

Judas Iscariot is one of the most controversial characters in the Bible. He was one of the original twelve chosen apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The majority of Bible scholars believe that Judas Iscariot was not a saved person. They teach that he is in hell today, burning in fire.

According to the school of Calvinism, Judas was a false professor. In other words, he made a profession of salvation but never really possessed it. He never genuinely believed enough in Christ to be saved. He was playing games. Yet, the Calvinists will never tell you how much you have to believe in order to become a Christian. I guess that if you believe in your heart, and not only in the head, you are saved. Some say that a person can be twelve inches away from becoming a Christian. The Calvinist teaches that you are saved if you believe with your heart. If your life is changed, if you are a good Christian and don't sin too much, then only can you know for sure about your salvation into eternity. If you sin much, then maybe you never really meant it. Calvinism is such a joke! It is very unfortunate that many dispensationalists have adopted the fifth point of Calvinism in order to preserve eternal security from being a license to sin. They may mean well, but it brings great reproach to the Finished Work of Jesus Christ.

In any case, Calvinism is not in the Bible. It is a tradition of men, a cunningly devised fable. You will not hear it in this church!

There are basically only two major schools of theology today. One is Calvinism and the other Arminianism. The Arminians teach that Judas was really saved but he lost his salvation because he willfully became an apostate and committed suicide. He did not persevere to the end. Just as the Calvinists, the Arminians believe that Judas is in hell today. We at Berean Bible Church are not Arminians, either. Yet, we must give the Arminians due credit. At least they take the warning passages of the Bible seriously, unlike the Calvinists, who just write them off to the unsaved or those they classify as unregenerate.

This morning we'll see what the Scriptures have to say about this. I hope this message will provoke us all to think beyond tradition.

JUDAS ISCARIOT WAS A DISCIPLE

John 12:4

Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot??

To be a disciple of Christ you must be saved. A disciple is called out from among the saved people. Not everyone that is saved is a disciple. It is absolutely conditional. A disciple is learning to live his life through faith by continually hearing the Word of God (Rom.10:17). In other words, he has his eyes on the future reward in the next age, the millennial age. Therefore, he is esteeming "things hoped for" and "things not seen" which are the things recorded in the Scriptures and which God is preparing to bring down from heaven to this earth in very near future (1 Cor. 2:9-10; Heb.11:16). Discipleship has to do with submitting to water baptism and being taught the commands of Jesus Christ (Mat. 28:19-20). A disciple is "growing in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ," in 2 Peter 3:18. He continues in the words of Christ and applies the truth in his lifestyle and that truth sets him free from the power of sin.

John 8:31-32

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, **If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed**; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

A disciple has a hunger to obey the commandments of Jesus Christ. His level of commitment is higher than that of a normal Christian who attends church only on Sundays. Those disciples of Christ who "continue in the faith" and do not quit with

Acts 14:22

Confirming the souls of **the disciples**, and exhorting them **to continue in the faith**, and that we must through much tribulation **enter into the kingdom of God**.

Please listen this morning! Judas Iscariot was a disciple! That is what the Bible says

DISCIPLESHIP IS CONDITIONED ON OBEDIENCE

Luke 14:26-27

26 If any [saved] man come to me, and **hate not his father**, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he **cannot be my disciple**. 27 And **whosoever doth not bear his cross**, and come after me, **cannot be my disciple**.

Some people like to use this passage to show how one can get saved. That is ridiculous! Rather, Jesus was speaking to His disciples. He had placed conditions on discipleship. Therefore, this is not about initial salvation. To be a disciple one must spend time with the Lord. Discipleship will cost you your time, your own desires, your own pursuits, and it might even cost you your family relationships. A disciple must deny himself and be willing to say, "not my will be done, but thy will be done, Lord."

The word "**hate**,"

which Jesus used in Luke 14:26, is a term that means preference. It doesn't mean that we hate our family with bitter animosity, but rather, it means that we place our allegiance to Christ and His will over all our close family relationships. He has the first place in our lives. That is being a disciple. Judas was a disciple. He obeyed this passage. He was a follower of Jesus Christ. Therefore, I believe, he was a saved man. He was a Jew that believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He also believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Jewish Messiah

Let's not forget that to get saved today does not cost us anything!

ONLY BELIEVE TO BE SAVED

Acts 16:30-31

30 "Sirs, **what must I do to be saved**?"

