

Judas

The sad story of a thief and betrayer



Birth

Biblical history nor secular history record the details of Judas' birth. As one of Jesus' students, it's likely he was a few years younger than Jesus, but there is no way to know for sure.

Death

Judas died of suicide by hanging in 30 A.D., the same year as Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension.

Life and "Ministry"

Judas was one of Jesus' 12 Apostles. He travelled with Jesus during His 3-year ministry, heard His teachings, and witnessed His miracles. The first mention of Judas in the New Testament is in Matthew 10:4 where his name is listed along with those of the other Apostles. He is often called Judas Iscariot, a name he shared with his father, Simon Iscariot (John 6:71). Although Judas accompanied Jesus daily, his heart was infected by covetousness. He was given the responsibility of keeping the money bag for the group, but John 12:6 informs us he often stole from the community funds. He was never caught or confronted as far as we know, but towards the end of his 3 years with Jesus, his greed culminated in one of the most notorious sins in human history, a sin so infamous it cursed the name "Judas" forever. In the spring of 30 A.D., the chief priests and scribes were trying to find a way to kill Jesus without causing a riot in the city. They needed an inside man to lead them to Jesus "in the absence of the crowds." Judas went to the chief priests and asked, "What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?" They agreed on a price of 30 pieces of silver. From that time on, Judas looked for an opportunity to betray Jesus. His opportunity came the night of the Passover (a Jewish holy day). He led a mob of Jews to the Garden of Gethsemane and identified Jesus by kissing him and saying, "Greetings, Rabbi." Jesus was unlawfully taken by the mob and made to endure a phony trial. He spent the night in custody before being crucified the next morning. After seeing the effects of his greed, conviction and guilt suddenly struck Judas. He returned to the chief priests and threw the 30 pieces of silver on the floor of the Temple while expressing his regret. He then committed suicide by hanging himself. Judas was later replaced by Matthias as the 12th Apostles (Acts 1:26).