

RUSSELL SANDERS

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JUDAS ISCARIOT – LESSON 8

FALSE REPENTANCE

Judas led to the garden in Mark 14:43 a **“great multitude”** of temple guards bearing swords and staves (for beating). They were sent by the priests, scribes, and elders of the temple. The guards had been informed that “the kiss” customary for greeting a friend would mark the signal of who it was they were to arrest.

When Judas approached Jesus, he addressed the Lord as “Master,” then kissed Him. Jesus’ response in Matthew 26:50 and Luke 22:48 was, **“Friend, why have you come here? Is it to betray the Son of Man with a friend’s kiss?”**

Notice two things here. First, Jesus still called him “friend” as in showing no animosity. Second, He referred to Himself as “Son of Man” which was clearly understood by Judas as meaning the promised Messiah.

As Jesus was taken away to be beaten beyond recognition, then crucified, I believe Jesus’ spoken self-identification as the Messiah began to weigh heavily upon Judas. He now realized more than ever that he had betrayed an innocent man, and even more so because this truly was “The Anointed One” (Christ) who God had sent.

Heavy guilt feelings began to hang over Judas as he saw what they did to the Messiah, Immanuel (God with us), and he could no longer bear it. Matthew 27:30 tells us that story. Judas went back to the chief priests and temple elders and told them in v. 4, **“I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood.”** Their response was (my paraphrase) “Why should we care about that? We got what we wanted out of it!”

Judas then threw down the thirty pieces of silver and stormed out of the temple in anger at their rebuke and full of deep anguish within himself. Verse 3 said that Judas **“repented himself”** regarding his dastardly deed. It was not true repentance as we would understand it. The Greek word used here for “repented” is *“metamelloma;”* which best translates out to “regret” something afterwards. Regret is not true repentance.

His regret and his deep remorse were so great that he could not live with himself. At some point shortly afterwards, he went out and hung himself. Unfortunately, between his suicide and his unrepentant heart, his torment would now last an eternity. We know this to be true because when Jesus announced his impending betrayal at the Last Supper, He had said in Matthew 26:24, **“Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed: It (would have) been good for that man if he had not been born.”** That clearly speaks of Judas’ final estate.

Nevertheless, Jesus had not held it against Judas. He knew it must happen to fulfill prophecy. It had to happen to bring the plan of salvation to all the world. Showing no animosity toward Judas, Jesus had still called him "friend" in the garden of betrayal.

What about you? Can you still call "friend" to someone who has hurt you deeply? If not, why not? Jesus has told us that it is imperative that we forgive, or else God will not forgive us for holding any animosity. It is a sin to harbor ill feelings toward somebody.

You must repent and let go of it. It must be true repentance and not the false repentance (regret) like Judas. It is entirely possible that it might not restore your former friendship, but it will relieve you of the guilt of having kept those negative feelings. It is you who will benefit the most.