31 And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and **thou shalt be saved**, and thy house.

I remember hearing one man say: "This is the only place in the Bible where the word 'saved' is in the question as well as in the answer." That is so true. You can know that you are saved. It is not something we hope for, rather, it is an absolute assurance which is based completely on the Finished Work of Christ on the cross (John 19:30). It is not based on who I am or what I have done or even what I will do in the future. It is entirely based outside of me. It is objective and totally based on the work Jesus finished on the cross on our behalf. You cannot add to it or take away from it. After the word "believe" there is nothing to be added. Only believe!

Something else that is usually missed concerning the life of Judas in that he was not only was he a disciple of Jesus Christ, but he was also chosen by the Lord, out of all His disciples, to fulfill a unique ministry as one of the twelve apostles.

JUDAS WAS ONE OF THE TWELVE

Luke 6:13-16

13 And when it was day, he called unto him **his disciples**: and of them **he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles** ; 14 Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, 15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, 16 And Judas the brother of James, and **Judas Iscariot**, which also was the traitor.

John 6:71

He spake of **Judas Iscariot** the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, **being one of the twelve.**

The ministry of the twelve apostles was unique and different from our ministry today. How? They were taught directly by Jesus Christ and they followed Him around the land of Israel. They were direct eye witnesses of His earthly ministry. Also, in 2 Corinthians 12:12, they were given special power, gifts, and authority to perform signs, wonders, and miracles in order to give them credibility that God was with them, and that Jesus was truly the Christ. Judas was part of this elect group of men.

Peter said, in **Acts 1:17**,

"For **he was numbered with us** and had obtained part of this ministry."

Keep in mind, that in the portion of Scripture, where the Lord Jesus Christ chose His twelve apostles, there is nothing at all that would lead us to believe that Judas was not a true disciple, but rather some kind of false professor of faith. The fact that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John designated Judas as the betrayer in their accounts of the choosing of the twelve was not in any way meant to give insight into the spiritual condition of Judas. It was simply the authors means of distinguishing him from Judas, the brother of James, and also to remind us that he was one of the twelve chosen apostles! We need to be reminded of that important point! There is no doubt that Judas was one of the twelve which I believe is strong and very clear evidence that he was a saved man.

I think it is very significant that the Lord Jesus Christ called Judas His friend.

JESUS CHRIST CALLED JUDAS HIS FRIEND

Matthew 26:50

And Jesus said unto **him**(Judas), **Friend**, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him

One writer I found, his name is Robert Shank, in his book "Life In The Son," said this: ?

It is unthinkable?that Jesus, who so loathed the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, could ever have counted as His ?own familiar friend? one whom He knew to be false.?

In the Old Testament Psalms, we have a prophesy about Judas. Actually, it is a double reference. It also refers to Aithophel who was one of King David's closest counselors in his kingdom. He ended up betraying David, though he was his friend.

JUDAS WAS THE LORD'S OWN FAMILIAR FRIEND

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.

The Lord quoted this Psalm in **John 13:18**as being fulfilled through Judas:

John 13:18

To eat bread with the King was an honor and privilege that was only given to those who were very close to him.

I also believe that Psalm 55 is a prophesy about Judas.

JUDAS WAS NOTTHE LORD'S ENEMY

Psalm 55:12-14

12 For **it was not an enemy that reproached me**

; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

13 But it was thou, a man **mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.**

14 **We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.**

The twelve apostles had a close relationship with the Lord.

It was a more intimate fellowship than what all the multitudes that followed Jesus had with Him.

Jesus ministered to the multitudes, but He taught and showed things to the twelve that the multitudes did not see or hear.

The point I wanted to make about the above two passages is that Judas was very close to the Lord.

I do not believe the Lord would have allowed someone who was not saved to be so close to Him. He surely does not allow that today. No one that is unsaved can be close to the Lord.

JUDAS CAST OUT DEVILS

Matthew 10:1-4

1 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.

2 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;

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

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

This is very important. I want to prove, in spite of traditional teaching, that Judas was not an unsaved man. He cast out devils!

There are people today that believe they should follow the apostles' ministry by casting out devils. Yet, there is no command to do this or any formal instruction in the Epistles on how to do this. Let me make one thing clear, we are never to talk with demons. Rather, we are to go directly to the Sovereign God of the Bible and address Him. We talk to God, not to demons. The people who are involved in casting out demons in the churches today place their experience above the Scriptures. They have stories after stories after stories. And if someone gives you a personal experience as his authority, you cannot debate it. By the way, the Lord gave us a warning, in Matthew 7:22-23, about being involved in casting out demons. Unfortunately, most people believe that this warning is addressed to unsaved people, which is merely an excuse to avoid accountability before God.

