

"the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about Jesus"

THE DAILY JESUS NEWS

An ATJ Ministries Publication

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #277 Wednesday... Day of Betrayal and Conspiracy

"Judas Iscariot Conspires to Betray Jesus"

LK 22.3-6 (Parallel Texts: MT 26.14-16; MK 14.10-11)

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3 Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. 4 And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus ^Mto them.

^{MT}He asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?"

5 ^LThey were delighted, and agreed to give him money. ^{MT}So they counted out thirty silver coins for him. 6 ^LHe consented, and ^{MT}from then on Judas ^Lwatched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	The Temple Compound, Jerusalem
Timeline	Early April (Month 39)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VIII: Passion Week
	C. Wednesday: Day of Betrayal and Conspiracy
Title	Judas Iscariot Conspires to Betray Jesus

COMMENT:

Scripture mentions only one event on Wednesday of Passion Week, but it is a juggernaut. Judas Iscariot fell to Satan's temptation and conspired with the chief priests to betray Jesus.

Luke said that "*Satan entered Judas*." By this he meant that Judas chose to give in to the devil's temptation, and decided to betray his Lord. Judas received Satan's influence and embraced it.

We need to understand what happened here, for similar temptations surround us as well. This is part of why all the gospel writers include Judas's betrayal in their respective narratives. Peter fell into temptation and betrayed his Lord, too. All the Twelve promised they would die with Jesus, but ended up abandoning him and running for their lives.

First we need to understand that Judas did not intend for Jesus to be crucified when he decided to betray him. His reaction of deep sorrow when it happened shows us this. Judas intended something very different to happen than what did occur. He was deceived by his own erroneous evaluation of the situation, which opened him up to further deceptive influence from Satan.

We are all like Judas in this. When we sin we do not intend the consequences. None of us fully understand the consequences when we choose to disobey God. If we were thinking straight we would never take those actions. The time will certainly come when we will desire with all of our being to take them back. But we cannot, just like Judas couldn't.

What motivated Judas? Money had something to do with it. Judas had charge of the common purse for Jesus' band of disciples, and John told us that he frequently stole money from it (JN 12.6). So Judas already had a problem with personal integrity, honesty and money. It is no surprise that the chance to make some easy, big money was such a strong temptation for him.

Rarely does anyone experience a major breakdown in integrity overnight. Like Judas, it is usually a lengthy, accumulating process of many small sins in a consistent pattern that lead to a catastrophic failure. That was how Satan set Judas up for this fall.

Judas was probably trying to force Jesus' hand by betraying him. He knew Jesus had divine power. Judas desired Jesus to take the throne of David and rule over Israel's enemies...NOW! He probably had big plans for how he could use his influence and power as one of the Twelve once Jesus began his reign. He believed that if Jesus' enemies arrested Jesus and tried to kill him as planned, God would strike them all dead. So, Judas might as well make some money in the process.

One of Judas' most fundamental problems was that he had not received and believed Jesus' own words about the necessity of his death. He was not alone in this. None of the Twelve understood their Lord's plain teachings about his death.

I am not writing in defense of Judas. What he did was utterly wrong. However, we miss the lesson for each of us when we make Judas into an unusually evil person--much worse than ourselves. No, he was just like us, as was Peter, and all the apostles. They all failed their Lord in different ways.

In the end, the only difference between Peter and Judas was that Peter was able to believe and receive Jesus' forgiveness and restoration. Judas became so overwhelmed with the unforeseen consequences of his greed that he despaired of any hope for himself, and committed suicide in his depression. He could not believe there was any forgiveness available to him. He was wrong about that, too.

APPLICATION:

Becoming comfortable with "little" sins, to the point where they become consistent patterns of behavior is a very dangerous thing. Judas shows us this.

Is there any pattern of consistent, habitual disobedience in your life? Have you given up on all hope of repenting permanently, and leaving it behind?

If so, watch out.

Ask God to convict you of how wrong it is again, and fill you with his hatred of it to the point where you cannot stand it anymore, and embrace repentance.

Persist in this prayer, no matter how insincere it may seem to you. God WILL answer you, and deliver you. Do not give up until he does. He loves you too much to ignore your pleas to be enabled to obey him.