

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expository Study of The Gospel According to Luke Chapter 22- Luke 22:1-6 325- Satan Enters into Judas

August 21, 2016

Luke 22:1-6

1 Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching.

2 The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Him to death; for they were afraid of the people.

3 And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve.

4 And he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them.

5 They were glad and agreed to give him money.

6 So he consented, and *began* seeking a good opportunity to betray Him to them apart from the crowd.

To the Glory of God

Now I want to begin this sermon with a statement, and then go about to prove that statement by what Dr. Luke wrote here in the first six verses of Chapter 22. Here is the statement:

Sins that changed the course of history served to fulfill God's eternal Decree to glorify Jesus Christ and save His people.

Great sins, terrible sins, earth-shaking sins, sins that transformed the world, like the betrayal of Jesus Christ, did not hinder or nullify God's Determination to exalt Jesus Christ and to save every single one of the unworthy sinners that God chose to save from before the foundation of the world. No, in His absolute Sovereignty, God

orchestrated the horrific betrayal of Judas here to actually *fulfill* His Decrees.

Let me say this another way. God's eternal Decree to "see to it" that Jesus has a Name that is above every other name, so that at the Name of Jesus, every knee will bow and so that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and at the same time, God's eternal Decree to "see to it" that every single one of the lost sinners whom God set His Love upon from the very beginning will be saved, those two Decrees of God, *would not* and *could not* have happened, without the horrendous sin of Judas being done.

Let me say this yet another way. Jesus is *not* exalted right now and you are *not* saved right now *in spite* of Judas' wicked and evil betrayal, but *because of it!*

Now this is a lot deeper and more profound than many of you have previously thought because there are several things at work here, all at the same time:

- ✓ Judas' betrayal of Jesus was pure evil.
- ✓ Judas betrayed the Lord because he *wanted* to- thus he was fully culpable and was damned to "**his own place (The Acts 1:25)** in hell" because of it.
- ✓ It was God's perfect Will that Judas betray Jesus.
- ✓ God did not *force* Judas to betray Jesus.

Make no mistake about this, dear friends, the single most *spectacular* sin that has ever been committed in the history of the world was the brutal murder of Jesus Christ, Who was the morally perfect, infinitely worthy, divine Son of God. And probably the single most despicable act in the *process* of that murder was the betrayal of Jesus by one of his closest friends, Judas Iscariot.

Judas is one of the most amazing and saddest people in the entire Bible. And as we studied back in Chapter 6, Judas was one of the twelve Apostles that Jesus had personally chosen out from the larger group of disciples or learners. Jesus spent all night in prayer agonizing over His choice of the men who would be specially gifted and specially anointed and specially empowered by God the Holy Spirit to do four things:

1. Receive and articulate the final, full, and completed Revelation of God to Man in 27 inspired Books.
2. Give Divine Credibility to that radical new Revelation through signs, wonders, miracles, and various gifts of the Holy Spirit.
3. Correctly interpret the mysteries of the Old Covenant.
4. Establish the Christianity on the earth.

That was the Ministry of the Apostles. And if anybody in the history of the world should have failed, it was them. What Jesus told them to do was completely impossible. And yet, they *didn't* fail, they actually *did* what God called them to do! And the fact that we are sitting today in a Church, 21 centuries later, that is genuinely struggling to follow the Divine Truth that these men laid down, is testimony to the amazing success that these men worked through God. And Judas Iscariot was chosen to be with these men.

And so, Jesus stayed up all night in prayer so that He could pick the right men to do this. 4 of them were fishermen, one was a terrorist, one was a despised tax collector, and one was a traitor. None of them were priests, and none of them had been theologically trained by the ruling class of religious experts of that day.

All of them suffered unbelievable persecutions and all of them, save for John, died a martyr's death, and that wasn't their fault, they tried their best to kill him, and the man just would die.

Now for the most part, the Apostles were “**uneducated and untrained men**” (**The Acts 4:13**). And yet God gave them the most intelligent and the wisest and the most important Doctrine in the history of the world. None of them had any political or financial connections and had no connections at all to the religious elite located in Jerusalem. Yet they were the single most humble, obedient, spiritual followers of Jesus that has ever graced the earth. And just in case somebody would get the notion that they have some or all of what that these men had, let me read what John said about this group from **1 John 1:3**:

what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

First of all, notice that John said that what the Apostles proclaimed to us in Scripture was *not* something they read in another book. No, John says here that what the Apostles proclaimed to the world in New Testament Scripture is what they personally saw with their own natural eyes and what they heard with their own natural ears. And then John goes on to say:

... so that you too may have fellowship with us ...

