

## Wherefore Art Thou Come?

### **Matthew 26:23 – 75**

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~ Judas has been lurking in the background of our Spiritual Safari ever since we started hanging around these apostles. He has managed to stay completely out of sight until our last report; so, if you have not read our previous report, then I highly suggest you go back and do so now. In this report, we are going to really get to know all about Judas. We are in the upper room now with all of the fourteen occupants, Jesus, the twelve and Satan. The twelve are sitting directly between the Lord Jesus Christ and the devil. The events in this report will lead to His arrest and murder by the religious rulers. Remember, He has told us several times this was going to happen, so it should not be a surprise; although, what we have here will be surprising for most people. Jesus set the time of His death to be during the Passover. The religious rulers had said, “....not on the Passover” - but Jesus said, “on the Passover.” The religious rulers were wrong again. Christ is the King, friends; The Lord Jesus is in charge today. He is in charge of this report and He is in charge of whatever you are learning – or not - right now.

He was also in charge as we exited the leper’s home in our last report. Every single time we have seen Jesus He has either been on the road or in someone else’s home. The people reject Christ as their King today; even the ones who deign call Him King! It’s no wonder because they are all hypocrites. Well, maybe Judas is still upset about the wasted oil scenario? Who knows; but we will see Judas in his nefarious network scheme to betray the Lord Jesus. Jesus said Mary was the only one that knew what she was doing with that oil and she was the only one to enter into His death with Him before He died. This is a remarkable picture we have here today of our King that will now die for the sins of the world! In the midst of this remarkable setting we have just heard Jesus tell us someone would betray Him and we learned in our last report the apostles were aware in their hearts that they could be the one. If Christ didn’t keep me close in His hands I would be the one to betray Him in before the sun goes down today. That keeps me right up close to him, you may be sure. Well, these men want to know who it is – so they asked Him....

***23 And Jesus answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.***

***24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.***

~ We hear a lot of people say they wish they hadn't been born. Others say we should keep children from being born into the world today. Well, irrespective of what you believe about those issues, here's one person who really shouldn't have been born. Terror should be born unto your soul as we contemplate what we are reading right here. Judas slips out of the room at some point after this takes place. John gives many more details; so, we'll wait and recount this event again in that Gospel....

***25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.***

***26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.***

***27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;***

***28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.***

~ The Lord's Supper is instituted over the heaping ashes of a dying religion – the Passover - this night. Jesus makes that very clear here to us. Amazingly, we see next that the Passover will be reinstated during the Millennium Kingdom. Verse twenty-nine can only reasonably conclude with the Passover in the millennium looking back in remembrance of His death; just as the Lord's Supper looks back to His death for you and me today. This, of course, will be part of the new Heaven for us. Interestingly, the Passover that looked forward to His coming will also look back to His return

to establish His Kingdom. Obviously, there are a whole lot of things we do not know – because God hasn't told us....

***29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.***

***30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.***

***31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.***

***32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.***

***33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.***

~ After we sing the song, Peter confesses he doesn't trust the other apostles himself. What another revelation. Peter says the Lord can sure depend on Him, though, so – it's time for another rebuke from the Lord Jesus to Peter. See, Peter did not know himself and that's our problem today – we really do not know ourselves as well as we ought to – nor as well as we might like to think we do....

***34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.***

***35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.***

***36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.***

***37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.***

***38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.***

***39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.***

~ Christ's prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane is something the Gospel of Matthew just doesn't go into much detail with; which has always made me wonder – because one of the other Gospels goes into painstaking detail. Here, in Matthew's account of this event, what we need to note is that Jesus takes three of them into the garden and begins praying. The horror of humanity in the suffering and death He is going to face on the cross is now being realized. Frighteningly, the entire point of this is more than highlighting His death, in and of itself, it is something we typically either do not realize or we do not emphasize correctly: that the Lord Jesus Christ was made sin for us. Jesus was wholly harmless and sinless - until He gets up on that cross – then everything changes in this connection.

