



Week 2 ~ Jesus Predicts Judas' Betrayal

- One fateful night together...

- Jesus has just a few hours left with His disciples before His journey to the cross would begin. Whatever He chose to reveal to them would be, not just important to them, but significant for our future as well. They were heading into uncharted spiritual territory. What would Jesus choose to share with them?
- We looked last week at His first message, which came not with words, but with an incomprehensible action. Jesus humbled Himself, washed their feet, and told his followers they would need to follow His example in the future.
- Immediately following this shocking scene, they all gather around the table to share the Passover feast together. That scene is where we find ourselves today... Jesus reveals that one of them would betray Him!
- All four of the gospel writers recount this interaction between Jesus and his 12 disciples on the night before his arrest. But John's account is much different, much more personal than those of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
- John's perspective is an "insiders" look at this horrific moment when Jesus would reveal His betrayer, before the fact. The question of the hour is, "Why?"

- **The Text:** John 13:18-30 *Passion Translation*

- **John 13:18** "When I tell you these things, I don't refer to all of you, for I know the ones I've chosen *to fulfill the Scripture that says, 'The one who shared supper with Me treacherously betrays Me.'*" ¹⁹ I am telling you this now, *before it happens*, so that when the prophecy comes to pass you will be convinced that I AM.
- **Betrayal requires...** Jesus chose Judas to be one of the 12 apostles. He knew Judas, what he was like, his strengths and weaknesses. In order for betrayal to become a reality, Judas had to be close to Jesus. The closeness, friendship, and love they shared was actually what qualified Judas' actions as betrayal.
- **Betrayal reference...** The Scripture Jesus is referring to is Ps 41:9.
 - Even my best friend, the one I trusted completely, the one who shared my food, has turned against me. (Psa 41:9 NLT-SE)
 - As David was betrayed by his trusted table companion Ahithophel, who then hanged himself (2 Sam. 16:20-17:3, 23), so Judas, Jesus' close companion, betrayed Him and then hanged himself.
 - AHITHOPHEL, a-hith'-o-fel ("brother of foolishness"): The real leader of the Absalom rebellion against David. He is described as "the king's counselor," in a context connected with events some of

which are dated in the fortieth year of David (1 Chronicles 27:33, 34; compare 1 Chronicles 26:31). Concerning him and his part in the rebellion we have rather full information (2 Samuel 15:12).

- ²⁰ Then Absalom turned to Ahithophel and asked him, “What should I do next?” ²¹ Ahithophel told him, “Go and sleep with your father’s concubines, for he has left them here to look after the palace. Then all Israel will know that you have insulted your father beyond hope of reconciliation, and they will throw their support to you.” ²² So they set up a tent on the palace roof where everyone could see it, and Absalom went in and had sex with his father’s concubines. ²³ Absalom followed Ahithophel’s advice, just as David had done. For every word Ahithophel spoke seemed as wise as though it had come directly from the mouth of God. (2 Sam 16:20-23 NLT-SE)

- **Psalm 55** contains another clear prophecy of Judas and his betrayal. Imagine Jesus speaking these words:

- ¹² It is not an enemy who taunts me— I could bear that. It is not my foes who so arrogantly insult me— I could have hidden from them. ¹³ Instead, **it is you—my equal, my companion and close friend.** ¹⁴ What good fellowship we once enjoyed as we walked together to the house of God. ²⁰ As for my companion, he betrayed his friends; he broke his promises. ²¹ His words are as smooth as butter, but in his heart is war. His words are as soothing as lotion, but underneath are daggers! (Psa 55:12-14; 20-21 NLT-SE)

- **Their faith increased...** A lot was about to change for Jesus’ disciples. Jesus knew this would be hard for them to understand and accept. He told them about His betrayal **before it happened** so that they would not be discouraged, but their faith would actually increase.

- ²⁰ **Listen to this timeless truth: Whoever receives the messenger I send receives Me, and the one who receives Me receives the Father who sent Me.**”

- **Jesus sent** ~ The clear message here is that we are all sent! Jesus was sent by the Father, to reveal the love of the Father, to all mankind.
- **The disciples sent** ~ The apostles (lit., “sent ones”) were being sent by Jesus to reveal the truth of who He is and preach the coming of the kingdom of God to a lost and dying world.
- **We are sent** ~ In this sense the apostles are forerunners, showing us disciples the power of the message, the reality of the kingdom, and the hope of the destiny we have in Jesus for eternity.

