the Lord's enemies did not end well for Judas
  - ❖ Like Judas, we too can be guilty of fraternizing with the Lord's enemies
    - ⇒ As was the case with Judas, it will not end well for us
  - ❖ The Bible warns us not to fraternize with the Lord's enemies
    - ⇒ See **1 Cor 15:33, 2 Cor 6:14-18\*, Eph 5:11, Jam 4:4**

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #4

- The example of Judas reminds us the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim 6:6-10, John 12:4-6)
  - ❖ Judas' love of money led him to betray his Lord for (30) pieces of silver, the price of a male or female servant (Ex 21:32)
  - ❖ After Judas realized what he had done, he was pierced through with many sorrows, but the damage was done
  - ❖ Sadly, even to this day there are many who are willing to betray Jesus and others close to them because of their love of money
  - ❖ Jesus warned His disciples, including Judas, on multiple occasions you cannot serve God and mammon (Matt 6:24, 33; Luke 16:13)

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #5

- The example of Judas teaches us how a missed opportunity for one can open a door of opportunity for another (*Acts 1:15-26, V20\**)
  - ❖ Because of his suicide, Judas would not enjoy the great privilege & blessing of being with the other apostles on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit arrived and the church was established
  - ❖ However, Judas' failure opened a door of opportunity for another man who had been with Jesus from the beginning and who could testify of His life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension
  - ❖ That man was **Matthias**, who would enjoy the privilege & blessing of preaching the gospel, leading to the salvation of lost souls

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #6

- The example of Judas teaches us it is possible to walk with Jesus and serve Him for a time, but ultimately be guilty of betraying Him
  - ❖ Judas began his spiritual walk with Jesus, but sadly he failed to finish it
  - ❖ The result being he departed this life separated from Jesus and now faces the prospect of spending eternity in hell
  - ❖ With the knowledge of what he gave up for (30) pieces of silver
- The Bible teaches us that in order to receive the crown of eternal life, we must remain faithful and endure until the end (2 Tim 4:6-8\*)
  - ❖ See Rev 2:10, Matthew 10:22, Hebrews 10:36, James 1:12

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #7

- The example of Judas should forever remind us of the terrifying woe Jesus pronounced against him for his betrayal in **Mark 14:21**
  - ❖ *The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born.*
  - ❖ I would suggest to us the woe Jesus spoke against Judas that day is just as applicable to professed believers today
  - ❖ On the judgement day, if we are found to be betrayers of Jesus and not faithful followers, it would better for us if we had never been born

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #8

- The example of Judas teaches us that being remorseful for a wrong committed against God does not rise to the level of true repentance (2 Cor 7:8-11)
  - ❖ After the fact, Judas changed his mind about his betrayal of Jesus, declaring, *“I have sinned by betraying innocent blood”* (Matt 27:4)
  - ❖ However, instead of experiencing godly sorrow leading to true repentance, Judas sorrowed according to the world’s standard, leading to his death by suicide (2 Cor 7:10)
  - ❖ Perhaps Judas believed his transgression was beyond the forgiveness of God or perhaps Judas could not forgive himself

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #9

- The example of Judas teaches us how far the guilt of sin can take us, possibly to the brink, believing there is no way out but to end it all
  - ❖ Apparently, Judas believed he had no better options available
  - ❖ However, there was another option available to him
  - ❖ Turning back to Jesus and seeking His forgiveness
- When we compare the actions of Judas and Simon Peter, Peter was equally devastated by his sin after he denied the Lord (3) times
- Peter wept bitterly (**Luke 22:60-62**), but did not try to take his life
- Peter repented and was later restored by the Lord (**John 21:15-17**) and I am convinced Judas could have been restored as well

## SOME OBSERVATIONS & LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JUDAS: #10

- The example of Judas shows us how God can use great acts of evil to bring about an even greater good for the benefit of His people
- Another classic example of this great Biblical truth is seen in the life of Joseph after his brothers sold him into slavery (**Gen 50:15-21**)
- In the New Testament we learn the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, leading to His crucifixion was a part of God's eternal plan for man's eternal redemption (**Acts 2:22-24, 4:27-28**)
- God's ability to use evil to bring about good testifies to His divine nature and sovereignty. He is...
  - ❖ All powerful, all knowing (wise), present everywhere and ultimately it is His will that will be done

## CONCLUSION

- In this study we briefly examined the life of one of the Bible's most infamous characters, Judas Iscariot
- We frequently mention Judas in our Bible studies, but we seldom consider some of the important lessons we can learn from his life
- Hopefully, this lesson has been somewhat beneficial in that regard as I believe we can learn much from studying the life of Judas
- Hopefully, the things we have discussed can help each of us in our spiritual walk as we strive to live faithfully before God and prepare ourselves for His Son's return
- I offer these thoughts for your consideration