

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are
Most Surely Believed Among Us
An Expository Study of the Gospel According to Luke
Chapter 22- Luke 22:40-53
334- Are You Betraying the Son of Man with a Kiss?

November 13, 2016

Luke 22:40-53

40 When He arrived at the place, He said to them, "**Pray that you may not enter into temptation.**"

41 And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and *began* to pray,

42 saying, "**Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.**"

43 Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him.

44 And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground.

45 When He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow,

46 and said to them, "**Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not enter into temptation.**"

47 While He was still speaking, behold, a crowd *came*, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was preceding them; and he approached Jesus to kiss Him.

48 But Jesus said to him, "**Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?**"

49 When those who were around Him saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?"

50 And one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

51 But Jesus answered and said, "**Stop! No more of this.**" And He touched his ear and healed him.

52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders who had come against Him, "**Have you come out with swords and clubs as you would against a robber?**"

53 "While I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me; but this hour and the power of darkness are yours."

To the Glory of God

Now the term "Messiah" is the English translation of the Hebrew term "Masiah", which is derived from the verb *masah*, which means: *to smear or anoint*. Originally, when objects such as wafers or even shields were smeared with grease or oil, they were said to be "anointed".

But the term "Messiah" was not used to refer to "anointed" objects that were designated and consecrated for specific purposes, but to people. And so, people who were "anointed" had been "chosen" or "elected" or "designated" or "appointed". And because of this election, or this choosing, these people had been given "authority", and they had been "qualified" and "equipped" to carry out specific offices and tasks. For example, **Psalm 133** says:

1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity!

2 It is like the precious oil upon the head, Coming down upon the beard, *Even* Aaron's beard, Coming down upon the edge of his robes.

3 It is like the dew of Hermon Coming down upon the mountains of Zion; For there the Lord commanded the blessing — life forever.

So, when the oil was placed on Aaron's head, it ran down upon his beard and all the way down to the edges of his robe. That's a lot of oil. And that's symbolic of what it meant to be "anointed", the Calling and Choosing of this person was all consuming, it was dominant, it flowed all over the vessel. And here the psalmist was comparing the "unity of brethren" to that all-consuming "anointing".

Aaron was chosen by God to be the Priest. And the *reality* of his Divine Choosing or his Divine Election to the Priesthood by God was *signified* by the outward anointing of oil. But it is important to understand that the oil didn't make Aaron to be chosen. Putting oil on his head didn't qualify or equip Aaron for the priesthood. The oil merely signified what God had already done.

So, as time went on, and as the Revelation of God became more and more clear to the people of God, as God's Will began to flow out

from the vagueness and generalities and symbolism of the First Covenant, the people of God began to understand that God was going to choose a Person, a single Man, Who would be from the lineage of their beloved King David, a Man Who would be specially chosen by God and specially anointed by God to bring Salvation and Deliverance and Healing and Redemption.

And this one Man would be totally *consumed* by this Calling. The "Oil of Anointing" would flow down upon Him and *dominate* His Life. This Man would not merely be "anointed" by God to perform a specific task, but would actually be "The Anointed One", meaning the One Who has been specially gifted and specially qualified and specially chosen and specially equipped by God. And so, the verb *masah* became the title *Masiah*, or the *Messiah*.

And the longer it took for Masiah to come, the more the people longed for him. And about 400 years after Malachi had uttered his prophecy, the expectation that Masiah could come at any moment, had reached a fever pitch.

And all during the intervening four centuries between Malachi's prophecy and the angel Gabriel being dispatched from Heaven to Zacharias, there were several men who had tried to lay claim to that title. And we know about two of them from the Bible itself and two of them from history.

According to the Jewish historian, Josephus, about 164 BC, two men, Judah and Mattathias Maccabees, rose up and through military conquest captured a section of Israel from the pagan occupiers and enforced Old Testament Law on that section. And the Maccabees and their successors ruled that area for about 100 years until the Roman army crushed them. And with that military crushing came the crushing of the hopes and dreams of the Jews to one day see Messiah come and finally rid them of their tormentors. And the two apocryphal books of 1 and 2 Maccabees describes some of this. But now please turn with me to **The Acts 5**.

Now you should remember from our journey through **Luke 2**, Jesus had prophesied that after He was killed and risen and ascended that there would be a literal explosion of many of these pseudo-Messiahs that would rise-up, and deceive people and mislead them and add to their further disillusionment. But even though none of these self-appointed Messiah's would succeed in eliminating the pagans from

Israel, Jesus said they *would* cause more and more persecution and terrible political and social turmoil among the Jews that would eventually result in the Government of Rome sending Titus Vespasian down from the North Country to utterly destroy the Temple and Jerusalem and Jewish Worship and their way of life in 70AD.