The Lord gave Judas, along with the other apostles, power over demons, and a supernatural ability to heal all manner of sickness and disease, and even the power to raise the dead. This was supernatural and miraculous. The signs and wonders that the Lord Jesus did in His ministry and that His apostles did were never questioned as being counterfeit or false. Even the Lord's enemies never questioned His miracles as if they were gimmicks and not real.

I think this is very significant. Even when Jesus announced in the upper room that one of the twelve should betray Him, all the apostles were filled with apprehension and were in doubt as to the identity of the traitor.

Instead of turning their eyes of accusation toward Judas, the Bible says, ?

they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing,?in Luke 22:23.

Nothing in the ministry of Judas, as a chosen apostle, had distinguished him in any way from the other eleven. Nothing at all is said in Scripture that Judas failed to function in the exercise of the supernatural powers given to the apostles.

If Judas was unsaved, then Jesus Christ gave an unsaved person the very abilities, which prove that the apostles were Christ's messengers. Furthermore, if Judas was unsaved and owned by Satan, then how did he cast out devils?

SATAN CANNOT CAST OUT SATAN

When Jesus was accused of casting out devils by devils, He replied by saying:

Matthew 12:26

And if **Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself**; how shall then his kingdom stand?

This is a rhetorical question. Satan's kingdom will not stand if Satan casts out Satan! The point is that Judas could not cast out devils if he was under the ownership of Satan. It is impossible for Jesus or Judas to cast out devils by devils.

JUDAS UNDERSTOOD THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM

Mark 4:10-11

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with **the twelve** asked of him the parable. 11 And he [Jesus] said unto them,

Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables:

This is very important to understand. Jesus opened the twelve apostles' eyes to see the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. Remember, parables are called dark sayings, in Psalm 78:2. Therefore, parables are not given in order to teach us how to get saved. God does not hide that message in a mystery or a dark saying. The common salvation or initial salvation is easy and can be clearly understood by anyone. The parables are for those who are already saved. They provoke questions in the hearts of disciples so they will search and go deeper into the Word of God. They are also used to veil certain truths from those who have rejected the previous teaching concerning Christ, the Son of God.

The mysteries of the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven are teachings that are in reference to a heavenly inheritance in the coming age when Christ comes a second time to rule and reign over this earth as King in great power and glory. Revelation 20:4-6 tells us that the the age to come will last a thousand years. By "heavenly" I mean the kingdom inheritance which God has prepared for them that love Him. In the very near future it will come down out of heaven to this earth in all of its glory and splendor (Heb. 11:16; 13:14; Rev.21:2). The heavenly inheritance does not stay somewhere up in heaven. It comes down to this earth in the coming age. Jesus made it very clear in Matthew 7:21 that not everyone will enter into the kingdom of heaven. This is what we should be seeking first in our priorities in the Christian life (Mat.6:33). T

some. However, the Lord has given insight and illumination into this mystery to many children of God by His grace and mercy (Eph.1:18). Judas understood this truth!

He had this deeper knowledge, which was not revealed by flesh or blood but by the Father which is in heaven (Mat.16:15-17). In Daniel 2:22, God reveals the deep and secret things.

JUDAS SAW AND HEARD

Matthew 13:16-17

16 Jesus said, "But blessed are your [the twelve] eyes, for **they see**: and your ears, for **they hear**.
17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired **to see those things which ye see**, and have not seen them; and **to hear those things which ye hear**, and have not heard them.?"

Remember, Judas saw the unique earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. He was right there when Jesus raised the dead son of the widow of Nain, in Luke 7. He saw Christ feed the 5,000 with five barley loaves and two small fish.

He saw Jesus defy all the laws of nature by walking on water. He also heard the deep teachings of Jesus Christ. As one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ, he had MORE LIGHT given to him than any other person that has ever lived. And with more light comes more accountability and greater judgment. The apostles were walking with God in the flesh and the light they had been given was extremely BRIGHT!

CHRIST BROUGHT A HIGHER ACCOUNTABILITY

Matthew 12:41

Jesus said, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with **this generation** [the generation that witnessed the earthly ministry of Christ], and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, **a greater** [Jesus Christ] than Jonah is here [and there was no repentance].?"

The point I really want to make here is that when Jesus appeared on the earth among men He brought them a higher accountability. He was the final revelation which is greater than all the prophets put together (Hebrew 1:1-2). The generation of Jews, to whom He came, was highly accountable.

Jesus Christ came to the Jews preaching the message of the Kingdom (Matthew 4:17). It was a restricted message, according to Matthew 10:5-6.

