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Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

Matthew 26:14-16; Mark 14:10-11; Luke 22:3-6

Thursday the fourteenth of Nisan after sundown

Judas agrees to betray Jesus DIG: Was Judas simply an overzealous Jew, like the others, hoping for freedom from Rome, or much more? At what point do you think he decided to give Jesus a little “help?” Did Judas have a choice? Could Judas have resisted the Enemy of souls, or was he “born to betray?”

REFLECT: Have you ever plotted against someone else? Did you ever admit your scheme? What is your relationship like with that person now? Have you ever had someone plot against you in some way? Once you found out, how did you feel towards your betrayer(s)? Was there reconciliation? How hard is it to forgive in that situation? What did you learn? How can you help others that experience betrayal?

Three important events took place late Wednesday afternoon the thirteenth of Nisan *before* sundown and on Thursday the fourteenth of Nisan *after* sundown.

First, late Wednesday afternoon *before* sundown the most important members of the Great Sanhedrin met at **the palace of the high priest, Joseph Caiaphas**, to plot against **the life of Christ (to see link click [Ka](#) - The Plot Against Jesus).**

Secondly, on Thursday evening *after* sundown Jesus was invited to **the home of Simon**, formally a **leper**, for **dinner**. There, **Mary**, the sister of Lazarus, anointed **Him** with expensive perfume for burial. It was then that **Yeshua** rebuked **Judas** for wanting to sell the **expensive perfume made of pure nard** so **the money given to the poor** (see [Kb](#) - **Jesus Anointed at Bethany**).

And thirdly, on Thursday evening *after* sundown, after being rebuked by Jesus, **Judas** then left Bethany, walked to **the palace of Caiaphas the high priest** in Jerusalem and agreed to betray **the Meshiach**.

The key members of the Great Sanhedrin had met earlier Wednesday before sundown

looking for a way to kill **Jesus**. **On Thursday, the fourteenth of Nisan, Judas Iscariot** unexpectedly **went to the Sadducees to betray Jesus (Mark 14:10)**. When **Caiahpas** was told that **one of the Twelve**, was at **his** door and wanted to speak to **him**, **he** was confused. I am sure that at first **he** wondered, “What is **he** doing here? I wonder what **he** wants?” But then after thinking a little more about it, **he** must have said to **himself**, “Let **him** in. What harm can it cause? Let’s hear what **he** has to say.”

Judas, the practical betrayer, was about to meet **Caiaphas**, the practical religious leader, in one of the most somber moments in history. Had either been a man of good will, had either been honest, the story would have been different. **Judas** was tired of waiting for **his** money and notoriety after spending several years trudging all over Isra’el, and was determined to force **Jesus’** hand. Either **the Nazarene** would declare **Himself** to be **the Messiah** and elevate **Judas** to **his** proper place in the new government, or **He** would die. But **Caiahpas** had no such illusions. **He** just wanted **the troublemaking rabbi** dead.

And Judas went to the Sadducees and the officers of the Temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus (Luke 22:4). Under normal circumstances **Judas** would have meant little to **them**. The only reason **Caiaphas** met with **him** now was the possibility that this mean little **Judean** mercenary might be ready to deliver up **the Nazarene**. **They** were all shocked when **Judas** asked: **What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him over to you (Matthew 26:14-15a)?** Setting **their** normal arrogance aside, **they** didn’t gloat in front of **him**. There would be time for that later. **Their** immediate goal was to manipulate **Judas** into doing whatever it took to arrange **Jesus’** arrest and execution.

The heart of the godly delights in righteousness, but the heart of the godless delights in evil. Then **Judas** had made **Caiaphas** a deal **he** couldn’t refuse and **the high priest** was pleased. It would have been difficult to hide it. **The renegade rabbi** had hurt **him** in many ways, and the ways were increasingly grievous. **The Nazarene** had come from nowhere proclaiming **himself** to be a prophet, or acting like a prophet, and the multitudes had flocked to **his** words as though they believed it. **The high priest** had had much experience with others who claimed that they were sent from **God**; as a matter of fact, the City of David seemed to attract all the crazies.¹³⁶⁰ And this **Galilean** was obviously one of them. But now **they** had **him**. Checkmate.

Caiaphas asked **Judas** where **the criminal** was, and **the betrayer** told **the high priest** the exact house. **Caiaphas** nodded with some surprise because **he** knew the father of **Mark** as a rich and substantial citizen of **Jerusalem** with considerable influence in the Temple.

One never knew where to look for the talmidim of this **maverick rabbi**.