John says here that the goal of all of the writings of the Apostles in the New Testament is so that, we who are saved, may have fellowship with *them*, the Apostles! Now why didn't John say that the goal was so that we could have fellowship with Jesus or with God? Why did he say that the goal was so that we would have fellowship with the Apostles? Look at the next part of that verse:

... and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

Now what this means is that John is making the fantastic claim that the Apostles were in correct fellowship with Jesus Christ and with God the Father. In other words, the fellowship that the Apostles had with Jesus Christ and with God the Father is the one and only *model* by which all who follow them in the Church should follow.

And so, because that is true, if anyone in the Church hopes to be in right fellowship with Jesus Christ and with God the Father, we *must also* be in right fellowship with the Apostles.

In other words, there is no such thing as *anybody* being in right fellowship with Jesus Christ and with God the Father while they are at odds with what the Apostles taught in New Testament Scripture. In fact, it is what the Apostles taught in the New Testament that *defines* what a correct and proper fellowship with Jesus Christ and with God the Father looks like.

Now there is no human on earth today that can make that claim. No Pastor, no Elder, and no Church Leader can make this claim. This claim is solely the purview of the Apostles.

Now, for a good part of my Christian pilgrimage, I thought that "Christ" was Jesus' last name, and that "Iscaiot" was Judas' last name.

I later learned that "Christ" was the Greek version of the Hebrew *title* of "Messiah" or "Anointed One". And Judas was *not* the son of Mr. and Mrs. Iscariot either. "Iscariot" is simply the English transliteration of the region of Kerioth, which is close to Jerusalem. And so "Judas Iscariot" is "*Judas who was from Kerioth*". So one of the distinctions about Judas is that he was the closest one of the Apostles to Jerusalem, and I think that is significant. All of the other Apostles came from the region of Galilee, except for Judas, the traitor.

Now there are many things we could say about Judas. But this is how the four Gospels talk about Judas:

- ✓ "**... Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, *the one who betrayed Him.***" (Matthew 10:4)
- ✓ "**Judas, *who was betraying Him*, said, 'Surely it is not I, Rabbi?' Jesus said to him, 'You have said it yourself.'**" (Matthew 26:25)
- ✓ "**... and Judas Iscariot, *who betrayed Him.***" (Mark 3:19)
- ✓ "**... and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, *who became a traitor.***" (Luke 6:16)
- ✓ "**But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, *who was intending to betray Him*, said,"** (John 12:4).
- ✓ "**Now he meant Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the Twelve, *was going to betray him.***" (John 6:71)
- ✓ "**Judas also, *who was betraying Him*, was standing with them."** (John 18:5)

Now I want to bring to your attention another matter about Judas that is often overlooked, but which I think is very important. And that is the connection between the love of money and Judas' sin. And to do that, we need to understand just how serious the love of money is. So let's go to **1 Timothy 6:3-12**:

3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,

4 he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,

5 and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

6 But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.

7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

So, according to verse 3, a pervasive affection for money and what money can do for you is the result of believing real bad doctrine that has two characteristics:

- 1. does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ**
- 2. [does not agree] with the doctrine conforming to godliness**

... and those who are deceived by this false doctrine operate on a false premise:

who suppose that godliness is a means of gain

... this is talking about any Teaching, or any Doctrine that has, as its foundation, the false and sinful notion that pursuing godliness is the *mechanism* that results in material or financial gain. In other words, any teaching that says that the end result of being godly is financial or material wealth is evil and is the product of satan. It is *using* God to get earthly gain, and that is sinful.

And in verses 4-5- the Apostle Paul taught that people who have this sinful mind set and who have been deceived by this false doctrine have certain characteristics:

4 he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,

5 and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth...

... which means that they are not saved. Then Paul taught *how* believers are to arrive at "Great Gain" on this world and in this life:

1 Timothy 6:6

But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.

So the combination of "godliness" plus "contentment" is the source of what Paul called "Great Gain" for believers. And the logic behind this radical concept is given in the next two verses:

7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

Then Paul is careful to warn the young Pastor of the Church at Ephesus (Timothy) with this sobering Truth:

1 Timothy 6:9

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

... and then Paul gives the *foundation* or the *basis* for this statement:

1 Timothy 6:10

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

... which describes Judas to a "T".