- ²¹ **Then Jesus was moved deeply in His Spirit. Looking at His disciples, He announced, “I tell you the truth— one of you is about to betray Me.”**

- **The Passover meal...** Jesus had given His disciples a stunning message about humility using an unforgettable illustration as He washed their feet. Very little was said as they moved to the table to celebrate the Passover meal together.
- **The “cloud” over the meal...** The phrase “moved deeply in His Spirit,” (“troubled in spirit”) occurs also in chapters 11:33 and 12:27. The Greek word here, *tarasso*, always means **indignation** (displeasure, anger, annoyance, irritation, exasperation) with **sorrow**. In this case, Jesus is feeling deep sorrow, yet vilification of the traitor, Judas, who had already met with the Jewish leaders to set a trap for Jesus.
- When Jesus saw her (Mary) weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. (John 11:33 NLT-SE)

- “Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But this is the very reason I came! (John 12:27 NLT-SE)
- **Clearing the air...** Jesus had previously spoken of his betrayal (Matt 17:22, 20:18), but had not revealed the traitor by name...until now. He had some important things to say to his disciples and it's almost like He named Judas and sent him on his way so he could share His message in chapters 14-17 with His friends.



- ²² Eyeing each other, His disciples puzzled over which one of them could do such a thing. ²³ The disciple whom Jesus dearly loved was at the right of Him at the table and was leaning his head on Jesus. ²⁴ Peter gestured to this disciple to ask Jesus who it was He was referring to. ²⁵ Then the dearly loved disciple leaned in to Jesus' chest and whispered, “Master, who is it?”
- **A tense moment...** First, Jesus shocks and embarrasses the disciples by humbling Himself and washing their feet. Now, He tells them that one of the twelve disciples in the room would betray Him. Could this night get any more tense for these young followers?
- **John asks the question of the hour...** John was in position to ask Jesus the fateful question. Five times in this gospel the author refers to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus dearly loved.” At one end of the table is Peter, at the other Judas. Peter motions to John to ask Jesus who the traitor is. All the disciples are filled with anxiety, and Peter, the impulsive one, asked the question all the others were afraid to ask. Who was the traitor? Would Jesus actually reveal his name to them?
- ²⁶ “The one I give this piece of bread to after I’ve dipped it in the bowl,” Jesus replied. Then He dipped the piece of bread into the bowl and handed it to Judas, the locksmith, the son of Simon. ²⁷ And when Judas ate the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus looked at Judas and said, “What you are planning to do, go do it now.” ²⁸ None of those around the table realized what was happening. ²⁹ Some thought that Judas, their trusted treasurer, was being told to go buy what was needed for the Passover celebration, or perhaps go give something to the poor. ³⁰ So Judas left quickly and went out into the dark night to betray Jesus.
- **The betrayer revealed...** Quietly, Jesus leans over and whispers in John’s ear, “The one I give this piece of bread to after I’ve dipped it in the bowl.” On the table there was a dish filled with a sauce of bitter herbs traditionally served at Passover. No knives, forks, or spoons at the Middle-Eastern table, only carefully washed fingers are used. Jesus takes a piece of unleavened bread, dips it in the

sauce, and gives it to Judas. John alone realizes the drama that is unfolding. The betrayer is being revealed, right before their eyes!

- **Satan enters Judas...** A few days before this in Bethany, Judas met with the leaders of Israel and bargained for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave, about twenty to twenty-five dollars if he would betray Jesus and hand Him over to the Pharisees. Now his evil deed comes to full fruition on the eve of the crucifixion. Judas takes the bread and eats it, apparently “closing the deal,” because what happens next is astounding. Satan, the tempter who had spoken to Jesus (Luke 4:2, 13) and stalked Peter (Luke 22:31), actually enters Judas.
- **Judas takes the bread...** No one knows Jesus is revealing the traitor but John. Imagine John’s shock when Jesus looks at Judas and says, “What you are planning to do, go do it now.” As far as the others were concerned, Jesus is sending Judas out to pay for the food for Passover, or give some money to the poor. The role of group treasurer was his and this kind of request from Jesus was apparently not uncommon. John is the only one who really knows what’s happening.
- **At any time...** Judas could have chosen not to betray Jesus. Understand, Judas's choices reflected his own will. Judas was no robot. Jesus did not force an unwilling Judas to be the villain in the crucifixion. That would be inconsistent with the character of Jesus Christ. It is also inconsistent with the historical record. Although Judas's treachery fit into the plan of God, God did not design him as a treacherous man. He became a traitor to Christ by his own choice. If God was responsible for making Judas what he was, Jesus would have pitied him rather than rebuked Him.
- **Judas was no saint...** Six days earlier, the disciples were in Bethany, at the home of Lazarus. What unfolds next reveals what’s hiding in Judas’ heart:
 - ² A dinner was prepared in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. ³ Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus’ feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, ⁵ “That perfume was worth a year’s wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor.” ⁶ Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples’ money, he often stole some for himself. (John 12:2-6 NLT-SE)
- **Humility would have to guard their hearts...** Unless Jesus had in some way prepared the disciples for what was about to happen, what was about to happen could have had a disastrous affect on them. If Judas had suddenly and without warning betrayed Jesus, the disciples may have concluded that Jesus wasn't all He claimed to be; otherwise He would have known that Judas was like this, and He never would have chosen him.
- **Into the darkness...** Judas follows Jesus orders and leaves immediately. The symbolism is profound as he goes from this light-filled room in Jerusalem, into the darkness of the night. Unfortunately, he would never again walk in the light again.