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Judas Iscariot

Judas Iscariot (Hebrew: קריות איש יהודה), also known as Judas Iscariot, was one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ according to the New Testament. However, he later betrayed Jesus, and in Christianity he is called the greatest sinner, a servant of the devil, and a synonym for traitor. The word 'Iscariot' has the meaning of 'Iscariot', a place name in southern Judea, as well as 'assassin', 'fake', 'hypocrite', 'liar', and 'dagger'.

Life

Account from the Gospel of John

According to the Gospel of John, Judas Iscariot was the son of Simon Iscariot and one of the twelve apostles chosen by Jesus Christ. Judas Iscariot was a shrewd accountant, and while serving as treasurer of the apostolic group, he embezzled public funds. According to the Gospel of John, when Mary of Bethany offered expensive perfume to Jesus' feet, Judas grumbled, "Why wasn't this perfume sold for a high price and the money given to the poor?" The author attributes this to Judas's actions as a thief. He wasn't truly concerned about the poor, but merely a hypocritical attempt to conceal the thief's wishful thinking: "How wonderful it would have been if I had sold that perfume and embezzled some of the proceeds."

Then Jesus rebuked and admonished the apostles, saying, "Why do you bother this woman? She has done a good thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me (Mark 14:6-7)." But he was so enraged that he went to the Jewish chief priests and suggested that they betray Jesus to them, saying, "What will you give me if I hand him over to you?" The priests agreed and paid thirty pieces of silver, the amount then paid to a slave owner for being gored to death by an ox. From then on, Judas was watching for an opportunity to betray Jesus.

Judas's Shameless

At the Last Supper, held on Maundy Thursday, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Jesus, realizing that his time of death was approaching, quietly said to his apostles while they were eating, "Truly I tell you, one of you



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will betray me." The apostles were all grieved, and each denied that it was he. Unable to resist the apostles' urging to reveal who that person was, Jesus said, "The one who has dipped his hand in the dish with me—this is the one who will betray me." Then, dipping a piece of bread, he took it and gave it to Judas. As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into his heart.

Even after Jesus revealed his wickedness, Judas asked, "Surely not I, Master?" Jesus answered, "You yourself said so." Then he said to Judas, "What you are about to do, do quickly." The other apostles did not understand why Jesus had said this to him. Some thought that since Judas had a purse, Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the feast, or that, remembering Jesus's history of caring for the poor, he was telling him to give something to the poor. Judas took the bread, went out, and ran to the chief priests.

Betrayal

After the Last Supper, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane with the remaining eleven apostles and prayed fervently. Just as they were finishing their prayers, Judas arrived with soldiers. It was late at night, and it was dark, making it impossible to tell who Jesus was. So, as a signal, Judas approached Jesus and kissed him. Thus, Jesus was arrested.

Death

The next day, Jesus was condemned and sentenced to death by the Sanhedrin. However, since the Sanhedrin did not have the authority to carry out the death penalty, they took Jesus to the governor, Pontius Pilate. Judas, overcome by remorse and belatedly regretting his actions, went to the chief priests and elders and threw 30 pieces of silver in front of them, saying, "I have sinned by betraying an innocent man to death." Regarding his remorse, the chief priests said, "What is that to us? It is your own business." According to the Evangelist Matthew, Judas Iscariot threw the silver coins into the temple, came out, and hanged himself. The chief priests picked them up, and after consulting with disgust, they bought a plot of land to be used as a burial ground for foreigners. Thereafter, that field was called Akeldama (אקלדמא), meaning "Field of Blood."

However, the Gospel of Matthew, the Acts of the Apostles, and writings from the early church offer a completely different account. Judas of Cariot,



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belatedly repenting his actions, went to the chief priests and elders, threw thirty pieces of silver in their urn, and said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." In response to his repentance, the chief priests retorted, "What is that to us? That is your problem." The Gospel of Matthew states that Judas Cariot threw the thirty pieces of silver into the temple, came out, and hanged himself. Conversely, the Book of Acts states that Judas used the money from Jesus' betrayal to buy a field, but that as punishment for his sin, he fell to the ground, his body split open, and all his intestines spilled out. The discrepancy between the two different accounts of Judas' death in Matthew 27:1-10 and Acts 1:18 posed a serious challenge to those who supported the concept of biblical inerrancy. However, various attempts were made. They generally followed a literal interpretation, similar to that of Augustine, bishop of Hippo, who said it simply described different aspects of the incident—Judas hanging himself in the field, the rope snapping, his body falling, and his body bursting open. Others suggested that it referred to accounts from the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of Matthew.

The Church's Interpretation of Judas Iscariot

The Gospel Writers' Interpretation

Judas's evil deeds and tragic death were repeatedly cited by early church preachers and gospel writers, who often added chilling language to make Judas' death seem even more horrifying. Biblical scholars believe the evangelists' reference to Judas Iscariot was intended as a warning against the apostasy of some within the Christian community at the time. In other words, the evangelists warned their readers that apostates would face a tragic end, just like Judas Iscariot. Some progressive theologians understand the story of Judas Iscariot as a story created by the Christology of the gospel writers who understood Jesus to be the Christ anticipated in the Old Testament, based on the fact that the stories in the gospels are not written down directly from what they saw and heard about Jesus' life and teachings, but are mainly interpretations of oral traditions, that is, stories of Jesus that were passed down by word of mouth. Bishop John Shelby Spong, an actual Anglican theologian, argued for such a view in his book *Jesus for the Non-Religious* (Korea Christian Research Institute).

The Gospel of Judas



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The Gospel of Judas, a Gnostic document restored in 2006, offers a positive portrayal of Judas Iscariot, stating that he betrayed Jesus at his request and was merely faithful to Jesus' plan to save humanity through sacrifice and resurrection. This has sparked controversy. However, this interpretation is criticized as unconvincing because it contradicts the Gospel and glorifies Judas's betrayal as an act of God's redemptive plan.

Martin Luther's Interpretation

In his Table Talk, Martin Luther evaluated Judas Iscariot as a valuable member of the apostles because he initially refuted heretics. He also argued that while his performance of his duties was just and proper, he committed a sin by stealing, and that Judas's character and his duties should be considered separately.

Judas' Apology



He made a tomb for strangers. Judas, who had betrayed Jesus, saw that Jesus was condemned and was filled with remorse. He returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders and killed himself. – Judas

Esther 8:16 The Jews had glory, joy, gladness, and honor.