Matthew 10:5-7

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not**
6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And as ye go, preach, saying, **The kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

Therefore, the kingdom message was not a message of getting saved, but instead, it was a message for the chosen Jews of that generation unto whom Jesus came. His message was conditioned on repentance and water baptism - a change of living. That is the reason the Bible says that He came to His own (John 1:11) and that He was a minister of circumcision, in Romans 15:8. His message was for the already saved of the house of Israel, God's people. If that is not understood, then confusion in the Gospels will abound.

It was Israel that had the true God.

Acts 13:17

The God of this people of Israel

arm brought he them out of it.

I really want you to understand that the generation to whom Christ came was made highly accountable.

Remember what Jesus said to his apostles, including Judas:

Matthew 13:16-17

"blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*."

MUCH IS GIVEN, MUCH IS REQUIRED

Luke 12:47-48

47 And **that servant**, which **knew his lord's will**

, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with **many stripes**

. 48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with **few stripes**. For unto

whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and

to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

Notice that Jesus is talking about **that servant**. He is the same servant who was mentioned in verse 43.

In that verse, he was blessed for being faithful, but if that same servant would turn away from the truth, from knowing his lord's will, he would be in trouble.

We are talking about accountability of a servant. The penalty will be greater if one falls away from knowing his Lord's will, from preparing himself, or from doing according to the will of the Lord.

If you are given much, just as Judas was, there is going to be much required from you by the Lord!

SOMETIMES IT IS BETTER NOT TO KNOW

If the Lord grants you understanding of His truth and you fall away or turn from that truth, it would have been better had you not known it at all. This is a very sad thing to witness. I personally know of only one person that has ever done this. In fact, he is a pastor. It will not be good for him on the day of resurrection! We can know this for a fact because of what the Scriptures teach concerning people like him. There is a resurrection of damnation, in John 5:29. It would have been better for him not to know the truth and then turn from it, and even teach against it.

2 Peter 2:21

For it had been better for them **not to have known** the way of righteousness, than, after **they have known it, to turn from** the holy commandment delivered unto them.

The book of second Peter was not written to the Mormons or the Jehovah Witnesses. It was written to people who had known the way of righteousness.

This means that they had come into the knowledge of the truth, but had turned away from it!

The only one who can do that is a saved man! It would have been better for them not to have known the truth. Why? Because they are going to be judged according to the truth they had. There will be **no mercy**

for them at the Judgment Seat of Christ. They can only expect the terror of the Lord. Hebrew 10:31 is a trustworthy saying:

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Someone told me recently that the [outer darkness](#)

, which is mentioned in three parables in the Gospel of Matthew, is addressing unsaved Jews. He also said that the outer darkness is never mentioned in the Epistles.

Therefore, it is not something Christians have to fear during the millennial Kingdom.

Well, he hasn't read 2 Peter 2:17.

2 Peter 2:17

These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever [**"the darkness to the age,"** *Young's translation*].

The darkness mentioned by Peter is not forever and ever but it is for the age to come. Peter is not talking to the Jews in the Tribulation period. Rather, he is talking to Christians who apostatize through false teaching. It is amazing what people will do to avoid and escape accountability! They plainly twist the Scriptures to their own destruction, according to 2 Peter 3:16.

JUDAS WAS A TRAITOR

Luke 6:16

And Judas the brother of James, and **Judas Iscariot**, which also was **the traitor**.

The word "**traitor**"

refers to a person who violates or goes against that which has been trusted to him. A traitor commits treason. Judas committed treason against the Lord by siding with the enemy. He knew the truth yet he chose to go against it. Judas was trusted with a unique ministry and he had a unique choice. He departed or fell from that ministry.

Did you know that in the last days there will be more traitors?

TRAITORS IN THE LAST DAYS

2 Timothy 3:1-2, 4

This know also, that **in the last days** perilous times shall come.² For men shall be... 4 **Traitors**, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

The word "**traitor**" is also associated with apostasy

, which means "to stand away from." It is used in the New Testament for divorcement. That means that one has to be married in order to be divorced. The same is true with apostasy. Apostasy is not for the unsaved. A person has to be in the faith before he can walk away from it. Yes, Christian people can and do apostatize!

APOSTASY IN THE LATTER TIMES

1 Timothy 4:1

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that **in the latter times some shall depart from** [to stand away from]**the faith** [departing from the living God], giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

The faith is defined in Hebrews 11:1. It is in reference to "things hoped for" and "things not seen."

