



LESSON 143 - MARK 14: 10-11

And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray Him unto them. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

" Iscariot " means "man of Kerioth." Kerioth was a city of Judah in the Negev desert of southern Israel near Edom. Judas Iscariot was chosen to be one of the twelve apostles, from out of the many followers of Christ. (Mt 10:4, Mk 3:19) [At the time the names of the apostles were given to Jesus by His Father, Jesus was also told Judas Iscariot would be His betrayer. (Jn 6:64)] Since there was another of the apostles who was also named Judas (named Judas Lebbeus Thaddeus (Lk 6:16), Iscariot was used to designate which was which.

Some of the verses of Psalm 41, penned by David, speak prophetically of the betrayal of the Messiah. Verses 5;6;7;9-12 were written over a thousand years before Judas and the Jewish leaders plotted to betray Jesus. Judas himself may have even read these lines and never imagined that he would be the "familiar friend" who would betray the Messiah. "Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?... All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt... Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them. By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me. And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever. Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen."

In our previous lesson, Judas' anger over the costly ointment being used to honor Jesus was discussed. Now we will look at the attitudes of the religious leaders who wanted to kill Jesus. Consider the contradiction between religious leaders ordained to be holy and righteous, and appointed to lead the people in keeping the laws of God, and the gladness they felt when they found a man to betray Jesus, and were willing to pay him for doing so.

This wasn't their first step off the path of righteousness. They had become hypocrites, teaching one thing but doing another. They had turned away from God and His commandments and were living their own code of unrighteousness. They called themselves children of God, but were determined to kill the Son of God. Jesus' raising Lazarus from the dead seemed to bring their fears and jealousy to a head. John 11:47-57 explains more of their thinking. Jesus did miracles they couldn't do. They were afraid the people would come to know the truth that Jesus was the Messiah and, therefore, stop following their leadership. They were also afraid of losing position and power. "If we let Him alone, all will believe on Him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and our nation." They had no faith in God; they had no thoughts for justice or righteousness. They simply wanted to protect themselves at any cost.

To be a true follower of the Lord is to walk worthy of Him, to listen to the Holy Spirit and obey His voice. He directs us into righteousness, loving kindness, thoughtful consideration, gentleness, and acts of integrity. He teaches us how to be a true friend of Jesus Christ. In these

next lessons approaching the time of the cross and the resurrection, reflect on the strength of Jesus' character, His strong faith in His Father, and His faithfulness to finish the work He had been sent to do, despite the pressures, the lies, the betrayals, the sufferings, and the impending loss of fellowship with His God. He truly suffered in every way, so that those who trust in Him would never have to suffer as He did. Nothing we experience matches what He suffered for us. Take a few moments to give Him thanks.

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