

NO JUDAS NO SALVATION

DUMISANI HLEZA

The story of Judas Iscariot is quite an intriguing story or should I say an enigma and I guess we will only know it fully when we get to heaven but we have some Bible insights which I would like to share with you because they could give away some clues and you will make your own Spirit inspired conclusions

We firstly must remember that Jesus is God and is omnipotent, we also must remember that Jesus Christ was not sacrificed for the first time at Mount Calvary as the Son of Man but before the foundation of the world this is according to Revelation 13:8 *All the inhabitants of the earth will fall down and worship him, everyone whose name has not been written since the foundation of the world in the Book of Life of the Lamb who has been slain [as a willing sacrifice]*. So in the spiritual realm Jesus was already sacrificed long before being born into the household of Joseph. This should tell you that Judas Iscariot was there in eternity past as part of God's salvation plan before he was even born and without him, there would not have been salvation for humanity and all would be destined to hell. Before God made the earth and humanity, He knew with His fore-knowledge and omniscience that the very first human beings Adam and Eve would sin, and in the big picture of things Judas would be part of the solution; because somebody had to do what he did. Judas was in God's plan of man's salvation.

Has it ever occurred to you that twenty five per cent of the Bible is made up of Bible prophecy and God made the very first prophecy in the Bible where He said this: Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*" This was not going to happen without Judas Iscariot; this should tell us that Judas was the one essential piece in this huge jigsaw puzzle of humanity without which the picture would have been complete. The Law, Prophets and Psalms as they were writing about Jesus, implicitly they were writing about Judas Iscariot because everything they said had everything to do with Judas.

I know that you might be reading this and thinking that I am absolving Judas on what he did, absolutely not, I am just stating Biblical truths. Judas himself knew that what he had done was wrong and you read this when you read this passage of Scripture Matthew 27:4a *"I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood."* In this statement Judas is making a statement of repentance for starters and acknowledges that he has done something that is wrong because betraying Jesus was a sin to him because Jesus Christ was innocent. 1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.* The question is, does this also apply to Judas Iscariot having confessed his sin? John says if we confess and the question is; did Judas confess his sin? Has he not looked at Jesus as innocent blood? Did he not return the thirty pieces of silver? John says that we are cleansed from all unrighteousness not some, it is not selective. I told you this is quite an intriguing story.





You might be reading this and asking if the writer of this article perhaps has read this statement by Jesus Christ Matthew 26:24 *For the Son of Man must die, as the Scriptures declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for the one who betrays him. It would be far better for that man if he had never been born!*" probably this is the reason Judas Iscariot hanged himself after betraying Jesus.

We however wish to show you that if this is the statement that made him to hang himself, then his memory was a selective one. Can you also put the Scripture in Matthew 26:24 in context? The first part of the scripture speaks about *'the Son of man who must die, as Scripture declared long ago'* and though not mentioned explicitly, Judas would ultimately be the one doing the act of betrayal which would lead to Jesus' death. The last part of the same Scripture, could it mean that the regret by Judas Iscariot would be so intense or would weigh so heavily on his shoulders and conscience that he would wish he was never born? The trajectory of Jesus' demise was untenable. All we are trying to say is that, this was more like Judas being a means to which a prophecy as great as this which would lead to the redemption of all mankind would come to pass. He played an important role.

Can we agree that sin is sin no matter how small or how big, actually there is no small or big sin because sin is sin? Whilst this article is about Judas Iscariot, can we prick your mind by taking a rabbit trail and looking at how judgmental we can be whilst we choose to be blind sighted by the acts of the other apostles. Can we just for a bit look at Peter just before the betrayal of Jesus Christ? Do you remember these words found in Matthew 26:33 *But Peter told him, "Even if everyone else turns against you, I certainly won't!"* 34 *Jesus said to Peter, "I tell you that before the rooster crows tonight, you will say three times that you do not know me."* We know that you are going to ask what is the big deal about what Peter said and did which is nothing compared to what Judas did? Wait until you hear what Jesus had to say about this one of the good days as He was teaching before His crucifixion. Matthew 10:33 *But those who reject me publicly I will reject before my Father in heaven.* Jesus simply means that if you deny Him, you have no place with the Father in heaven. If Jesus tells the Father that He does not know you, there is only one place you will go to and you guessed it right; hell. This was Peter's destiny after he denied Jesus Christ three times before the cock crowed. In your thinking what was the reason Peter cried after he had denied Jesus? Maybe you might need to know that it was probably because he remembered not only what Jesus said about him denying Him but also the words of Matthew 10:33. Peter saw himself doomed and being rejected by Jesus and His Father. But here is the million dollar question: Was Peter condemned by Jesus Christ? Absolutely not, that is an emphatic no! Let us show you how despicable Peter's denial of Jesus Christ was Mark 14:71 *Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this Man of whom you speak!"* This was pretty serious; he swore and cursed as he was denying that he knew Jesus Christ and he did that within earshot of Jesus Christ.

