

DECEIVED BY THE DEVIL Luke 22:1-6

The road to the cross is coming to an end.

The climax of the conflict is near.

The hostility between Christ and the Pharisees became so open and irreversible, action could no longer be delayed.

They must stop Him!

AGREEMENT FOR BETRAYAL 22:1-6

They had to find a way to get rid of Him without provoking people.

It seems incredible that these people perpetrated history's greatest crime during Israel's holiest festival: Passover.

The Passover looked back to the Exodus, when the slaying of the lamb provided a refuge for those who trusted God.

Result: their *freedom from slavery* to the Egyptians.

The Passover looked ahead to the death of the Lamb Who would free people from bondage to sin and bring us into the *freedom of new life*.

Therefore timing is significant.

Jesus died as the Lamb at Passover.

This event was about to take place

Luke says that **THE PASSOVER** was coming near.

Leaders are seeking a way to kill **THE LAMB** of God.

During Passover, the Jews **removed all yeast** for a week, as a reminder that their ancestors left Egypt in haste, without any of the leaven from Egypt.

Religious leaders cleansed their homes but not their hearts.

Luke's account: a spiritual battle is going on

The religious leaders of Israel are allied with Satan.

This isn't ignorance.

They want to get rid of Him. It's deliberate.

They aren't interested in truth!

For a long time they wanted to get rid of Jesus,

but they hadn't come up with a safe plan to protect them from the people.

They're afraid an open arrest will lead to a riot.

At Passover millions crowd in the city—a volatile crowd.

Romans expected trouble.

The leaders had to be careful not to provoke a riot.

Judas solves their problem for them and they're delighted!

He'll deliver Jesus, out of view of the crowd—for a price!

The first time we hear the story we're caught by surprise.

How could a trusted follower—the treasurer!—suddenly turn against Him?!

Exell: **"Men do not become great villains at once.**

Souls are not like meteoric bodies that are blazing amongst the stars at one moment, and the next in some dark pit on earth. wrapped in noxious and sulphurous smoke.

They are like trees, they fall by degrees. See that great monarch of the forest! For years disease has been in its roots and a long succession of foul insects has been gnawing at its vitals. Slowly and silently the decline goes on. At first the outward symptoms are scarcely visible. A few withered leaves on one of its branches. ... The next spring, not only withered leaves are seen, but perhaps a leafless branch or two. Thus through many a long year the deterioration proceeds, until at last it is rotten to the core, and only awaits some light breeze

blowing in the right direction to strike it down. One morning a gentle gust of air sweeps through the wood, the tree falls with a crash.

So went the fall of Judas.

Howard Hendricks puts it this way: "The fall of the mighty is never a blow out. It is always a slow leak!"

Maybe Judas was hurt, or angry, or just fed up.

Whatever his reason, Satan enabled them to find a way to destroy Jesus. Judas, one of His own followers, would take them to Him at night.

Judas was motivated and energized by Satan.

He never was a true believer.

Like the seed mentioned by our Lord in the parable of the soils, Judas' soil was full of rocks. The seed sprung forth and looked good, and everyone rejoiced at "what God was doing in his life!" but it was rocky under the surface and the seed doomed to shrivel up and die.

He went out on the mission and did mighty works just like everybody else.

He saw the power of God. No one had cause to doubt—but he was a fake!

He looked like a true follower of Jesus, but he was along for the ride.

His act was known to God—to Jesus—from the beginning.

His deception fooled everybody else; they all trusted him.

No one suspected. They let him carry the purse!

But Jesus knew. It was part of the plan from the beginning.

People always make excuses for Judas.

One theory: Judas wanted to force Jesus to action.

The Scripture nowhere implies such a motive.

His offense would be just as serious if he is only guilty of coming up with a "better plan than God's plan!"

But Scripture gives no such idea.

It DOES imply love for money had a great deal to do with it.

I don't believe there is any excuse.

He can't blame his own zeal or plan.

He can't even blame Satan.

