

Fact Sheet for **“Judas the Betrayer”**  
**Matthew 26:47-56; 27:3-10**

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Several years ago I preached a series on a harmonized life of Christ. I had ended that series just before Jesus and the eleven disciples arrived at the Garden of Gethsemane, so I picked-up from there last week. Today we are going to be looking at Judas' betrayal of Jesus. We are going to be coming around to application at the very end, but there is going to be a lot of Scripture first. I invite you to imagine the scene as the drama unfolds, much as if you were sitting in a theatre watching a play.

Jesus had known the day was coming long before he got to this point. Turning the water into wine was the beginning of the signs that Jesus did in Cana (John 2:11). His mother made a request. Read Jesus' response in John 2:4. Think about that last phrase. This was a reference to his death and resurrection. On multiple occasions during his public ministry he pointed to his coming death and resurrection. In fact he spoke clearly to his disciples about three times this on his last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. In the Garden he prayed earnestly that this cup may be removed from him if possible, but was absolutely committed to do the Father's will.

Here's the point. What would happen with Judas was not a surprise to Jesus. Look at events surrounding the Last Supper. Now it was just before the Last Supper. The Jewish leaders were looking for a way to finally kill Jesus (*Matthew 26:3-5*). Now read Matthew 26<sup>14-16</sup> and Zechariah 11:12. The Parallel Passages about Judas' betrayal are as follows: Matthew 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-52; Luke 22:47-53; John 18:2-11.

After the Last Supper the *eleven* disciples came to the Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus. Read Matthew 26:46, then the following...

**ESV <sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people.**

John records that Judas knew the place because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. John also records that there was a detachment of soldiers with them. The group was carrying torches, lanterns and weapons. Luke records that Judas was leading them.

**<sup>48</sup> Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; seize him."**

The pointing out of the right person was critical, not only because it was dark but also because it was long before photography.

**<sup>49</sup> And he came up to Jesus at once and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed him.**

Read John's addition in John 18:4-9. When did he speak those words? Let's go back to the Last Supper again for a moment. Read Matthew 26:21-22, 24. Then read John 13:23-26; Matthew 26:5; and John 13:27-30. From this point on Judas was not with the other eleven disciples. Jesus then washed their feet. Now read John 13:10-11, 18; Psalm 41:9. Later, on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed the prayer of John 17, often referred to as his High Priestly Prayer. Read John 17:12. Now Jesus was faced by those who came to arrest him.

**<sup>50</sup> Jesus said to him (*Judas*), "Friend, do what you came to do." Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him.**

The word "friend" here carries more the idea of "companion." The eleven were ready for action (Luke 22:49). Peter, impulsive Peter, acted.

**<sup>51</sup> And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.**

John identifies this servant as Malchus, and the one who cut off his ear as Simon Peter.

**<sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. <sup>53</sup> Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?"**

A Roman legion had about 6,000 soldiers. Twelve legions of angels then would number about 72,000! You can hear in Jesus' response his firm commitment to do the Father's will, no matter the cost. But still teaching the eleven he said...

**<sup>54</sup> But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"**

Read Isaiah 53:7-9; Daniel 9:26; Matthew 26:31; Zechariah 13:7. Luke, the physician, then records that Jesus touched the man's ear and healed him.

**<sup>55</sup> At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. <sup>56</sup> But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.**

Luke records this statement by Jesus, "But this is your hour, and the power of darkness." Do you remember Jesus response to his mother's request in Cana (John 2:4)? Imagine the scene now as his disciples fled.

At this point you see a unique occurrence in the gospels. It is like being in a theatre with two stages, and separate though related plays happening at the same time on the two stages. On the first, Peter is denying Christ in the courtyard. On the second, Jesus is standing trial before the Sanhedrin. Once both plays have run their course, Matthew alone records more about Judas in 27:3-10. Matthew references a prophecy from Zechariah 11:12-13 but ascribes it to Jeremiah... why? First, there are many similarities between this prophecy and things said in Jeremiah. Second, Matthew would have had both prophets in mind but only referred to the *major* prophet Jeremiah by name. A similar situation is found in Mark 1:2-3, where Mark only mentioned the prophet Isaiah, but quoted directly from both Isaiah and Malachi.

Then we have Peter's words in Acts 1:15-20. Apparently when Judas hanged himself the rope may have broken and he fell on the rocks below.

Now here's a question. What application for life today would you draw from the story of Judas' betrayal? Here's where I go. I focus on Jesus rather than on Judas. Jesus was about to face the toughest time any person would ever face. And he would do this for you.

**ESV <sup>1</sup> John 2:2** He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Judas was just a bit player in this drama. He was not the focus of it. Jesus committed himself to be obedient to the Father. He also knew that the Father, not the devil would be victorious.

God has made promises to all of us. We do face tough circumstances from time to time. Are you committed to that walk of faith, being obedient to the Father, and trusting in his plan for your life, regardless of the circumstances? Consider Jesus' example.