When Jesus Christ was at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked His disciples a question: Matthew 16:13 *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"* for the purpose of this discourse we will cut the other aspects of it and focus on Peter who answered the question inspired by God: Matthew 16:16 *And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."* This was a revelation on which Jesus was going to build His church that is according to the words of Jesus Himself; a few minutes later Jesus tells His disciples that it was necessary for Him to go to go to Jerusalem, and that He would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders who were the leading priests and the teachers of the religious laws but that on the third day He would be raised from the dead.

www.charisbem.org.za





Allow us to play the devil's advocate a bit. Let us look at what Peter said and Jesus' response to that Matthew 16:22 *But Peter took Him aside and began to reprimand Him for saying such things. Heaven forbid, Lord," he said, "This will never happen to you!"* 23 *Jesus turned to Peter and said "Get away from me satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. you are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God."* Here is the thing, Peter spoke these words but Jesus addresses Peter as satan, really? No Jesus is not addressing Peter but satan who has got into Peter and is speaking through him, in other words satan entered Peter but Jesus rebuked the devil not Peter because He could see beyond the uttered statement. Now if you fast forward this to the Last Supper Table on the evening of Jesus' crucifixion this is what happened: Luke 22:3 *Then Satan entered into Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve disciples,* 4 *And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus.* Same thing with Peter who was entered by satan, Judas was also entered by satan, satan who had entered Peter was rebuked by Jesus Christ but satan who entered Judas was not rebuked by Jesus Christ. Do you think Jesus having seen satan in Peter when they were in Caesarea Philippi did not see satan when they were seated at the Last Supper Table? Absolutely not, but Jesus allowed satan to use Judas because 'No Judas no betrayal, no betrayal no crucifixion, no crucifixion no salvation for humanity, no salvation no reconciliation between God and man'. We believe there is a big scheme of things and Judas was that essential piece. This article is pointing Biblical truths, the truth will be known once we are in heaven about Judas' destiny. I believe that God is not only righteous but He is also the God of justice that is how we know Him.

Yes, at one point Jesus said these words to His disciples: John 6:70 *Jesus answered them, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!"* 71 *He was speaking about Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. For although Judas was one of the Twelve, he was later to betray Jesus.* Jesus Christ knew this even before it happened and by saying that Judas was a devil actually meant that later he was going to be inhabited by the devil for His betrayal. Jesus could have stopped the devil just like He did when the devil in Peter was trying to prevent Him from going to the cross; but this was an act that had to be done by Judas for the benefit of all humanity.

Here is another question: Did Judas Iscariot have a choice when it came to the Bible prophecy and word of God where He, Judas was supposed to betray Jesus Christ, remember Scripture said it several times that it was written that Judas was going to betray Jesus. What chance did Judas have against what is said by God through the mouth of Isaiah the prophet: Isaiah 55:11 *so My word that proceeds from My mouth will not return to Me empty, but it will accomplish what I please, and it will prosper where I send it.* If He had not done the act of betrayal, will it not be considered as defiance of God's word?

Contrary to popular belief Judas Iscariot was very close to Jesus Christ, John 12:4 *But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was going to betray Him, asked,* 5 *"Why wasn't this perfume sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?"* 6 *Judas did not say this because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief. As keeper of the money bag, he used to take from what was put into it.*





A treasurer in any organization is very close to the CEO of that company, so in this instance Jesus did not choose one of the other eleven to be a treasurer but Judas, the same disciple He knew would steal from Him and also betray Him later. At the Supper Table this is what Jesus said: Matthew 26:23 *Jesus answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with Me will betray Me.* This tells you that Judas also ate with Jesus and was part of the declaration of Jesus Christ where His blood is concerned: Matthew 26:28 *This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.* Here is the question does this include Judas or is he excluded in the many Jesus Christ is talking about considering that he partook of the meal with the other eleven disciples?

We want you to navigate this maze with us. There is this remarkable statement which was uttered by Jesus Christ just a few hours before He was crucified. Matthew 26:31 *Jesus said to his disciples, "During this very night, all of you will reject me, as the Scriptures say, 'I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' 32 But after I have been raised from the dead, I will go ahead of you to Galilee and meet you there."* Knowing that they [the eleven] were going to deny Him, He tells them that He would meet them at Galilee after He has been raised from the dead. Let us share the implication of this statement by Jesus Christ. Jesus knew what they were all going to do but forgave them even before they did it, put simply, He forgave them in advance; they were forgiven before they had sinned against Him. Jesus was talking to the twelve disciples which included Judas Iscariot, so when you consider this in the context of the statement made by Jesus, Judas Iscariot was also informed by Jesus that when He was raised from the dead, he would also meet Him in Galilee. Let us further share with you what Jesus said after His resurrection: Mark 16:7 *But go and tell His disciples and Peter; He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you."* The same Peter who cursed and swore that he did not know Jesus Christ was to be given the same message as the other disciples. Don't you think that if Judas was still alive Jesus would have told them to tell Judas too? There is a tendency of looking at Judas and Peter as the chief sinners, but I have got news for you. Yes, Peter denied Jesus Christ, yes Judas betrayed Jesus Christ, people exonerate the other ten disciples which is not the correct thing to do because though they did not pronounce their denial of Jesus Christ in words, they did it by walking away from Him which is denial through their actions.

Given the above discourse; do you think Judas is in heaven or hell? We hope we have helped you to come to your own conclusion.

Stay blessed!