Those things have to do with the future. What are those things in the future? They are rewards: an inheritance, in Hebrews 11:8; a heavenly city, in Hebrews 11:10; and a better resurrection, in Hebrews 11:35. God is a rewarder! (Heb.11:6)

There will be future accountability for how we as Christians live in this age of temptation, especially after we have understood the truth. If we continually believe on these things, we please God!

Unfortunately, some Christians will stand away from THE FAITH in the last days for example, they shall depart from living by faith for the love of money, materialism, or ungodly relationships, and they will put their hope in things which are seen.

They will stop pleasing God. If you depart from faith, you stop pleasing God and He shall be ashamed to be called "your God," in Heb.11:16. Remember what Jesus said in Luke 18:8:

"When the son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" I am saying all this because Judas departed from the faith. The warnings for apostasy are for Christians, not the unsaved. The unsaved have nothing from where to apostatize.

One of the things that I think could have contributed to Judas falling away from the faith was the martyrdom of John the Baptist. Think about it. That event occurred shortly before Jesus made the statement that "one of you is a devil," in John 6. Judas may have reasoned that martyrdom was not the sort of thing that should be happening to the friends of the true Messiah, the King of Israel.

Remember, the suffering of the Messiah was something that caused many in Israel to stumble.

The cross was an offense to many Jews (1Cor.1:23).

Jesus, a man of sorrows who was rejected and despised of men, did not fit the concept of the Messiah that many in Israel had come to understand. Most likely, Judas concluded that his earlier impressions of Jesus had not been correct at all.

The preaching of the cross, which is in reference to suffering now in this age, became an obstacle to Judas.

Departing from the faith opened his soul to selfishness and self-gain.

He continued with Jesus only for some personal advantage, which would later show up in his betrayal of Christ for a few silver coins.

Apostasy, falling away from the faith that you once lived and walked in, is a real possibility even for the chosen apostles!

When **"many"** of Jesus Christ's disciples **"went back and walked with Him no more,"**

in John 6:66, please remember the probing question that Jesus asked His apostles: **"Will ye also go away?"**

The danger of defecting was real and not hypothetical for the twelve!

When Jesus said to the apostles: **"Have I not chosen you twelve? Yet one of you is a devil,"**

He was actually saying to the apostles, that they should not be too confident.

Even though He had chosen them, they were not immune to turning back from following Him!

In fact, He was saying that one of them was already a devil!

This happened among the twelve!

We, as God's children, need to fear the real danger of apostasy. We need

"to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear," in 1Peter 1:17. Why? It is because election is not sure!

That is why Peter said to us, his brethren,

2Peter 1:10-11 "brethren, **give diligence to make your calling and election sure:** for if ye do these things, **ye shall never fall:** For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting **the age-lasting kingdom** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The "calling and election" which we must make sure of and not fall away from is unto the coming millennial kingdom reign.

THE WARNING AGAINST APOSTASY IS FOR THE SAVED

Hebrews 3:12-13

12 Take heed, **brethren**, lest there be in any of you an **evil heart of unbelief**, in **departing from the living God**
. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through **the deceitfulness of sin**.

When we depart from the faith, we depart from the living God and we trust the arm of the flesh, in Jeremiah 17:5. For that reason, we need to be encouraged DAILY to stay in the race and not quit.

It is possible for all of us to believe a lie and not take sin seriously. Notice the last four words of Hebrews 3:13: **the deceitfulness of sin**. Sin is deceitful. It leads Christians to develop an evil heart of unbelief, as it did with Judas.

Then, how do we keep from being deceived by sin and from developing an evil heart of unbelief?

1. Do not play with your weakness. Flee it!
2. Keep short accounts - confess your sin in honesty before God and do not live in an unbonifide guilt.
3. Pray always and you will not faint (Lk. 18:1).
4. Stay in the Word (Eph. 6:17).
5. Fellowship with the saints (Heb. 10:25).
6. Keep witnessing. Do the work of an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5).
7. Have a ministry to others ? do not be occupied with self.
8. Give thanks in everything, understanding that you deserve nothing (1 Thes.5:17).
9. Do not get offended (Ps. 119:165).

In John 12:6, we learn something about Judas' character.

JUDAS WAS A THIEF

John 12:6

This he [Judas] said, **not that he cared for the poor**; but because **he was a thief**, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

The above verse reveals that Judas was not living by faith. Someone that has to practice stealing cannot live by faith, he is not trusting the Lord to provide for them. Judas was appointed the treasurer over the finances of Christ's ministry; he had the bag. However, he was taking money out of the bag for himself. That is called embezzlement. Stealing is self-seeking and self-gain.

