

Matthew Chapter 9:36-10:42 – Jesus Prepares and Commissions the Twelve Apostles Part 5 – Matthew 10:3 – Judas Iscariot

Review:

In Matthew 9:37-38, Jesus declares to His disciples that it is time to increase the shepherds because the people were distressed and dispirited by the Pharisees and scribes who were not shepherding the people in accordance with the Law.

Fortunately, Jesus had been training shepherds as their replacement. The apostles and other disciples are called to be gentle, merciful, peacemakers; they are salt and light and Jesus is not only training them in the message of the kingdom but also telling them that they will receive power to do the same actions as He does to validate their message of the kingdom of heaven.

So far, we have discussed Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew (Nathanael), Thomas, Matthew, James, son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus (Jude, son of James), and Simon the Zealot. This group will be known as the Eleven.

Judas Iscariot:

As stated previously, his name is Judah, a very popular name. Eight different men have that name in the New Testament. This one is a disciple of Jesus, also called an apostle (one who is sent out). He is only mentioned as doing anything significant in two major instances.

In the Gospels, he is the son of Simon (another popular name in Israel). Iscariot may have many derivatives. This could have been the patriarch who was well known in Israel as a son of Simon, son of Iscariot. John 6:71 – Judah of Simon of Iscariot. Iscariot may also be a location. Many believe that this is the “men of Kerioth,” which would have been a town in Moab (Jeremiah 48:24; Amos 2:2).

However, this name is not mentioned in the LXX, and the origin of this name (patriarch or hometown) is lost to history.

In Christendom, no one is more despised than Judas. Satan may be the adversary, but Judas is the betrayer. He is seen in both religious and secular cultures as a viscerally hated character in all of history.

Judas even has a place in the dictionary: traitor; one who betrays under the guise of friendship.

There is nothing in the text that indicates his profession before being called to be an apostle. John 12:3-6 states that Judas oversaw the money box but was a thief and would pilfer what had been given to the ministry. Also, in Matthew 26:14-16 (Mark 14:10; Luke 22:3-6), Judas went to the chief priests not to simply betray Jesus but to get paid for the deed.

Judas was probably a corrupt businessman or a simple thief that lived his life trying to look for opportunities to steal.

He is called to be a disciple and follows Jesus. He remains with Jesus for about 3 years. He stayed with Jesus during His ministry, even when Jesus’s words drove people away.

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Why did he stay? Because of the way that Judas is described, it is not because he was a believer, but because he desired to profit from being with Jesus.

He is referred to as the one who betrays. The word for *betray* is “*παραδίδωμι* *paradidōmi*.” This word means to give over, give to another, hand over, deliver up.

One lexicon says, “To deliver a person into the control of someone else, involving either the handing over of a presumably guilty person for punishment by authorities or the handing over of an individual to an enemy who will presumably take undue advantage of the victim.”

This word is used of God, who gave over those who were idolaters to an obvious perverted state (Romans 1:22-25), and of doctrinal information that has been transferred from one person to another (1 Corinthians 11:2; Jude 1:3).

Paul uses this word in reference to Jesus and presumably Judas (since he is the one who delivered Jesus) (1 Corinthians 11:23); both *deliver* and *betray* are the same word.

Who handed Jesus over?

1. Judas – John 18:5
2. The Jewish authorities – John 18:35
3. Pilate – John 19:16
4. The Jews in general – Acts 3:11-15
5. God – Romans 8:32
6. Jesus Himself – Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:2

In these passages, questions must be asked. To whom is Jesus being handed over? And for whom is Jesus being handed over? We find that the handing over was planned, and Jesus, with the Father, had determined to be handed over for the benefit of the world and especially believers. But Judas, with the Jews and Pilate, handed over Jesus in an evil manner—for Him to die, an act for which they are held accountable.

Is Judas a deceived person?

John 6:66-71 – Judas is a devil (*diablos*), a false accuser, a slanderer (this is a description of the person, not the action).

John 17:11-12 – *perdition* is “*ἀπώλεια* *apōleia*.” This word is used 18 times and means destruction, waste, perish. The term *the son of the destruction* is used one other time (2 Thessalonians 2:3) and is equated to the man of lawlessness, the tool of Satan, during the time of Jacob’s trouble, the Great Tribulation.

Jesus referring to Judas in this manner tells me that his character and his position are of a willful ally of Satan and not a deceived disciple of Jesus.

Judas was greedy, and although He was a first-hand witness of the Messianic words and actions, he saw Jesus as a way to gain financially.

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Is Judas saved? Based on the above references and how the Bible describes him, he is not reconciled to God and died in a state of unbelief. If Judas did end up believing before his suicide, I believe the text would have made that clear.

One of the arguments for the salvation of Judas is that he was an apostle, was given the message, and performed miracles with the other apostles in Matthew 10:7-8. There is no indication that Judas did not perform the acts or speak the message. But there are a few examples in Scripture that enemies are used and do/say amazing things even while being an enemy (Balaam, Caiaphas – John 11:47-53). God is sovereign and can use unbelievers if He wants to.

The disciples did not suspect Judas (when Jesus predicts His betrayal, they had to be told who it was). Judas' deception was very convincing.

Did Judas believe when he became remorseful? Matthew 27:3-5 – Remorse does not mean belief, only regret. He did not change his mind about Jesus; he regretted handing Jesus over because he judges Jesus as being innocent.

For three years Judas had followed Jesus, shared with Jesus, heard Jesus, and conversed with Jesus, yet Judas handed Jesus over for the purpose of temporary profit; he did not believe in Jesus.

All four Gospels describe Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane after Judas arrived in the company of soldiers from the chief priests and Jewish leadership. Matthew and Mark identify him as "one of the Twelve" as he hails Jesus as rabbi and kisses Him, a sign he had prearranged to identify Jesus. In Luke, Jesus inquires whether Judas is betraying him with a kiss. In Matthew, Jesus replies to Judas' greeting with the statement, "Friend, do what you have come for." John doesn't mention a kiss or any action by Judas but twice records Jesus' self-identification to the officers while Judas stands with them. For Matthew and Mark, the scene culminates with all the disciples, presumably including Judas, fleeing and abandoning Jesus.

Review of the Twelve:

Why review the Twelve? Understanding who was with Jesus and understanding these men to the best of our ability gives us a tactile reference to the ministry of Jesus.

In the next sections in Matthew, we will read about the Twelve as a collective. They are highlighted so that we can trust what they have to say about Jesus.

God does not need anything. Jesus did not need apostles. If He had wanted, He could do all this without them. Why does Jesus use these men? Grace and mercy. God does not need to use people, yet He does, and He gives people the opportunity to participate in the message and the blessing (temporal and eternal) that comes with the efforts for the Gospel.