The acting **high priest** told **Judas** to wait in the courtyard and, in a moment, **the money-keeper** was alone. **Caiaphas** lifted the hem of **his** costly robe and hurried across the courtyard of **their** conjoined estates to tell **his** father-in-law **Annas** the good news. If **Judas** noted the happiness on the face of **the high priest**, **he** must have thought at once the **he** had sold **Jesus** too cheaply. Had **he only** realized how important **the Lord** was to the socially elite sect of **the Sadducees**, **he** might have asked for much more.¹³⁶¹

And they were delighted because **they** had found **their dupe**, and **agreed to give him money (Luke 22:5)**. This broke **the elders'** own laws regulating trials. When **Jesus** was found guilty of blasphemy, there were twenty-one rules of the Sanhedrin regarding trials (see [Lh - The Laws of the Great Sanhedrin Regarding Trials](#)) and in **their** zeal to kill **Him** **they** broke every one of them. **Rule number 1 said that there was to be no arrest by religious authorities that was affected by a bribe.**



Nevertheless, **they counted out for Judas thirty pieces of silver** right before **his** eyes (**Matthew 26:15b**). **They** told **Judas** to cup both hands while **they** counted **the silver**. The small coins clinked, one on top of the other into **his** sweaty palms. **His** head nodded with the count of **the priest** until the number reached **thirty**. Then, with deep thanks and proper bows of respect, **the betrayer** thrust the money into a bag and put it inside **his** outer cloak. **The traitor** is paid off in advance. **Thirty pieces of silver** was not an accidental price. It was a price of contempt. It said you were worth no more than a dead slave (**Exodus 21:32**). However **Zechariah 11:11-12** says that one day **God Himself** would be sold for the price of a dead slave. In a calculated, deliberate manner, **He** had sold **the Master** who promised **him** everlasting life.

Judas had lost the opportunity to obtain money through the sale of the pure **nard** that Mary used to **prepare Jesus for burial**. Now **he** gladly accepted payment from the Sanhedrin for participating in **their** plot to kill **Jesus**. **Judas** had lived a meager existence as a talmid for several years, rarely having more than a few extra coins in **his** purse, and very little in the way of luxury. But **thirty pieces of silver** was the equivalent of four month's wages. Along with **his** desire to be famous when the messianic Kingdom was ushered in once **Christ** overthrew the Romans, **he** could not resist the money. After all, getting paid to force **Jesus'** hand couldn't be a bad deal for **him** - could it?

The money-keeper was convinced that one of two things would happen: **Jesus** would be arrested and then declare **Himself** to **the Messiah**. If **the Master** was truly **the Anointed One**, then **He** would have not problem saving **Himself** from **Caiaphas** and the Sanhedrin.

However, if **Yeshua** was not **the Messiah**, **He** would die.

Either way, **Judas'** life would be spared. **He** couldn't lose . . . could **he**?

The **pieces of silver** came from the Temple treasury, which was for the purpose of purchasing sacrifices for sin. Little did **they** realize that is exactly what **they** did. **They** purchased the death of **Yeshua ha-Meshiach**, the ultimate sin offering.

They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money (Mark 14:11a). The word **delighted** is *chairo*, and more expressive of *an inward feeling of joy or delight*. In other words, **they were** more **delighted** than **they** cared to show. **So Judas watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over (Mark 14:11b)**. **Judas** needed to do three things. First, **he** needed to show where **the Lord** could be arrested away from the masses of people. Secondly, under Roman law a cohort could not be released to make an arrest unless someone first appeared before the procurator accusing **Jesus** of a crime punishable under Roman law. Thirdly, at the Roman trial **he** would be needed to serve as the prosecuting witness. **Judas** would not be needed for the Jewish trial, but **he** would be desperately needed for the Roman trial because the Romans had taken away the Jewish right to impose the death penalty by stoning.

Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot (or the man from the town of K'riot), one of the Twelve (Luke 22:3). This was **his** choice because **his** betrayal would have been impossible if **he** had not willingly submitted **himself** to **the devil**. **James** tells us: **Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:7)**. However, **Judas** did not **resist**.

So Judas consented, and from then on the traitorous talmid watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present (Matthew 26:16; Mark 14:11b; Luke 22:6). Judas was a zealous Jew, like the others, hoping that the Messianic Kingdom would be established during their lifetime. But when it became clear that it would not happen that way, **he** gave up and was self-deceived (with **the Adversary's** assistance) to the point of betraying **his** former **Rabbi**.¹³⁶²

Jesus controlled **His** own destiny. **The Sanhedrin's** plan was to wait until the Passover was over and all the pilgrims had gone home to make their move. But when **Yeshua** identified **Judas** as **the betrayer**, **He** forced **their** hand. **They** had to act on the very night that **they** didn't want to act. The trial was confused and disorganized because **they** never intended to bring **Him** to trial on the Passover. The end of **a traitor** is like the end of a star - the result is always seen long after the event has taken place.¹³⁶³ And so it was with **Judas**.

The missing apostle walked the two miles back to Bethany in the moonlight. Robbers might be lurking on the roads. **He** wondered how **he** would hide such a large and noisy reward. "But it will all work out," **he** thought to **himself**. For **Judas** truly believed that **he** was smarter than **his** companions and deserved a reward. After all, **he** had sacrificed so much. If **Jesus** really was **God** that would soon be made known.¹³⁶⁴