And so, at one point, soon after Jesus had risen from the dead and ascended into Heaven, the Apostles found themselves at odds with both the Roman and Jewish authorities. And they were being put on trial. And during this trial, a wise and respected Pharisee named Gamaliel rose up to speak. Now this is the man that supposedly trained the young Saul of Tarsus.

Now the issue before the Sanhedrin Court that day was the Doctrine that the Apostles were preaching and teaching. They had finally rid themselves of that rabble rouser Jesus, and many of the Jewish rulers wanted to ban the Doctrine that He taught and kill the Apostles who were the only ones left who had personal connection to Him. But, beginning in verse 34, Gamaliel began to speak:

The Acts 5:34-39

34 But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Council and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time.

35 And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men.

36 "For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a group of about four hundred men joined up with him. But he was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing.

37 "After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census and drew away *some* people after him; he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered.

38 "So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown;

39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God."

Notice in verses 36 and 37 that Gamaliel was relating how that two of these self-appointed "Messiahs", Theudas and Judas of Galilee, had failed in accomplishing what the true Messiah was supposed to do,

proving that they were imposters. But Gamaliel knew that God was going to raise up a real Messiah, who everyone thought would do what these false messiahs did not do. And so, in verses 38-39, this well-respected Pharisee cautioned his fellow-rulers by saying:

The Acts 5:38-39

38 "So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown;

39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God."

So, Gamaliel said, **"stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God."**

In other words, *"the proof of the pudding is in the eating"*. If God is with these Apostles, human beings cannot overthrow them anyway, because God is absolutely Sovereign and all you will do is find yourself fighting against God.

This is an amazing statement and one that gives me great hope that perhaps Gamaliel was a believer, or at least on his way to becoming one. But, at a minimum, you can see that even at this point, *after* Jesus had died and *after* He had risen from the dead and *after* He had ascended into Heaven, that even the wisest and most respected and most learned Jews were still looking for a warrior/messiah who would act *militarily* and *politically* in "saving" or "rescuing" God's people from the infidels, and they still had no concept that the real Messiah was establishing an *invisible* Kingdom by saving God's chosen people from their sins.

And this entire sequence of events with the Apostles in **The Acts 5** is astonishing, especially in contrast with the event in the Garden of Gethsemane in **Luke 22**, where instead of a physical demonstration of Power and Authority, that everyone there, including the Roman soldiers and including the Apostles, thought should have come with Him being the "Anointed One", we see Jesus being betrayed and arrested by evil men, who would humiliate Him, beat Him to within an inch of His Life, and then crucify Him.

Now we took a two week "vacation" to celebrate the 499th year of the Reformation by being obedient to **Hebrews 13:7**, so I want to spend some time this morning refreshing your memory about just what all is going on here in this section of inspired Truth.

Chapter 22 begins with Jesus instituting one of only two Sacraments of the Christian Church, the Lord's Supper. And, as Jesus is going over the value and seriousness of this Last Supper, we saw that this scene is very busy, even chaotic. And in verses 21-22, Jesus was purposefully provocative by making a *general* statement that He knew would incite fear and examination in His followers that would then lead to a demonstration of sin that is almost unbelievable when He said:

Luke 22:21-22

21 "But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table.

22 "For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"

And, as they, at first, began to examine themselves that quickly descended into a display of self-righteousness that Jesus used to teach them how different His Church would be from the lost world. It was, also, at this time that satan entered into Judas to betray Jesus.

After Supper, Jesus brought His disciples with Him to an olive garden that was just outside Jerusalem, that was probably owned by a follower, and it was here that the single most amazing prayer took place.

And then Dr. Luke told us that Jesus left 8 of the remaining eleven disciples at the gate of this Garden and told them to pray so they would not enter into temptation. Jesus then took Peter, James, and John with him some ways into the Garden. But, He didn't tell these three men to pray like the other eight. No, Jesus asked these three men to pray with Him.

And as they looked at the Man that they had abandoned their fishing business for, the Man they had risked everything for, the Man they saw raise the dead and cast out demons and forgive sin and open blind eyes and walk on water, they saw Jesus in a way they had never seen Him before. The Apostle Levi later described this moment in **Matthew 26:37-38:**

37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed.

38 Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me."

Up to this point Jesus had all the answers. These men had watched Jesus stare down the most powerful men in Israel and never blink. He had tied the Jewish lawyers in knots. And so they just knew that at any moment, Jesus would begin to gather His Army together and begin to train them to wage war against the Roman occupiers, because, after all, that's what everybody thought Messiah was going to do.

