

# Judas Iscariot

Judas Iscariot was an only son of wealthy Jewish parents living in Jericho. He had become attached to John the Baptist, and his Sadducee parents had disowned him.

He was looking for employment in these regions when Jesus' apostles found him, and chiefly because of his experience with finances, Nathaniel invited him to join their ranks.

Judas Iscariot was the only Judean among the twelve apostles, was born in Kerioth, a small town in southern Judea.

Judas Iscariot, the twelfth apostle, was chosen by Nathaniel.

When he was a lad, his parents moved to Jericho, where he lived and had been employed in his father's various business enterprises until he became interested in the preaching and work of John the Baptist.

When Nathaniel met Judas at Tarichea, he was seeking employment with a fish-drying enterprise at the lower end of the Sea of Galilee.

He was thirty years of age and unmarried when he joined the apostles.

He was probably the best-educated man among the twelve and the only Judean in the Master's apostolic family.

Judas had no outstanding trait of personal strength, though he had many outwardly appearing traits of culture and habits of training.

He was a good thinker but not always a truly honest thinker.

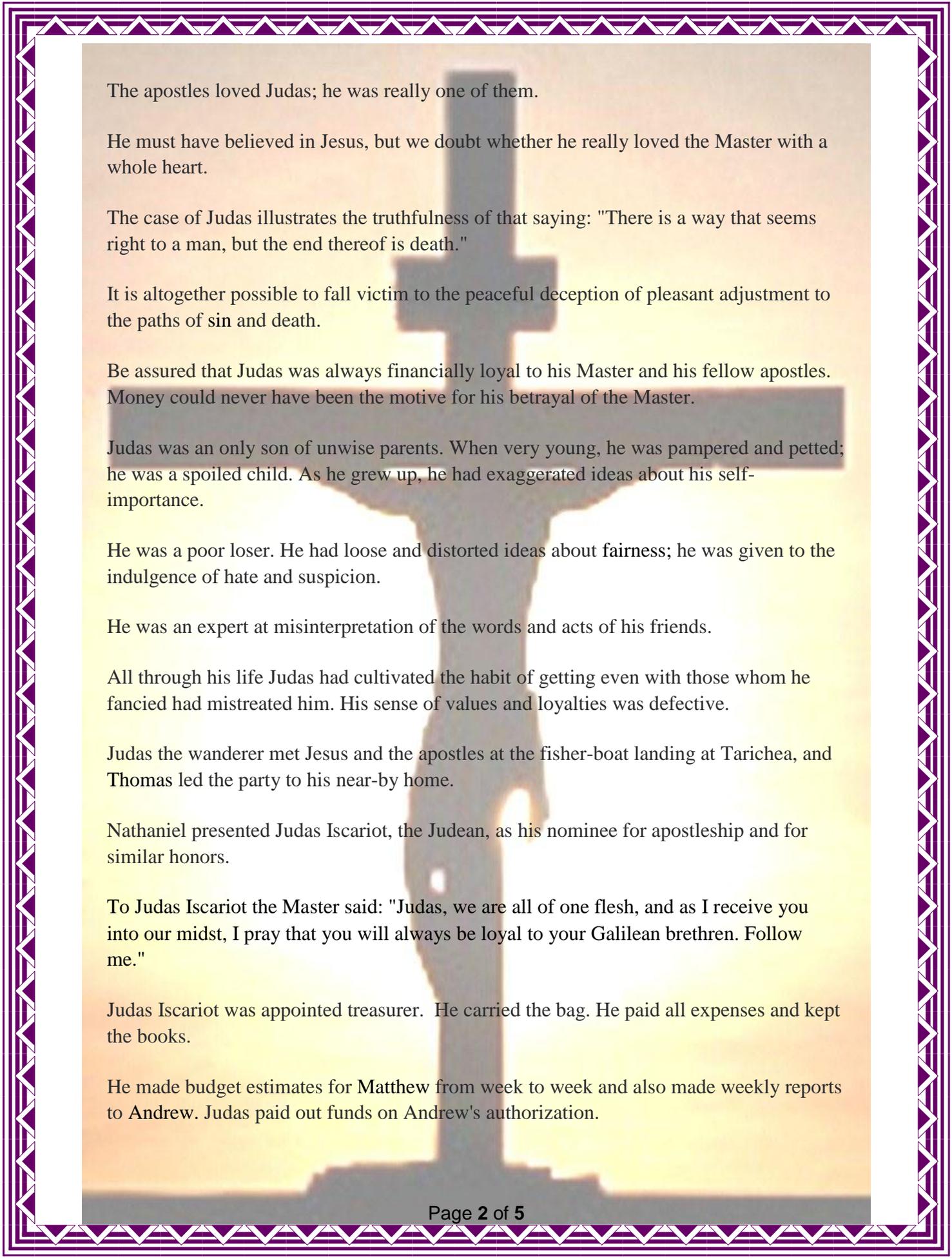
Judas did not really understand himself; he was not really sincere in dealing with himself.