Now the phrase, "**have wandered away from the faith**", as a result of longing for money does *not* describe someone who is genuinely saved

losing their Salvation; it describes someone who is merely hanging around Jesus and trying to achieve "gain" through that external association. And this is *exactly* what Judas did.

Now, look at yet another part of this puzzle from **Luke 16:14**:

Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him.

... and then, the Apostle Levi wrote, in **Matthew 26:5**, how the Pharisees also were afraid of the people. And **Matthew 26:4** says they also hated Jesus. And so we have three characteristics of the Pharisees:

1. They loved money.
2. They feared the people.
3. They hated Jesus.

... which are characteristics of what being lost looks like. So, Jesus said in **Matthew 6:24** that if you love money and fear man and do not love Him, you *cannot* be saved. But the love of money can often look very practical. And the fear of men can hide behind masks. But the Bible is clear: If you love money and fear men, you cannot love God or escape hell. And so, loving money and fearing man and *not* loving Jesus makes you a card-carrying member of the crowd who crucified the Author of Life.

And so, the Cross, that horrifying drama of hatred, was really only a symptom of the Pharisees' craving for money, approval, and power. The Cross was really simply a billboard designed to advertise their love for money, set on a hill for all to see.

But, because they had the trappings of man-made religiosity, they would never do something so obvious. What would the people think? The Truth is that it was the people's *love* for Jesus that was half the reason why they hated him so much. These religious authorities were cowards with cravings. So they had to find a way to kill Jesus quietly. They had to find a way to murder an innocent Man without losing any esteem or influence with the people.

But first, they needed an insider, someone close enough to Jesus to betray Him, but far enough from Jesus to betray him. In other words,

they needed a perp dressed like the Pope. And they found the perfect guy in Judas.

Now what possible "gain" did Judas hope to achieve by hanging around Jesus? We need to remember that the Jews of that day didn't view the Messiah the way we view Jesus today. They weren't looking for a merciful "Savior" to *rescue* them from the Wrath of God, they were looking for a "Deliverer" who would rid them of the Gentile pagans who were occupying their land.

They saw themselves as God's people and children of Abraham by birth. And so, they looked at "Salvation" *not* as the gracious forgiving of their sins, but the military deliverance of the geographical real estate of Israel from pagan oppression. And so, Judas saw himself as being in on the ground floor of the next ruler of Israel. That is, until Jesus started teaching His radical doctrine of Love and Mercy and Forgiveness.

Now look what the Apostle John wrote about Judas in **John 12:4-6**:

4 But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said,

5 "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor *people*?"

6 Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.

Don't you find it odd that Jesus put Judas in charge of the money? Why would Jesus put a thief over the money, *especially* since He had the Power to "**know what is in man**" (**John 2:25**). Yet here we have an Omniscient Savior placing a man He knew to be a thief and a traitor over the money. And doing it on purpose. Why? Why not put the Apostle Nathanael over the purse? After all Jesus had described Nathanael this way in **John 1:47**:

... Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!"

So why not put a man over the money who had no deceit? Why put a thief over the money? This makes no sense, unless you were trying to actually *facilitate* the very betrayal that happened. Jesus knew that Judas was not saved and did not love Him. Jesus also knew

that Judas loved money and feared the people, just like the Pharisees. So, I will tell you that one of the reasons why Jesus put Judas over the money was so that it would actually *assist* him in doing what he did. I believe Jesus was putting His money where His Mouth was. Remember that Jesus had said:

Matthew 6:19-21

19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

20 "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

So, in letting Judas carry the moneybag, Jesus showed us by example what this meant. In Judas, Jesus showed us the heart-hardening, heart-blinding, heartbreaking end of treasuring the wrong thing.

Jesus had also said:

Matthew 6:24

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

So, in Judas, Jesus showed us an alarming example of what loving money and hating God actually looks like.

Now what should be shocking to all of us is that for quite a while loving money and hating God can actually look like devotion to God. And that is what is so frightening about Judas.

For a long time, Judas's reputation was as a student and close companion of Jesus. Judas lived with Jesus and the other eleven disciples for the better part of three years. He traveled long, dusty roads with these missionary comrades. He ate with them, sat around evening fires with them talking about the Kingdom of God. Judas prayed with them and he was privileged to hear more of Jesus's sermons, first-hand, than almost anybody on earth.