JUDAS BETRAYED HIS LORD FOR SELF-GAIN

Matthew 26:14-16

14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, 15 And said *unto them*, **What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?** And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. 16 And from that time **he sought opportunity to betray him**.

The word betray means to deliver someone over to the enemy, someone who trusted in you.

Yet, you cannot betray anyone unless you are a trusted friend of that person.

A betrayer is one who was in with the group, but has now gone against it by personal choice due to self-gain.

TO COVET AFTER MONEY REVEALS LACK OF FAITH

1 Timothy 6:9-10

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 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.

Have you ever asked yourself how loving money could be the root of all evil? When people love money, they are willing to do just about anything. Judas was willing to betray the Son of God, Jesus Christ, after all that his eyes had seen. THE LOVE OF MONEY is behind the sins of pornography, drugs, prostitution, gambling, child exploitation, and government corruption. It can stop you from following Christ.

JESUS CALLED JUDAS A DEVIL

John 6:70,71

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and **one of you is a devil**? 71 **He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon**: for **he it was that should betray him**, being **one of the twelve**.

I know what you are thinking. Judas must have been unsaved since Jesus called him a devil. The Lord would never call a saved person a devil, would He? How about Peter? Do you believe he was unsaved? Look what Jesus called him.

JESUS ALSO CALLED PETER SATAN

Matthew 16:23

But he [Jesus] turned, and said unto **Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan**: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Peter was a saved man but he was manifesting the Devil's nature. You see, sin is never a manifestation of God. When a Christian sins, he is manifesting the character of the Devil, not the character of God. The Devil is the source of sin because he sinned from the beginning.

SIN MANIFESTS THE DEVIL

1 John 3:8

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.

Judas was living in the sin of greed. When we practice sin without confession, we open ourselves up to another kingdom. Why? Because we are no longer walking in the light as He is in the light. Humility would confess sin but pride continues in it. When I am proud, I refuse correction and I give Satan an advantage over my soul.

THE DEVIL TOOK ADVANTAGE OF JUDAS

Luke 22:3-6

Then **entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot**, being of the number of the twelve.

What does it mean that Satan entered Judas? I don't believe it means demon possession. Rather, let's compare it with another Gospel account and it'll become clearer to us. Let's look at what John says in his Gospel.

John 13:2

And supper being ended, **the devil** having now **put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son**, to betray him;

The Devil put thoughts into the heart of Judas. That is what is meant by the words "Satan entered into him." Satan entered into Judas through wrong thinking. Therefore, we are told in 2 Corinthians 10:5 "to cast down vain imaginations and high things that exalt themselves over the knowledge of God and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Judas did not do this, and hence gave a place for the Devil to take advantage of him.

DON'T GIVE PLACE TO THE DEVIL

Ephesians 4:27

Neither give place to the devil.

Through not dealing with his sin, Judas gave an area over to Satan.

JUDAS REPENTED

Matthew 27:3-4

3 Then **Judas**, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, **repented himself**, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 Saying, **I have sinned** in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

A truth, which is not mentioned much when Judas' name is brought up, is that he did repent when he saw the Lord Jesus condemned. Now, one could debate whether or not this was true repentance. Let's look at one type of repentance mentioned in 2 Corinthians 7:10 "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." I think Judas' repentance was genuine. He understood what he had done. Nevertheless, his repentance did not lead to bearing any good fruit.

JUDAS KILLED HIMSELF

Matthew 27:5

And he [Judas] cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and **hanged himself**.

Judas committed suicide, which is self-murder. I also believe that King Saul, in his backslidden state, committed suicide. We can see that in 1 Samuel 31:4 - "Saul took a sword and fell on it... ."

Do not think it to be reality that saved people could not commit suicide, because they can. A saved person is capable of any sin, just like an unsaved person. That is why there are so many warnings in the Scriptures addressing the behavior of saved people. In fact, I personally know two people who were disciples following Christ yet they backslid so far away from the Lord that they ended up killing themselves.

I believe that Judas committed suicide the same way that King Saul did, by falling on a sword. That would explain the account of Judas's death in Acts 1:18.

Acts 1:18

Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

MURDERERS DO NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM

Galatians 5:19-21

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*?

21 Envyings, **murders**, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things **shall not inherit the kingdom of God** [the Millennium, Rev. 20:6].

