

Easter Teaching No. 3

Jesus Identifies the Betrayer

To reiterate, we have seen that the religious leaders plotted to kill Jesus but away from the crowd so as not to incite a riot.

Judas approached the religious leaders and for the agreed price of 30 pieces of silver, he agreed to hand Jesus over to them at the first opportunity.

It was the eve of Passover and Jesus and his disciples were eating the Passover Meal (Seder), our equivalent to Maundy Thursday evening. Their Passover lamb would have been sacrificed in the Temple Compound that afternoon, and then roasted ready for the meal they were just enjoying.

Jesus knew this would be his last Passover meal and he transformed some of the traditions to become the 'Communion' or 'Breaking of Bread' that we observe today. But that is not the purpose of our study here.

Jesus was very aware of who it was who would betray him that night. Of course, the other disciples had no idea what sort of evening this would turn out to be, and that actually it would be the very last meal they would share with Jesus before his death.

In John 13:5 -We are told that Jesus poured water into a basin and wrapped a towel around his waist and proceeded to wash his disciples feet. An unusual thing to do as it was usually the hands that were washed. You probably remember Peter's objection to this and then after Jesus' admonition, his fervour to be washed completely by Jesus! However, in Verse 10 Jesus said that all his disciples were clean except for one of them, as he knew who was to betray him.

Verse 18: Jesus is encouraging his disciples to be servants and to serve others, but he was not referring to them all.

Vs: 18: I am not referring to all of you, I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfil the passage of scripture "He who shared my bread has turned against me". I am telling you now before it happens so that when it does happen, you will believe that I am who I am.' After he said this Jesus was troubled in his Spirit and testified 'One of you is going to betray me'. This was to fulfil Psalm 41:9

If we turn to Matthews account chapter 26:23 he adds ' But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him that he had not been born'

The disciples were shocked and wanted to know who it was who was going to betray him.

John 13:26: 'It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish'.

Back to Matthew 26:25, Judas, the one who would betray him, said 'surely you don't mean me Rabbi?' Jesus answered 'You have said so'.

Now although this sounds like a tame reply on Jesus' behalf, in the language of the day it was actually an affirmative in the strongest sense, and we actually see this at the trial of Jesus later on in our studies where Jesus affirms in the strongest possible terms that he is the King of the Jews to Pilate.

When Jesus dipped the bread into the dish and offered it to Judas, Satan entered into Judas again, and Jesus said to Judas

'What you are about to do, do it quickly'.

The other disciples did not understand and thought that as Judas was the Treasurer, Jesus must have instructed him to buy something for the festival.

John tells us - that it was night. It was obviously night as this was an evening meal - so what did John mean by this? One of John's sub-themes in his book was the conflict between the light and the dark. Judas was of the dark, he went out into the dark and the deed he was about to perform was of the dark. Judas was characterised as having darkness and deception in his heart.

This was about to be a night like no other, the beginning of the road to Calvary, a dark evening indeed.