

Could Judas Have Been Forgiven? – April 3, 2024

Judas Iscariot. Forever known as the betrayer. Did he have a choice? Could he be forgiven? What about his suicide? Bible gives us answers.

Luke 22:1-6 – “The Festival of Unleavened Bread, which is also called Passover, was approaching. ²The leading priests and teachers of religious law were plotting how to kill Jesus, but they were afraid of the people’s reaction. ³Then Satan entered into Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve disciples, ⁴and he went to the leading priests and captains of the Temple guard to discuss the best way to betray Jesus to them. ⁵They were delighted, and they promised to give him money. ⁶So he agreed and began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus so they could arrest him when the crowds weren’t around.”

We know what happened: Judas led them to Jesus, betrayed Him w/ a kiss.

- **Jesus knew** Judas would betray Him

- **John 6:** ⁶⁴But some of you do not believe me.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning which **ones** didn’t believe, & **he knew who would betray him**.)
- **John 6:** ⁶⁷Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, “Are you also going to leave?” ⁶⁸Simon Peter replied, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. ⁶⁹We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.” ⁷⁰Then Jesus said, “I chose the twelve of you, **but one is a devil**.” ⁷¹He was speaking of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, one of the Twelve, who would later betray him.”
- **John 13:** ¹⁰Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” ¹¹For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not **every one was clean**.”
- **John 13:** ²¹Now Jesus was deeply troubled, and he exclaimed, “I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me!” ²²The disciples looked at each other, wondering whom he could mean. ²³The disciple Jesus loved was sitting next to Jesus at the table. ²⁴Simon Peter motioned to him to ask, “Who’s he talking about?” ²⁵So that disciple leaned over to Jesus and asked, “Lord, who is it?” ²⁶Jesus responded, “It is the one to whom I give the bread I dip in the bowl.” And when he had dipped it, he gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷**When Judas had eaten the bread, Satan entered into him**. Then Jesus told him, “Hurry and do what you’re going to do.” ²⁸None of the others at the table knew what Jesus meant. ²⁹Since Judas was their treasurer, some thought Jesus was telling him to go and pay for the food or to give some money to the poor. ³⁰So Judas left at once, going out into the night.

Many have wondered: did Judas have a choice? Doomed from beginning?

John 17:12 – Jesus’ Prayer for the disciples:

“While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.”

Q: Do any of us have “free will” or is it predestined?

Rom. 8:29 – *“For those God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers.”*

- God “foreknew” – He knows us; knows in advance our choices...
- Bible tells us we all have a choice.

- **Moses - Deut. 30:19** – “I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life, so that you and your descendants may live”
- **Joshua 24:15** – “But if it is displeasing in your sight to serve the LORD, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living. As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD!”

- Judas made a choice... his own free will.
- Judas wasn’t born a betrayer ... he became one. Heart was not right.
 - **John 12:1-6** - Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. ²A dinner was prepared in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. ³Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus’ feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. ⁴But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, ⁵“That perfume was worth a year’s wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor.” ⁶Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples’ money, he often stole some for himself.
 - “do not give the devil a foothold” **Eph. 4:27**
 - **James 4:7** – “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you”
 - Judas had an issue with \$\$

- **James 1:14** – “Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away.”
 - Judas chose \$ over Jesus. Doubtful he had an agenda.

What happened to Judas?

Matt. 7³⁻⁵ - When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. “I have sinned,” he said, “for I have betrayed innocent blood.” “What is that to us?” they replied. “That’s your responsibility.” So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.

Could Judas have been forgiven? Yes.

- Jesus loved Judas... chose him... washed his feet... ate w/him. **Hope**
- † **Judas felt guilt** for his actions, he had remorse.

His mistake? He didn’t know God. Hopeless. Helpless.

- He didn’t turn to God and **repent**.
 - Remorse is not same as Repentance; it’s more than just sorrow. Repentance is a change of mind—turning from sin, toward God.
 - Only 1 **unforgivable sin** – blasphemy against the H.S.

Matt. 12:31-32 – “And so I tell you, every kind of sin & slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.”

- Context. Jesus’ Healing/work of devil.
- Know role of Holy Spirit: reveal God & draw people to the truth. Unpardonable sin is to persistently reject God, not acknowledge God’s presence or His authenticating miracles. **Choose darkness**

Suicide doesn’t keep people out of heaven... rejecting God does.

Jesus chose Judas . . . there is always hope that God’s love breaks thru.

- God’s desire is for all to know Him, spend eternity w/Him.
- But we must choose . . . we **don’t truly love** if we’re **compelled**.
 - Even Angels ... abandoned God... followed Satan, who chose/left
 - **Heb. 12:2** – “Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

- I believe Jesus chose to live as God desired . . . drink/cup.
 - Soldiers nailed Him to the cross, but love kept Him there.
 - **Matt. 26:** ⁵² “Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him, “for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?”
- Jesus chose. We must also choose. . . to **believe**.
 - **John 3:16-19** -NLT “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so **that everyone who believes in him** will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God’s one and only Son. And the judgment is based on this fact: **God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.**”
- Choose light. Choose Jesus. Choose to Believe.
- Jesus loved Judas. If He could love him, He loves you.

Song of the week – “Judas” by Joseph Habedank.