Judas received personal instruction from Jesus. He witnessed Jesus's incredible miracles and saw the Father provide for their needs over and over again.

All during the time Judas was part of the Twelve, he mostly said and outwardly performed the right things. It's astonishing that none of Judas's fellow Apostles perceived his deceitfulness. Even when Jesus finally sent Judas off to carry out his betrayal from the table at the Last Supper, the others didn't seem to suspect him. It was a shocking surprise to all of the other Apostles when they found out that Judas had sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.

But Judas's masquerade is a lesson for all of us. Wolves can look and sound almost exactly like sheep. And sometimes Jesus, for His Own reasons, allows the disguised wolves to live among the sheep for a long time and do great damage before their deception is exposed.

And when this happens, we must trust that the Lord knows what He's doing. Judas reminds us that even ravaging wolves have a part to play in the drama of Redemptive History. Now please read **Luke 22:3** again:

And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve.

Now this is interesting. What are we to make of this statement? When Luke tells us in verse 3 that "**Satan entered into Judas,**" several questions come to our minds:

1. Did satan *overpower* a genuinely saved man here, or was Judas already walking in line with satan and Dr. Luke was merely describing that the devil had decided that it was now time?
2. Why did satan do this since the Death and Resurrection of Jesus would result in his own final defeat?
3. Where was God while all this was going on?

So let's take these questions one at a time.

1. Did Satan Overpower a Genuinely Saved Man?

No. Judas was *not* an innocent bystander when satan entered into him. The Apostle John said in **John 12:6** that Judas was a thief. And John went on to say that Judas “pilfered” what was in the money box.

And if that sounds incredible, just think of the scandalous behavior of so-called Christian leaders today who use ministry gifts to buy \$39,000 worth of clothes at one store in a year, and send their kids on a \$29,000 trip to the Bahamas, and drive a white Lexus and a red Mercedes, and beg people to buy them a new private jet. I tell you the spirit of Judas is alive and well today.

Now keep in mind that when Jesus handed out the special anointing and authority to cast out demons and heal the sick and raise the dead and perform miracles, Judas was right there to receive that Power. And when the Apostles were sent out to do great exploits, Judas went, too.

You see, if Judas had *not* cast out demons with the other Apostles or if he had not healed the sick or had he stayed back with Jesus and had not gone out, it would have been obvious that something was wrong. So we have no reason to doubt that the mighty signs and wonder and the various gifts of the Holy Spirit that the Apostles used was also used by Judas as well. And this is *exactly* what Jesus meant when He said in **Matthew 7:22-23**:

22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'

23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

But, as Judas sat beside Jesus with his pious, religious face, and went out and cast out demons in Jesus' Name, he was not a righteous lover of Jesus. Judas loved money. Judas feared the people. Judas did not love Jesus. He loved the power and pleasures that money could buy.

So we need to understand, dear friends, that satan does not take innocent people captive, precisely because there are *no* innocent people. People are born in sin and they are shaped in iniquity from their mother's womb at the moment of conception. Every human who is

conceived is a child of the devil by birth. And the only way to become a child of God is to be *born again*. And so everyone who is not saved *already* belongs to satan.

And so satan holds absolute authority wherever sinful passions hold sway. Judas was a lover of money, and he covered it with a phony, external relationship with Jesus. And then he sold the Prince of Life for thirty pieces of silver!

2. Why Did satan Do This?

Didn't satan understand that the Death and Resurrection of Jesus would result in his own final defeat? Yes, he did. When Jesus began His Ministry, satan tempted Him to turn him away from the path of suffering and sacrifice. In **Matthew 4**, in the wilderness, satan tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread, and jump off the temple, and get the rulership of the world by worshipping him.

And the point of all these temptations was to try to get Jesus to *not* walk on the path of Suffering, Sacrifice, and Death. Satan wanted Jesus to use His Divine Power to avoid suffering and to escape it.

So what were the evil sins that satan tried to get Jesus to commit?

- Eat food rather than Fast.
- Become known rather than stay obscure.
- Prove His Deity by performing now falling down.

... which would have alleviated the suffering and removed the rejection and avoided the Cross, things we would consider to be good things. But the suffering and the rejection and the Cross was God's Will. And Jesus loved His Father more than he loved His Own Life.