But here, the Man that these men were betting their lives on, yea, even their very souls on, looked weak and unsteady and unsure. He looked troubled and worried and distraught. They had never seen Him like this before. And it scared them and it hurt them and it profoundly troubled them.

And then Levi tells us:

Matthew 26:39

And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."

Now a strong leader doesn't talk like this. A confident military commander doesn't act like this. A man chosen and elected and anointed by God to lead the nation doesn't ask those who are following him to pray with Him. He doesn't fall on his face in anguish, asking God to let the cup pass from him. Who would follow a man who was this vacillating, this deeply grieved? How does acting like this inspire anyone?

Was Jesus having second thoughts? Was Jesus contemplating making peace with the Jewish rulers? Was He thinking about cutting and running away and leaving the disciples to fend for themselves? So, what in the world is going on here? Why is Jesus so upset and why is He praying like this? I mean, if Jesus is getting scared about what the Jewish rulers and Roman authorities are going to do to Him, what hope do we have?

We have to remember, dear friends, that *none* of these men had ever read what the Apostle Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 5:21**:

He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

... because Paul had not written that verse yet. Because Paul was not even saved yet. And *none* of these men had ever read what the writer of Hebrews wrote in **Hebrews 2:17**:

Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

... because this writer had not been saved yet, either.

So, none of these men understood that Jesus was not afraid of dying, He was agonizing over having to be made sin on behalf of God's elect, and of His Father withdrawing away from Him. Jesus had never sinned, ever. Not even for a second, and the thought that God was going to lay on Him all of the sins of all of God's elect was so heavy a load that He began to seek another way. Combine that with the fact that Jesus knew that the Pristine Nature of God would not allow Him to continue to be "one" with Jesus at the point, and it was more than He could take.

So, Jesus was agonizing over seeking another way to perfectly obey His Father and yet not become sin. He was crying out to God that He could fully submit and yet God not leave Him? But, if not, then may God's Will be done. *That* was His agony. *That* was His prayer. *That* is why Jesus fell on His Face and why an angel had to come to strengthen Him. *That* is why He prayed so hard that He sweat Blood.

Jesus was not afraid to die. He didn't fear what Man could do to Him. Jesus loved His Father to such an extent that He was willing to become a Curse and have His Father delight in crushing Him. Truly this was an amazing moment.

Now the Apostle John tells us that Jesus came to Peter, James, and John three different times during this agony, twice to rebuke them for falling asleep, even though these men had spent their entire lives

staying up all night fishing. So, from that we know, this prayer by Jesus that night went on for a long time, perhaps several hours.

Now Dr. Luke tells us that these three men were sleeping "for sorrow", perhaps so distraught over what they considered to be Jesus' display of weakness and confusion, something that, in their mind, the true Messiah would never demonstrate.

But, the third time, Jesus was back in His calm and confident demeanor. And, this time, Jesus tells these three men the very same thing he told the other eight at the beginning:

Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not enter into temptation.

The Apostle Levi gives us further insight here as he recalls Jesus saying:

Matthew 26:45-46

45 ... Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!

... and this is where we pick up Luke's account in verse 47:

Luke 22:47

While He was still speaking, behold, a crowd *came*, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was preceding them; and he approached Jesus to kiss Him.

So, Judas was leading this group of soldiers and religious leaders. Now John tells us that the reason Judas was leading them:

John 18:2

Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with His disciples.

... so evidently this was not the first time that Jesus' disciples had gone to this Garden. And Judas knew the way and so he was leading the group. So this is the height of betrayal.

Now John also tells us just who was in this group of men that Judas was leading:

John 18:3

Judas then, having received the *Roman* cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

... Levi wrote:

Matthew 26:47

While He [Jesus] was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, *who came* from the chief priests and elders of the people.

Now when John tells us that Judas had “**received the *Roman* cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees**”, that means the chief priests and Pharisees had arranged a deal with the Roman occupiers to send some of their soldiers with Judas and some who represented the Jewish rulers to arrest Jesus, even though the Romans really didn't have a beef with Jesus.

So this could very well mean that the Jewish religious rulers had actually paid the Romans to send soldiers to accompany Judas to the Garden since their complaint against Jesus was a Jewish *religious* matter and of no concern to the Romans.

But, in any event, Judas came to the Garden with a fairly large group, Luke calls it a “crowd”, Levi calls it a “large crowd”, and John says that the “cohort” contained both soldiers and officers.

Now a “cohort” was 1/10 of a legion, and a legion had 6,000 men. So this could have been a crowd of about 600 men. But then, you also have to understand that this crowd also included representatives of the Jewish religious rulers as well as the Roman soldiers and their commanding officers, who brought lanterns and torches and swords and clubs. So this was a seriously large crowd and a seriously dangerous moment.