John 12:4-6: he was a thief—as keeper of the money bag, "he used to help himself to what was in it!"—but no one discovered that until later.

His whole act was a show. He carried it off to perfection.

No one could tell the difference. *He looked real!*

Judas joins forces with the rejectors.

He bears the consequence of his rejection.

He betrays his Master; does it with a kiss—brazen rejection!

Matt. 26:14-16 tells us that Judas went to the leaders and said to them: "What are you willing to give me if I hand Him over to you?"

His concern for money finally got him!

You can't serve God and money!

Judas struggled with the craving for gold for years.

Now he had an opportunity to enrich himself and even the Lord wasn't enough to motivate him to stop.

It's possible to spend three years walking in the midst of Jesus' followers, with Jesus Himself present and still turn away and join the rejectors.

THE DANGER OF DECEPTION

The story of Judas reminds us of one of Satan's favorite tools: *DECEPTION!*

It appears repeatedly in Scripture:

1 Peter 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Matthew 16:23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

Luke 22:31-32 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

Acts 26:18 to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Acts 5:3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?"

1 Corinthians 7:5 Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

Revelation 20:8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth--Gog and Magog--to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore.

John 13:2 "The devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. . . (13:27) As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him,

Satan knew which lure to use—he knew Judas' weakness!

He came to him right where he was and he got him!

Imagine walking with Jesus for 3 years, and turning on him, and discussing with the chief priests how he might deliver Him into their hands.

It's possible to walk with Jesus and be deceived by Satan

It's possible to walk with Jesus and be used by Satan.

Many associate with Christians and are active in church but have never trusted Him.

Judas' act would seem impossible to believe if we weren't able to look down the corridor of time and see many who have walked that same path.

Many walk among us who have never trusted Him.

THREE KEYS TO JUDAS' DOWNFALL:

1. LOVE OF MONEY

He follows Jesus because "it has to be profitable."

He tries to enrich himself from the King's purse.

2. HE WAS A FAKE

He went along with the crowd that followed Jesus.

He acted like he had the real thing. But it was all a fake!

3. IN THE END, HE REJECTED THE SAVIOR.

TWO INESCAPABLE ALTERNATIVES

1. SERVE GOD

God is looking for people who will allow Him to control them and who will live for Him.

He won't give you all the things you THINK you want, but He'll satisfy the longings of your heart.

When He is done using you,

He gives you eternal fellowship with Him.

2. SERVE SATAN

Satan seeks people who will let him control them and serve him.

This isn't a conflict between two equals in eternal struggle. There is only one God, one Victor.

Satan will deceive you into believing he'll give you the desires of your heart.

Then when he's done with you, he'll destroy you.

ONE FATAL CONSEQUENCE

Notice the price he paid in the end.

Judas thought he would profit.

But Satan used the lie to destroy him.

When he serves Satan's purposes, Satan destroys him (Matt. 27:3-5).

Satan is a liar and murderer; after enticing Judas to serve him, he destroys him.

It's a quiet spring morning. The mists are still rising as the fisherman glides to his favorite fishing spot. He's after one of those giant bass that hide among the weeds and sunken logs.

The fisherman may be an honest man. But when he's fishing, he's a cunning deceiver. He's out there to snare and to capture. To do that, he's not going to throw a bare hook in the water. That wouldn't fool the fish. So he disguises it with an attractive lure. He may even hide it with that old reliable--the night crawler. He wants the fish to take the bait without noticing the hook. By that time it will be too late. A skilled angler will give just the right jerk and set the hook. And that's the end of the fish's freedom.

Satan is also fishing. We are the fish. And the bait is whatever will lure us to take the hook. For Judas it was money. For us it may be money, or prestige, sex or family. It usually appeals to a natural desire-- such as our need for intimacy or success or security. He uses legitimate needs to hide his real intent, which is to get us to disobey God. He knows that to entice us to take the bait, he has to hide the hook. And he'll make it look as appealing as he can.

WHAT ABOUT US?

What choice will you make?

What will your response be to Jesus?

What consequence will you experience?