Judas was a good business man. It required tact, ability, and patience, as well as painstaking devotion, to manage the financial affairs of such an idealist as Jesus, to say nothing of wrestling with the helter-skelter business methods of some of his apostles.

Judas really was a great executive, a farseeing and able financier. And he was a stickler for organization.

None of the twelve ever criticized Judas.

As far as they could see, Judas Iscariot was a matchless treasurer, a learned man, a loyal (though sometimes critical) apostle, and in every sense of the word a great success.



The apostles loved Judas; he was really one of them.

He must have believed in Jesus, but we doubt whether he really loved the Master with a whole heart.

The case of Judas illustrates the truthfulness of that saying: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is death."

It is altogether possible to fall victim to the peaceful deception of pleasant adjustment to the paths of sin and death.

Be assured that Judas was always financially loyal to his Master and his fellow apostles. Money could never have been the motive for his betrayal of the Master.

Judas was an only son of unwise parents. When very young, he was pampered and petted; he was a spoiled child. As he grew up, he had exaggerated ideas about his self-importance.

He was a poor loser. He had loose and distorted ideas about fairness; he was given to the indulgence of hate and suspicion.

He was an expert at misinterpretation of the words and acts of his friends.

All through his life Judas had cultivated the habit of getting even with those whom he fancied had mistreated him. His sense of values and loyalties was defective.

Judas the wanderer met Jesus and the apostles at the fisher-boat landing at Tarichea, and Thomas led the party to his near-by home.

Nathaniel presented Judas Iscariot, the Judean, as his nominee for apostleship and for similar honors.

To Judas Iscariot the Master said: "Judas, we are all of one flesh, and as I receive you into our midst, I pray that you will always be loyal to your Galilean brethren. Follow me."

Judas Iscariot was appointed treasurer. He carried the bag. He paid all expenses and kept the books.

He made budget estimates for Matthew from week to week and also made weekly reports to Andrew. Judas paid out funds on Andrew's authorization.

Andrew appointed Judas treasurer of the twelve, a position which he was eminently fitted to hold, and up to the time of the betrayal of his Master he discharged the responsibilities of his office honestly, faithfully, and most efficiently.

When the apostolic treasury was overflowing, Judas put funds on deposit to be used subsequently when they might suffer greatly from a diminution of income.

### **The End of Judas - After He Witnessed the Crucifixion**

From a distance Judas saw them raise the cross piece with Jesus nailed thereon, and upon sight of this he rushed back to the temple and, forcing his way past the doorkeeper, found himself standing in the presence of the Sanhedrin, which was still in session.

The betrayer was well-nigh breathless and highly distraught, but he managed to stammer out these words: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood.

You have insulted me. You have offered me as a reward for my service, money-the price of a slave. I repent that I have done this; here is your money. I want to escape the guilt of this deed."

When the rulers of the Jews heard Judas, they scoffed at him. One of them sitting near where Judas stood, motioned that he should leave the hall and said: "Your Master has already been put to death by the Romans, and as for your guilt, what is that to us? See you to that - and be gone!"

As Judas left the Sanhedrin chamber, he removed the thirty pieces of silver from the bag and threw them broadcast over the temple floor.

When the betrayer left the temple, he was almost beside himself. Judas was now passing through the experience of the realization of the true nature of sin.

