

What Really  
Happened  
*to*  
Judas Iscariot?



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## *Introduction*

This work is **NOT** a defense of, nor a justification for, Judas Iscariot or what he did. However, the story of Judas' role in his ministry with Jesus of Nazareth, and particularly his untimely death, has been formulated and passed on down to us by tradition.

Because of the subject matter, should we take the position that Judas was the spawn of the devil himself, and should never be considered as a real person? Is he the summation of all that is evil, and as such, his life is unimportant and we should sweep him under the rug and never give a second thought to him?

The Scriptures themselves present to us a very different picture than what we have heard in days gone by, and very possibly for a different reason, which we will attempt to present here. Our prayer is that the reader himself would go to the Word of God to confirm or reject what is put forth in this little work.

Judas Iscariot is a very, very, touchy subject with many people, and disdain many times awaits any individual who would seek to probe deeper into what actually might have happened almost two thousand years ago.

This author's prayer is that all who read this work would be willing to look honestly at the life of any Human Being as someone the Son of God himself came into this earth to die for.

May all praise ascend to the One who has brought us forth for His good pleasure, and to His Word, which genders truth to all generations.

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*\* all Bible quotes are from the King James Version*



# The Concept

*“His eyes are deep set, beady, and spaced closely together. They are often times bloodshot. His mouth is thin lipped and snarls wryly every time he smiles, saliva dripping from the corners. His posture, slouched, conveys his real character of deceit whenever and wherever he walks. And, an air of darkness hovers over him with his every move.”*

Is that not the mental picture that many people have of Judas Iscariot? Is he not considered, by Christians, as the epitome of evil? Do we not have our own individual idea of what kind of a person we think Judas was? An idea that has been spawned from all of the stories that we have heard from others during our Christian walk.

Please, do not misunderstand. Judas Iscariot did betray Jesus of Nazareth. He did deliver the Lord of Glory into the hands of sinful men. He is the stated **“son of perdition”** in the Scriptures. (*John 17:12*) He did submit himself unto Satan. And, in doing these things he did fulfill what the Scriptures prophetically said would come to pass.

And again, this work is **NOT** a defense of him.

But, what was Judas genuinely like as a person? What really did happen to him in those final days just before, and then directly following the crucifixion of Jesus?

The subject of Judas Iscariot has come to the forefront of controversy in recent years. *The Gospel According to Judas* has been put forth, and the idea presented that Judas was instructed to betray Jesus, by Jesus himself. Of course, there is no Scriptural indication of that anywhere. However, the story that has been handed down to us by tradition is not Scripturally sound either. Do we honestly think that we are beyond the reach of Satan or any of his wicked agents? Or, is it possible, concerning the person of Judas Iscariot (and within the context of time) that there, but for the grace of God, possibly go you or I?

May we take the opportunity to examine the Scriptures and follow the course of this man Judas Iscariot and see where they lead. And may the God of all grace and peace guide us as we do, and lead us unto the truth.



# The Early Years

It has been written that the name Judas Iscariot is a corruption of *Judas of Kerioth*. And, that Kerioth was a small town a few miles south of Hebron. Hebron is a city in the southern region of Judea, and it would seem that Judas was possibly the only apostle that was not a Galilean. Judas' father's name was Simon (*John 13:2*)

Did Judas originate from a dysfunctional family? Was he an only child or did he have any brothers or sisters? What kind of child might he have been while growing up? Was he obedient to the Law of Moses? Or was his life one of rebellion from his youth? Did he spend his formative years within the town of his birth, or did he travel elsewhere? Good questions all.

It has been written that, *"The life of Judas is one of unrelieved tragedy. In fact, there is no more tragic spirit in all the world's history. Judas is the greatest failure the world has ever known. His life is a lesson which points vividly to the pitfalls of our spiritual pilgrimage."* (*The Search for the Twelve Apostles* by William Steuart McBirnie, Ph.D.)

At what point in time did Judas become *"the greatest failure the world has ever known?"* Was it pre-ordained of God from before the foundation of the world? Does God create people like Judas just to fulfill the pages of predestination? To be sure, God did know about him because of foreknowledge. However, was he ever just a *normal* Human Being? Was he simply a pawn in the eternal scheme of things? Was he declared a failure at his birth? If not, how about when he was five years old? No? How about when he became a teenager? At what precise moment in his life did he turn as black as night and as evil as Satan himself?