And so, what we have to understand is that it was God's Will for Jesus to suffer and be rejected and to die a horrible, cruel, and unjust death. The Bible says that it pleased the Lord to crush Jesus. So it was God's Will for Jesus to hang there screaming in agony as God's poured the full fury of His Wrath on Him. Because through that horrific suffering and agony and death, the two Decrees of God would be fulfilled:

A. Jesus Would Have a Name greater than any other name.

B. All of God's elect would be saved.

... so *anything* that would hinder Jesus from going to the Cross was a work of satan. So satan surely did *not* want Jesus crucified. It would be his own undoing.

Yet here he is in **Luke 22:3** entering into Judas and leading him to betray the Lord which would facilitate Jesus going to the Cross. Why the about-face? Why try to divert Jesus from the Cross for over thirty years, and then take the initiative that would bring Him to the Cross?

Satan saw his efforts to divert Jesus from the Cross failing. Time after time, Jesus kept the course. His Face was set like flint to die, and satan concludes that there is just no stopping Him. Therefore, satan resolves that if he can't stop it, he will at least make it as ugly and painful and as heartbreaking as possible.

So, it would not simply be a death, it would be a death by betrayal. Death by abandonment. Death by denial. If satan could not stop it, he would drag others into it and do as much damage as he could. It truly was a breathtaking sequence of sins that brought Jesus to the Cross.

3. Where was God?

And this is the most important question. Where was God when all this was going on? What was God's Role in the most amazing sin that ever happened, the murder of Jesus Christ? And this is where the understanding of the absolute Sovereignty of God really takes hold.

As I have told you numerous times before, God is sovereign. He is *absolutely* sovereign. He is absolutely sovereign over *everything*, and He is absolutely sovereign over everything, *all the time*.

There is nothing that happens anywhere in the created universe that God not only knows about, but, also, that He has total and complete Authority and Control over. And that is true from a leaf that falls in the Amazon forest, to a sparrow hopping on the ground, to the hairs on your head turning white or falling out, to the evil decisions and choices of lost people, to the rising and falling of nations, to the unspoken prayer of a woman in the Sahara Desert who has no water.

And there are two main ways in which God manifests this absolute Sovereignty:

- A. Actively
- B. Passively

There are times that God *actively* and *forcefully* and *decisively* moves upon people and mountains and stars and oceans to *cause* His Will to come to pass. He *changes* minds and *inserts* Himself and *overrides* previous decisions and *ignores* human plans and interrupts ongoing activities so as to *impose* His Will and assure that Jesus is exalted higher than anyone else, and that all of those sinners that He chose to save from before the foundation of the world will be saved and they will be sanctified and they will be glorified forever!

But, as it pertains to evil, God's Sovereignty is manifested differently. God is perfectly Holy and Righteous. And so God can't get anywhere near sin or evil in any way. So God cannot be tempted with evil, and He does not tempt any Man to sin. God doesn't *force* anyone to sin. People sin because they want to. And because that is true, God holds them accountable for their sin.

We must understand that Evil is not something that God made. Evil is not a created commodity like a mountain or a tree or a man. What God made was "very good". When Adam and Eve fell, sin entered the world and evil was born. So evil is the "by-product" of Man's rebellion. And now, after 6,000 years of people rebelling against God in 10,000 different ways every day, it appears, at times, that evil dominates even God Himself.

Jesus said that evil lurks inside people, in their fallen and depraved natures, and in their wicked hearts. And so, ever since the Fall, evil lives inside of people and flows out from people to the world around us. And so when satan tempts people to sin, he isn't forcing them to sin either. Satan merely gives people an opportunity to act out on the lust that is *already* resident inside them and to do what they *already* want to do.

Now God could sovereignly stop people from sinning, and sometimes He does. Sometimes it is God's Will for Him to sovereignly and actively *interrupt* a person's plans to sin and to give him a "change of mind". Other times, God sovereignly and actively *hinders* a person's ability to sin as much as he wanted to.

But we must understand that there are times when it is God's Will for evil to be manifested. But, the only reason why a Good and

Sovereign God would allow evil to be manifested is because by sovereignly and passively *allowing* that evil to come forth, a greater Good will come forth because of it.