We are not talking academics or forensics in this safari, friends – we're talking about a reality of life. The sin you committed was put ON Christ. When your sin was placed there it was a horrendous thing for Christ to endure. I do believe, however, that the Garden of Gethsemane is where Jesus actually won the victory over Satan. The consummation was the cup of the cross. The content of that cup was your sin and mine – and of the whole world, friends. The thought of the repugnant experience coming before Him made the Lord Jesus physically appear as He had never appeared to the apostles before. I think His demeanor disturbed the apostles deeply. It is difficult for you and me to actually get our minds completely around what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane, so God, through the Holy Spirit and His Word to us, will bring us back to this moment later. Jesus isn't praying to escape the cross; He is praying for the will of His Father and of our Father to be done for His glory. You and I couldn't bear any more information than we have in this format without all of the other information given in the other Gospel records; so, we're going to have to just stick with what we have for the time being. Jesus has many things to say unto us – but – not now. The temptation from Satan in the

wilderness was a day at Disney Land compared to the temptation the Lord Jesus faced in Gethsemane. We won't look upon that today; and we should thank Him that we don't have to. As it turns out, the apostles have drifted off to sleep now anyways....

***40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?***

***41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.***

***42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying , O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.***

~ Many people interpret this as Christ not wanting to go to the cross. Of course, that's impossible because Jesus said that's what He was going to do – many times - to the apostles. No one forced Jesus to come to Jerusalem; He could have stayed over on the coast and started some mega-healing industry, or something. Frankly, Jesus could have cornered the market on healing. He could have made a very nice living and become very rich – but He didn't. No, friends, we're here by CHOICE and by DEITY with Christ in this report; irrespective of whether you believe it, understand it, accept it, agree with it, like it – or not. The awful horror of His perfect humanity being subjected to our sin and iniquities arises in His mind over and over again. Well, while Jesus was praying the apostles have fallen asleep - again....

***43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.***

***44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.***

***45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.***

~ There is, obviously, some space of time not accounted for in this interval. I'm not sure how long that time frame was, but I'm sure it was long enough for proper rest so these men could be refreshed and mentally prepared for what they were going to experience next. Jesus pays attention to the needs of their body. That's comforting to me. I don't know about you dear readers, but sometimes when I fall asleep, it seems like it is immediately time to wake up again – even when I have a full nights rest. Further, I just happen to love sleeping! Apparently, so did the apostles; because (a) they're asleep again and (b) I have no doubt that's how they felt here....

***46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.***

***47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.***

~ We must understand that the people coming with Judas had all witnessed the miracles. They knew Jesus had supernatural powers. They were obviously, at least somewhat, worried that Jesus might use those powers to escape or defend Himself. So, we end up with a scene from a cheap horror movie where the town comes out with pitchforks and torches against a monster. It seems Hollywood has reinvented this scene a zillion times by merely changing the targeted character; but let's be serious, these swords and staves were brought with the thought of needing self-defense in mind. I don't think they were brought to ensure compliance because they could have grabbed Jesus and arrested Him at any time before. There was a partial guard attaché sent by Pilate to secure Jesus on behalf of the Roman government, you may be sure, but the commoners stayed way back....

***48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.***

***49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.***

***50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.***

~ Theologians today argue whether Judas was predestinated to betray Jesus. They have thoroughly confused this with the doctrine of election. The doctrine of election never elected anyone to be lost; so Judas was not predestinated for anything except a free will. Judas had every opportunity after the betrayal that YOU do, friend – to do what you want to do. Even with Judas having a prophecy that said he would betray Jesus this prophecy would have been fulfilled with or without Judas committing suicide. Jesus calls Judas His “friend” AFTER the betrayal. Make no mistake – Judas could have turned that kiss of betrayal into the kiss of acceptance and repentance and coming back to the Lord Jesus if he had wanted to. He didn’t want to; because he did not love the Lord Jesus Christ. Even when Judas returns to the temple and throws the money back down and the high priests are taking Jesus to Pilate – Judas could have fallen down on his face and cried, “...forgive me.” Would Jesus have forgiven him? – Yes, you bet your life He would have, friends. It was still possible at this broken moment in time for Judas. Jesus was going to die on the cross – either way! My friends – dear readers – you MUST – MUST – MUST be able to iterate this word for word in your theology and in your heart if you are going to Calvary in this Spiritual Safari....