***"And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.***

***Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;***

***Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;***

**Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.**

**These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying..."** (*Matthew 10:1-5a*)

Our first glimpse of Judas, Scripturally speaking, comes when Jesus calls together men who have been following him for a period of time. On a mountain slope he chooses twelve men, commissions them, and sends them forth.

We will find a similar record in the gospel of Mark 3:14-19, where we shall find that all twelve were ordained for the work that Jesus would send them to do.

In Luke 6:12-16, we find that all those disciples were, at the time of this selection, named Apostles, and that the decision to choose these particular twelve was possibly a result of praying and fasting all-night, and sensitive hearing from the Holy Spirit as to whom would be part of this entourage.

Now, Jesus of Nazareth has spent the last eighteen years of his life saturating himself in the Scriptures as a regular man. He is not operating on this earth as **God**, he is operating as a Human man, with authority.

He has read the Scriptures, as we all are admonished to do. He has studied the Scriptures as a student of the Word of God. He has memorized the Scriptures that they might virtually become a part of him. He has meditated upon the Scriptures, that the Holy Spirit might bring revelation of truth.

He is knowledgeable of Psalm 41:9...

**"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up *his* heel against me."** (*Psalm 41:9*)

However, is this primary Scripture of betrayal, and the excerpt in Psalm 109:6-15 which are the only set of verses of their kind in the whole of the Old Testament, the foremost Scriptures on Jesus' mind when he chooses twelve individuals into whom he is now going to pour himself?

Some of these men are not *first-time* followers of Jesus. Upon his return from the wilderness, Jesus picked up five disciples who



witnessed his miracle of turning water into wine at a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. Those five men left off following Jesus when they all returned to Capernaum. Two of them to unstated endeavors and the other three to their fishing businesses.

After the wedding feast, Jesus ministered, for a period of time, without any disciples at all. He worked miracles and signs and wonders followed him down in Jerusalem, at the feast of Passover, and caught the attention of the religious rulers and the chief priests and the Pharisees without any disciples. (*John 3:23-25*) So, does Jesus, at this time of the selection of the twelve, know who will ultimately hand him over to his enemies?

The Psalm verse above tells us that Judas at one time was a trusted friend of Jesus, and that he and Jesus broke bread together. If, at the time of the selection of those who will closely follow him, Jesus knows that Judas is the betrayer, how will he ever be able to trust him?

What **might** have happened at the outset of this journey? Is it possible that at some point in time Simon Iscariot's son Judas, hears of a man performing miracles and walking in demonstrated authority within the region in which he lives, and purposes to find this man and *check him out*?

Is he the blackness of darkness even now, and purposely sets himself to infiltrate, seduce, deceive, and then betray this man of power? Based on Scriptural evidence, this author does not think so.

Does he have a political motive at this time for following Jesus? Possibly. Does he have an already established agenda even now? Possibly. We don't know because the Scripture does not comment on it. And, unbiblical speculation is unwise.

**“And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,**

**And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:”** (*Mark 3:14-15*)

What we do know is that Judas was one of those chosen by Jesus and that he went out with the other apostles and preached the good news of the Kingdom of God. We know also that Judas was anointed to heal sicknesses and cast out devils. He ate with all of the other apostles, he laughed with all of the other apostles, and he ministered in every aspect, just like all of the other apostles. He

observed signs and wonders that were wrought by the power of God through Jesus, and he was fully involved with every area of ministry.

That possibly being the case, then what happened? When and where did Judas begin to go astray? Could it be that when Jesus put together his ministerial team (at the time of the selection of the twelve) governmental positions were immediately established? Is it possible that Judas was, early on, installed as *the keeper of the bag*?

**“Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, which should betray him,**

**Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?**

**This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.”** (*John 12:4*)

Entrusted with handling money did Judas’ true character begin to seep out shortly after his appointment to the position of treasurer? The Scripture tells us that

**“every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.”** (*James 1:14*)

What lust within the personage of Judas was Satan able to assault with temptation, and that Judas fell prey to?

**“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”** (*1 Timothy 6:10*)

Not only does he become a thief, but his heart turns cold toward those who are less fortunate than he.

**“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”**  
(*Matthew 6:21*)

Has there never been, in all of the days gone by or in this present age, someone who might have followed, or is currently following, this same misguided path?