If you are a Christian and you commit self-murder, you shall not inherit the coming Millennial Kingdom of God. Murderers do not inherit the Kingdom plain and simple. To inherit the Kingdom of God is speaking of ruling and reigning with Jesus Christ in His future government. The inheritance is a reward in Colossians 3:24, and we get it at the end of this age, according to Matthew 19:29. You will lose the Kingdom of God for 1,000 years if you kill yourself.

SUICIDE: THE ULTIMATE LOVE OF SELF

John 12:25

He that loveth his life [soul] shall [during Millennial age] **lose it** [*apollumi*? to perish from, ruin, or to suffer loss]; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto **life in the coming age** [a life of ruling and reigning with Christ]

Suicide is the ultimate act of self-love and selfishness. It is telling God that one has a right to take his own life and leave the mess behind for others to clean up. Life is a gift from God, so to take it in one's own hands, in order to end it, is a reproach to God. Also, suicide does not mean that one hates himself, like all the psychologists would want us to believe. Rather, it is loving one's soul in this life to the greatest degree!

Those that love their soul now, in this present world of sin and Satan, shall lose it in the kingdom age when Christ brings to this world righteousness and peace. They will perish from a life of joy and honor and end up in a place where they will not want to be for a 1,000 years. This is why Jesus Christ called Judas the son of perdition.

JUDAS: THE SON OF PERDITION

John 17:12

While I was with them in the world, I kept **them** [the twelve apostles] in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is **lost** [*apollumi*? to perish from, ruin or to suffer loss], but **the son of perdition** [*apoleia*? perishing]; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

The word "son" speaks of a mature son, one who has grown up in maturity in time. That is significant. But what does that mean? It means that Judas was titled "**the son of perdition**" because he matured in perishing!

In type, the children of Israel, who came out of Egypt, perished in the wilderness because of unbelief (1Cor.10:9-10; Heb.3:17-19; Jude 5). They did not enter in the blessings of Canaan. The land of Canaan was the inheritance in Psalm 105:11. To perish means to be cut off from one's inheritance. Perishing has to do with the loss of one's soul-life during the Millennial Kingdom (Mt.16:24-7:2; Mark 8:34). To perish in the world to come means to be a castaway from the reward of honor, glory, and reigning with the Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor.9:27).

Judas developed fully over time. He matured in suffering the greatest loss a child of God could ever dream of facing. He fell away from a greater light than anyone could ever fall from!

hat others did not see and hear. He was an apostle chosen personally by Jesus Christ. He was highly accountable to the great light to which he was exposed. Again, he fell away from the greatest light a disciple could ever fall from. What did he lose? He lost his throne in the coming Kingdom!

THE TWELVE SHALL SIT ON TWELVE THRONES

Matthew 19:28

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you [the twelve apostles], That **ye which have followed me**, in **the regeneration**[the millennial kingdom age] when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of **his glory**, ye also shall sit upon **twelve thrones**, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

The twelve apostles were appointed to sit on thrones during the coming kingdom age. Judas lost his place in the coming kingdom age. He was disqualified from sitting on a throne as a ruler and judge when Jesus comes to sit on His throne of glory. Therefore, Judas needed to be replaced by another apostle who was chosen in Acts 1. His position was given to another. It is interesting, when the Apostle James was martyred in Acts 12, they did not replace him with another because He died in faith.

THEY CHOSE ANOTHER APOSTLE

Acts 1:26

And they gave forth their lots; and **the lot fell upon Matthias**; and **he was numbered with the eleven apostles**.

They cast lots in order to choose the next apostle. Matthias was now numbered among the twelve and he replaced Judas. Don't forget that God is the One who makes the choice in election, not man.

JUDAS WENT TO HIS OWN PLACE

Acts 1:25

That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which **Judas by transgression fell** [turned aside], **that he might go to his own place**.

The statement that Judas "fell" or better translated, "turned aside" from his ministry and apostleship is an assertion that, by a specific action, he disqualified himself. This, without any doubt, shows us that he previously was qualified!

I believe that the Scriptures teach us that Judas' own place was the potter's field.

THE POTTERS FIELD

Matthew 27:7,8,10

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them **the potter's field**, to bury **strangers** in. 8 Wherefore that field was called, **The field of blood**, unto this day. 10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

The money that Judas gave back to the Jewish leaders was used to buy a field under Judas' name. That field was the Potter's Field. The Potter's Field was where the potter would discard and throw away useless and worthless vessels that no longer could be used. It was also the place where strangers were buried. That is very significant. But, where was this Potter's Field?