***51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear.***

~ Here we have Simon Peter trying to make a point. Peter had been told he was going to deny Jesus that night so he had a sword from somewhere and he is going to try to protect Jesus now. Peter cut off an ear; he was trying to cut off this man’s head. Peter is a fisherman; he’s no swords master. See, Jesus hadn’t come to put up a religious fight. Oh, no – that whole Pharisee armament was THEIR making; Jesus came to die for their sins. Of course, we find Jesus still forgiving sins later on the cross, too. Simon Peter and the others, and most of us, miss this point completely - and it’s really too bad we do. Thank God Jesus is directing everything right now, my friends, even in the hour of His death He appointed the time of it; and He appoints ours, too - and that hour for Him has now come in our Spiritual Safari....

***52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.***

***53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?***

***54 Because how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?***

***55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.***

***56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.***

***57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.***

~ John will tell us all we need to know about Caiaphas in his Gospel. Caiaphas was the high priest to which Jesus must be brought according to the Mosaic Law. Caiaphas must also make a determination that can be taken to Pilate in seeking the death penalty. Well, here come our witnesses and they can't muster a conviction. Why? – Because they are false witnesses against God! Any witness against God today is a false witness. The atheist is just naïve, gullible and has sin in their life that they refuse to give up. There is simply no other reason for a witness against God. None whatsoever. They knew that Pilate was going to be interested in some evidence if they wanted him to crucify a man; and they also knew they didn't have any evidence. They knew that would generate some annoying and unpleasant questions from Pilate. Well, guess what? – Jesus is still going to Pilate because someone heard Jesus say He was going to destroy the temple....

***58 But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.***



**59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;**

**60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,**

**61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.**

**62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?**

~ Caiaphas needs to know how to proceed with the prosecution and he has no idea what case he is going to make. He asks Jesus, actually, to tell him what case he should present to Pilate against Himself! Do you see how weird this is getting? Jesus isn't going to give that information to Caiaphas; these religious rulers have brought themselves to a place that is really untenable; but they cannot stop now. Why? – Because all of these events are ordained to happen by the Lord God Almighty Himself, my beloved. Jesus is going to that Roman cross with no evidence against Him. That's why....

**63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.**

**64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.**

~ Jesus has just forced Caiaphas to answer his own question. The title 'Son of Man' is the highest title Jesus has. That means He is our Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Dictator, Monarch, Autocrat, Ruler by Proxy and High Priest - all rolled into one. If you are gung-ho for separation of church and state in the Kingdom of God you have some big troubles ahead because it's all one package there. The title goes back to Daniel and the prophets used it regularly. The 'Son of Man' is a title of deity, which is another term we are

going to need to get familiar with now in our expedition. When Jesus said He was the Son of Man coming in the clouds and sitting at the right hand of God He was claiming to be God – and these religious rulers absolutely came unglued. It is against the Mosaic Law for the high priest to tear his garment under any circumstances; so, what does Caiaphas do? ~

***65 Then the high priest ripped his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.***

***66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.***

***67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands,***

***68 Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?***

~ Comes now the human heart of antagonism and it is nothing but hate. The goodness, righteousness, holiness and the fact that He is God is despised now. If we were given the opportunity, every single one of us would attempt a coup at the Throne of God. Don't say you wouldn't, my dear readers. This is the main reason we have a crowd today who want to be first in the Kingdom of God. They have ambitions of usurping the Throne; although they seldom internalize, process and recognize their overweening ambitions, direct disobedience to the Word of God and unfaithfulness. They're making a good show of religion, but their rebellion is coming to a quick end. Human nature hates Christ and it spits on Him. Human nature will – and does - beat Christ to a pulp and deliver Him to be murdered without evidence every single day of the week....

***69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.***

***70 But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.***

**71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.**

**72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.**

**73 And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.**

**74 Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.**

**75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.**

~ Our Spiritual Safar expedition through the entire Word of God will examine myriad more details of this account in other Gospels. We're taking it easy this first time through. I know that's hard to imagine with all we've been through; but the apostles are in an out-of-control situation for them. Let's all thank God that Christ Jesus is in complete control today. As we end this leg of our safari, Jesus has been arrested without warrant and Peter has denied knowing Him. The other apostles are still around here somewhere, but we can't seem to locate them right now. We saw that Judas cannot repent so he's preparing for his suicide at this moment; but, if you read ahead, you will find it says Judas repented himself. That opens a whole new can of worms. What about it? ~

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