

WHAT WAS SO BAD ABOUT THE SIN OF Judas

by Carl McMurray

And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, "Is it I?" He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."

(Mark 14:17-21 ESV)

The Last Supper. The disciples are solemn and quiet through the meal because they don't understand all the events that are taking place. Jesus' heart is also heavy because he DOES understand. He even speaks of, and to, the one who is bound and determined to betray him. But then he makes a serious charge, i.e., *"woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."*

Why is the guilt of Judas emphasized so clearly and drastically? Is it because of the betrayal, the wrong done personally to Jesus? Over the intervening centuries many have betrayed Jesus, including another apostle, Peter. Is it because he would hang himself, taking his own life instead of repenting? Many other men have taken their own life and many of those through the years have chosen hanging. Is it because he would die in an impenitent situation, thereby being lost for eternity? And I would answer, with the uncountable billions who walked that same road. Would hell burn hotter for Judas than for any other? I find no biblical evidence that this is true.

Why would it have been better for him never to have been born? Two reasons stand out as to why Judas' fate might be worse than most sinners. One, is that he had obtained a relationship with the Lord. He touched him, saw him, heard him, witnessed his truth and then turned away. Judas might not have wanted to face the facts that night he took his own life, but he would have all eternity to dwell on them and mourn the loss that he had held in his two hands. Secondly, he would be remembered. All men sin and many commit grievous and awful sins but most of those things pass on into obscurity and are forgotten with time and the passing of men. Not so with the sin of Judas. All men would know that name. Parents would never use that name for their children. Insulting epitaphs would be thrown through centuries to come based on his traitorous and undeserved decision. Let us consider thoughtfully the legacy we leave behind with our actions and the awful thoughts we will have to face in eternity's timelessness.

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