THE POTTER'S FIELD WAS IN GEHENNA

?The Potter's Field, and this has been equated with the Potter's House (Jer . 18:2) **in the Hinnom Valley.** *New Bible Dictionary*

Gehenna was a valley outside of the city walls of Jerusalem, on the south side. It was a dumping ground. It was also where the apostate and false prophets were stoned. Gehenna was used by the Lord to describe a future place which unfaithful Christians would occupy during the Millennial Kingdom. It would be a literal place of exclusion outside the Kingdom.

The Bible says in Matthew 27:7 that the Potter's Field was where strangers were buried. Did you know that we, as saved people, can be strangers in the presence of the Lord when we stand at the judgment seat of Christ?

WE CAN BE STRANGERS IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

Matthew 7:21-23

21 **Not every one** that [is saved] saith unto me, Lord, Lord, **shall enter into the kingdom of heaven** [the millennial kingdom rule]; but he that **doeth**[practice in a daily walk] the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many [not all] will say to me in **that day**[the judgment seat of Christ], Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you:** depart from me [denial and disapproval from entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, v.21], ye that work iniquity [lawlessness].

Remember the faithful words of Paul the Apostle,

"If we suffer [endure and do not quit], we shall also reign with him: if we deny him [by not enduring], he also will deny us [I never knew you]?" (2 Tim.2:12).

JESUS WARNED HIS DISCIPLES ABOUT GEHENNA

Mark 9:47

And if thine [the twelve, v.35] eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee **to enter into the kingdom of God** [the Millennial Kingdom] with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into **GEHENNA** hell fire [outside the Millennial Kingdom]:

Gehenna is contrasted here with entering the coming Millennial Kingdom of God, not with eternity! This is not a verse telling unsaved people how to get saved. Rather, Jesus was warning His very own disciples about dealing courageously with sin or offenses. Judas also heard these warnings, yet he did not endure to the end but apostatized and stumbled from the faith. For that reason he shall not reign with Christ during the coming Kingdom. His experience will be the 1,000 years of Gehenna fire! That is where the Potter's Field is located.

I do not know what Gehenna will be like, but I do know that it is not a fun place to spend the entire time of the Millennial Kingdom. Will that fire in Gehenna be literal? I don't know and I don't want to find out.

Isn't that purgatory? No. People that compare the teaching of Gehenna and the Catholic purgatory do not know what they are talking about. The Catholic purgatory is different. It is a myth. It is said to be where a soul of a bad Catholic goes immediately after death in order to pay for his own sins in order to be saved into eternity.

Gehenna for the Christian is not for eternity. Rather, it is a temporary punishment for one thousand years, during the kingdom age, for those who are already eternally saved. Gehenna is not about trying to pay for your sins in order to be saved into eternity. That would be lu

gment on Him. That is called the Finished Work of Christ. However, Christians can face temporal judgments for their sins. That is what Gehenna is all about.

A very good passage correlating well with being outside the city in Gehenna is found in Revelation 22:14-15.

Revelation 22:14-15

14 Blessed *are* they that **do his commandments**, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may **enter in through the gates into the city**.

15 For without ["**outside the city**" NLT] *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Entering into the city, the New Jerusalem is conditional!

WOE UNTO THAT MAN

Mark 14:21

The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but **woe to that man** by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for **that man** if he had never been born.

I believe that here Jesus is using a figure of speech called a hyperbole. It is an exaggeration in order to bring across an important point. In fact, I did some research on this passage and discovered that the phrase "good were it for that man if he had never been born" was a common, colloquial figure of speech in the day of Jesus. Basically, it was saying that it would not be good for Judas to betray Jesus. In other words, he would not get away with it.

JUDAS WAS A VESSEL OF DISHONOR

2 Timothy 2:20

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and **some to dishonour**.

The Lord's house is a Potter's house. The Potter puts the clay on his wheel. He continues to spin the wheel around and around. The turning continually puts the clay into the hands of the Potter and his fingers shape the vessel into a final product - a vessel he has in mind.

We need to trust the Potter's hands!

Isaiah 64:8

But now, O LORD, thou *art* our father; we *are* the clay, and thou our potter; and we all *are* the work of thy hand.

The clay, which is you and I, can resist the work of the Potter and not cooperate with Him by our choices. Paul the apostle was a chosen vessel, in Acts 9:15, but he knew that there was a real danger of becoming a cast away (1Corinthians 9:27), as the children of Israel which were overthrown in the wilderness in 1Corinthians 10:5-6. They did not enter the land flowing with milk and honey, the promised land. The Potter labors over the clay forming and shaping it until the final product is realized. When it is all over, it will either be a vessel of honor or dishonor.

Judas was a vessel of dishonor!

What kind of a vessel will you be?