All the glamor, fascination, and intoxication of wrongdoing had vanished. Now the evildoer stood alone and face to face with the judgment verdict of his disillusioned and disappointed soul.

Sin was bewitching and adventurous in the committing, but now must the harvest of the naked and unromantic facts be faced.

This onetime ambassador of the kingdom of heaven on earth now walked through the streets of Jerusalem, forsaken and alone. His despair was desperate and well-nigh absolute.

On he journeyed through the city and outside the walls, on down into the terrible solitude of the valley of Hinnom, where he climbed up the steep rocks and, taking the girdle of his cloak, fastened one end to a small tree, tied the other about his neck, and cast himself over the precipice.

**Ere he was dead, the knot which his nervous hands had tied gave way, and the betrayer's body was dashed to pieces as it fell on the jagged rocks below.**

### **Judas Iscariot's Accomplishments:**

One of Jesus' original 12 disciples, Judas Iscariot traveled with Jesus and studied under him for three years. He apparently went with the other 11 when Jesus sent them to preach the gospel, cast out demons and heal the sick.

### **Judas Iscariot's Strengths:**

Judas felt remorse after he betrayed Jesus. He returned the 30 pieces of silver the chief priests and elders had given him. (Matthew 27:3, NIV)

### **Judas Iscariot's Weaknesses:**

Judas was a thief. He was in charge of the group's money bag and sometimes stole from it. He was disloyal. Even though the other apostles deserted Jesus and Peter denied him, Judas went so far as to lead the temple guard to Jesus at Gethsemane, and then identified Jesus by kissing him. Some would say Judas Iscariot made the greatest error in history.

### **Life Lessons:**

An outward show of loyalty to Jesus is meaningless unless we also follow Christ in our heart. Satan and the world will try to get us to betray Jesus, so we must ask the Holy Spirit for help in resisting them.

Although Judas attempted to undo the harm he had done, he failed to seek the Lord's forgiveness. Thinking it was too late for him, Judas ended his life in suicide.

As long as we are alive and have breath, it's never too late to come to God for forgiveness and cleansing from sin. Sadly, Judas, who had been given the opportunity to walk in close fellowship with Jesus, completely missed the most important message of Christ's ministry.

It's natural for people to have strong or mixed feelings about Judas. Some feel a sense of hatred toward him for his act of betrayal, others feel pity, and some throughout history have considered him a hero. No matter how you react to him, here are a few biblical facts about Judas Iscariot to keep in mind:

- He made a conscience choice to betray Jesus - Luke 22:48
- He was a thief with greed in his heart - John 12:6
- Jesus knew Judas' heart was set on evil and that he would not repent - John 6:70, John 17:12
- Judas' act of betrayal was part of God's sovereign plan - Psalm 41:9, Zechariah 11:12-13, Matthew 20:18 and 26:20-25, Acts 1:16,20

Believers can benefit from thinking about Judas Iscariot's life and considering their own commitment to the Lord. Are we true followers of Christ or secret pretenders? And if we fail, do we give up all hope, or do we accept his forgiveness and seek restoration?

**Hometown:**

Kerioth. The Hebrew word Ishkeriyyoth (for Iscariot) means "man of the village of Keriyoth." Kerioth was about 15 miles south of Hebron, in Israel.

**Referenced in the Bible:**

Matthew 10:4, 13:55, 26:14, 16, 25, 47-49, 27:1-5  
Mark 3:19, 6:3, 14:10, 43-45  
Luke 6:16, 22:1-4, 47-48  
John 6:71, 12:4, 13:2, 13:26-30; 14:22, 18:2-6  
Acts 1:16-18, 25

**Occupation:**

Disciple of Jesus Christ. Judas was the money keeper for the group.

**Family Tree:**

Father - Simon Iscariot

**Key Verses:****Matthew 26:13-15**

*Then one of the Twelve-the one called Judas Iscariot-went to the chief priests and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty silver coins. (NIV)*

**John 13:26-27**

*Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon. As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. (NIV)*

**Mark 14:43**

*Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders. (NIV)*

**Luke: 22:47-48**

*He (Judas) approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" (NIV)*

**Matthew 27:3-5**

*When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders...So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. (NIV)*

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