

LIVING GODS WILL

The Apostle

JUDAS ISCARIOT



Kiss of Judas

The Apostle **JUDAS ISCARIOT**

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Born: Kerioth, Judea
Died: 30 AD, Jerusalem, Israel
Death: Hanged himself from a tree

He was the son of **Simon**.

He was the **Treasurer** for the Disciples.

He betrayed **Jesus** for **30 silver coins**.

He **committed suicide** after Jesus was captured.

He was replaced by **Matthias** as the **12th Disciple**.

Judas Iscariot is typically remembered for one thing: **his betrayal of Jesus**. He was one of the **twelve disciples** who lived with and followed Jesus for three years. He witnessed Jesus' ministry, His teaching, and His many miracles. He was the **treasurer** for the group and used this trusted position to **steal** from their resources (**John 12:6**).

Judas was a common name in that era, and there are several other Judases mentioned in the New Testament. One of the other disciples was named Judas (**John 14:22**), and so was one of Jesus' own half-brothers (**Mark 6:3**). To differentiate, **John 6:71** and **John 13:26** refer to Christ's betrayer as "**Judas, son of Simon Iscariot**."

Scholars have several ideas about the derivation of the surname. One is that **Iscariot** refers to **Kerioth**, a region or town in Judea. The surname **Iscariot** is useful, if for no other reason, in that it leaves no doubt about which Judas is being referred to.

Here are some of the facts from key verses about Judas and his betrayal:

Money was important to Judas. As already mentioned, he was a thief, and, according to **Matthew 26:13-15**, the chief priests paid him "**thirty silver coins**" to betray the Lord.

Jesus knew from the very beginning what Judas Iscariot would do. Jesus told His disciples, "**Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!**" (**John 6:70**).

And at the Last Supper, Jesus predicted His betrayal and identified the betrayer: **"Jesus answered, 'It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.' Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon" (John 13:26).**

Jesus said that Judas Iscariot was not **"clean"**; i.e., he had **not been born again** and was not forgiven of his sins (**John 13:10–11**). In fact, Judas was empowered to do what he did by the devil himself: **"As soon as Judas took the bread [that Jesus had given him], Satan entered into him" (John 13:27).**

The other disciples had no clue that Judas Iscariot harbored treacherous thoughts. When Jesus mentioned a betrayer in their midst, the other disciples worried that it was they who would prove disloyal (**John 13:22**). No one suspected Judas.

He was a trusted member of the Twelve. Even when Jesus told Judas, **"What you are about to do, do quickly," (John 13:27)**, and Judas left the Last Supper, the others at the table simply thought Judas had been sent to buy more food or to give something to charity (**verses 28–29**).

Judas Iscariot betrayed the Lord with a **kiss**, perfectly in keeping with his brazen duplicity (**Luke 22:47–48**). After committing his atrocious act, Judas **"was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders" (Matthew 27:3).**

But we learn that remorse does not equal repentance—rather than make amends or seek forgiveness, **"he went away and hanged himself" (Matthew 27:5).**

Judas Iscariot fulfilled the prophecy of **Psalm 41:9**, **"Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me"** (cf. **John 13:18**).

Yet Judas was fully responsible for his actions. Jesus said, **"The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born" (Matthew 26:24).**

Matthew 27:6–8 reports that the chief priests took the **"blood money"** from Judas and bought a potter's field as a place for burying foreigners (thus fulfilling the prophecy of **Zechariah 11:12–13**). **Acts 1:18–19** continues the story of what happened after Judas' death and gives some additional information.

Luke reports, **"With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood."**

The additional detail we learn from Luke is that, after Judas hanged himself, his dead body fell into the very field purchased with his ill-gotten gains.

Given the fact of Judas' close proximity to Jesus during three years of ministry, it is hard to imagine how he could follow through on such a dastardly betrayal. Judas' story teaches us to guard against small, gradual failings that gain strength and power in our lives and that could open the door to more deadly influences.

His story is also a great reminder that appearances can be deceiving. Jesus taught, **"Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"** (Matthew 7:22-23).

The death of Judas Iscariot was a **suicide** committed after he was filled with remorse (but not repentance) for his betrayal of Jesus. Matthew and Luke (in the book of Acts) both mention some details of Judas's death, and reconciling the details between the two accounts has presented some difficulties.

Matthew says that Judas died by **hanging**. Here is the account in Matthew's Gospel: **"So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. The chief priests picked up the coins and said, 'It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.' So they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day"** (Matthew 27:5-8).

Luke says that Judas fell into a field and that his body ruptured. Here is the account in Acts: **"With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood"** (Acts 1:18-19).

Concerning how Judas died, here is a simple reconciliation of the facts:

Judas hanged himself in the potter's field (Matthew 27:5), and that is how he died.

Then, after his body had begun to decay and bloat, the rope broke, or the branch of the tree he was using broke, and his body fell, bursting open on the land of the potter's field (Acts 1:18-19).

Note that Luke does not say that Judas died from the fall, only that his body fell. The Acts passage presumes Judas's hanging, as a man falling down in a field does not normally result in his body bursting open.

Only decomposition and a fall from a height could cause a body to burst open. So **Matthew** mentions the actual cause of death, and **Luke** focuses more on the horror surrounding it.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

John 12: But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it.

Luke 22:3 Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve. He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd.

Matthew 27:3 Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself.

Luke 22:48 But Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"