So, in the case of evil, God doesn't have to actively *force* it to happen. All He has to do is to passively "step aside" and merely *allow* the evil that is *already* in the heart of Man to come forth, at least to the degree that God wills it. So God doesn't *create* evil, He doesn't *force* people to sin, He doesn't *cause* evil to come forth, He simply manifests the *other side* of His Sovereignty and passively steps aside; He passively *allows* the evil that already exists in the depraved nature of Man to be manifested, but only because by allowing that evil a greater Good comes forth.

And the single best example of how by allowing evil to be manifested a greater Good will follow is right here with Judas. It was God's Will for Judas to betray the Lord. But God didn't *force* Judas to act on this. God didn't *cause* Judas to perform his evil. Judas betrayed the Lord because he *wanted* to. The wicked heart to betray the Lord was *already* in Judas to begin with. And the *catalyst* for this betrayal came from several places:

- Judas betrayed the Lord because he did not love Jesus and was not saved.
- Judas betrayed the Lord because he cared nothing for the Will of God.
- Judas betrayed the Lord because he was horribly disappointed that Jesus' Messiahship was not working out the way he wanted.
- Judas betrayed the Lord because Judas loved money and saw his ability to continue to prosper by his association with Jesus fall apart.
- Judas betrayed the Lord because he loved money and was paid to do so.

... and so Judas was fully culpable for this sin. And therefore, God could damn him for this amazing sin, and He did.

Now it is true that God *could* have sovereignly and actively interrupted Judas' plans and stop him. But He didn't. God chose to sovereignly and passively *allow* Judas to carry out the evil that was already in his heart. But the only reason why God chose to allow this

horrific evil in Judas to be manifested was because by sovereignly and passively *allowing* this evil, an infinitely greater Good came forth, namely:

1. God's eternal Decree to "see to it" that Jesus has a Name that is above every other name, so that at the Name of Jesus, every knee will bow and so that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.
2. God's eternal Decree to "see to it" that every single one of the lost sinners whom God set His Love upon from the very beginning will be saved.

... and the Glory of God's Grace would be displayed throughout the Universe!

Now the Scriptures talk about this dynamic of God's Sovereignty and Human Responsibility all the time. For example, in **Matthew 21:42** Jesus was quoting from **Psalms 118:22**, and the *first* part says:

Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone...

... here is the part about Human Responsibility. Jesus said that evil people will reject the Stone that will become the Chief Corner stone. But the rest of that verse says:

... THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'?

So, while their rejection was sinful, and, thus, able to be damned, it also "**came about from the Lord**" and was the Will of God.

The Old Testament prophesied that Jesus would be hated. So when the people actually manifested that hatred in **John 15:25**, they were evil and fully responsible for their sin. But, it was also the Will of God that they do this because 1,000 years earlier **Psalms 35:19** said:

They hate me without cause.

So, why did they hate Jesus? Because they *wanted* to. Did God *make* them hate Jesus so His Word would be fulfilled? No. But God *could* have stopped them and chose not to. But in the case of those that God chose to save, God *did* stop their natural hatred for Jesus so He could save them. So how did this work? God passively “stepped aside” and *allowed* the evil that was already in their hearts to be manifested, but only because it fulfilled the ancient prophecies.

The Scriptures prophesy that the disciples would abandon Jesus, that His feet and hands would be pierced, and that no bones will be broken. And, in every case, the people did these horrible things to Jesus because they wanted to, and, thus, they were fully accountable to God for the evil of their ways.

But, at the same time, it was also God’s Will that all these things happen. So, did God *force* them to sin so His Word could come to pass? No. He sovereignly and passively *allowed* it.

And finally, it was God’s Will that Jesus be betrayed. But you cannot betray a stranger. You can only betray a friend. So a “friend” betrayed the Savior. **Psalm 41:9** says:

Even my close friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.

So, from this we know that it was God’s Will for Judas to betray the Lord. Yes. But why would it be God’s Will for this evil to come about? So that an infinitely greater Good could be manifested. So, since it was God’s Will for Judas to betray the Lord, did God force Judas to do this? No. Why did Judas betray Jesus? Because he wanted to. Why did he want to? Because he was evil. Could God have stopped Judas? Yes, but God chose to sovereignly and passively *allow* Judas to manifest the evil that was already in his heart.

So, where was God in all of this? He was right there, sovereignly and passively *allowing* evil to be manifested, but only to the degree that it would bring forth an infinitely greater Good. And so I believe from all this, that my original statement has been proven to be correct:

Sins that changed the course of history served to fulfill God’s eternal Decree to glorify Jesus Christ and save His people

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.