And at the lead of this large crowd was Judas, who both Luke and Levi made it a point to say was a “part of the twelve”. This was a deep and bitter betrayal by one who had walked with Jesus for 3-1/2 years.

Back at the last Supper, satan had entered into the heart of Judas and totally took over. And when he left, Judas went directly to find the Jewish leaders. He had already made the deal. He had already told them he would deliver Jesus. And they already negotiated the price. So

now was the hour. Judas knew that as soon as Jesus would leave the Upper Room, He would go straight to the Garden of Gethsemane. And so Judas told the Jewish rulers all this and volunteered to lead the group so he could point Jesus out.

Now Judas wanted this to happen fast, really fast. He wanted to take advantage of the night. He wanted to take advantage of the fact that Jesus was alone with the disciples and away from the massive crowds. And he knew exactly where He would be.

But even though Judas is possessed by satan, and even though he is pressed by his own greed, he is still being used by God, not willingly, but sovereignly. So, even in his wicked betrayal, Judas is the servant of a holy and divine Purpose.

Judas wants his money. He wanted his compensation for three wasted years following Jesus around in poverty hoping that Jesus was going to prove to be the real Messiah. And just like so many others, Judas became completely disillusioned with Jesus when things didn't work out the way he thought messiah would operate. Judas, as well as John the Baptist, as well as so many others thought that Jesus was going to set up an earthly throne, and Judas would end up being in some ruling capacity in the Kingdom that Jesus would bring about.

But, as far as Judas was concerned, Jesus had blown it. Instead of gathering a loyal following to destroy the pagans, Jesus taught some kind of foolishness that His followers should forgive their enemies, and love them, and pray for them, and do good to them. What nonsense! Surely the long awaited Messiah would never advocate that, especially to pagans! So, at least *part* of the reason why Judas betrayed Jesus was because Jesus was not acting or talking the way that Judas thought the Messiah was supposed to act and talk.

So, Judas' real bad eschatology encouraged his betrayal. His man-made and false understanding of what the Messiah was supposed to do contributed to Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

And as amazing as that might sound to you, you need to remember that John the Baptist went through the very *same* disillusionment with Jesus. Go quickly to **Luke 7:18-23**:

18 The disciples of John reported to him about all these things.

19 Summoning two of his disciples, John sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?"

20 When the men came to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, to ask, 'Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?'"

21 At that very time He cured many *people* of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many *who were* blind.

22 And He answered and said to them, "**Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.**"

23 "**Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me.**"

Now the phrase “**the Expected One**” is just another way of saying “**The Anointed One**” or “**The Messiah**”. So, because Jesus was not behaving in a way that John thought that the Messiah was supposed to behave, he doubted. And John began to waiver and was seriously thinking about *abandoning* his belief in Jesus and looking for somebody else to follow and love and serve.

But he didn't. The reason John stayed faithful to Jesus and Judas betrayed the Lord was *not* because John was full of faith. It wasn't because John was strong. It wasn't because John had some form of nobility about himself. No. John was horribly offended at Jesus. I mean, after all, Jesus had not even come to visit him in jail and things were not good at all for John.

No, John remained faithful and Judas didn't only because Jesus personally *interceded* on John's behalf and gave him enough information about what the Messiah was supposed to do by quoting from the Prophet Isaiah to keep him. But then Jesus also issued a very strong warning to John by telling him:

Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me

In other words-, "*Hey John-, I'm not coming to rescue you, and you are going to die. Is that okay? Am I worth your death? Are you going to be offended at Me because I don't destroy the pagans that are going to kill you or are you going to remain faithful to Me?*"

So, the difference between John the Baptist and Judas was that God sovereignly intervened to rescue John in his doubt and confusion, and He left Judas to himself. Let me say that again. John the Baptist would have turned against Jesus just as quickly as Judas did, the Bible

says he was already on his way, except that Jesus personally *intervened* for John to rescue Him.

Even though John had been called by God to identify Jesus as “the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world”, he, too, was confused about why Jesus didn’t act like everybody said the Messiah was supposed to act, and why Jesus never even visited him in prison. And so, the greatest prophet born of woman would have collapsed under the weight of his own confusion and doubt, except Jesus graciously rescued him

Now if that bothers you, let me go even further to say that Peter *himself* would have turned against Jesus just as easily and just as angrily as Judas did, except Jesus told Peter in **Luke 22:32**

... I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail

And, if that bothers you, let me go even further by saying that unless Jesus personally intercedes for you and me, it wouldn’t take long before we, too, would become very disillusioned with Jesus and offended at Him, and we would fall away very quickly. So, if we are truly saved, we *stay* saved. Absolutely. But the *way* we stay saved is that we are kept by the Power of God.

In addition to living a sinless Life, in *addition* to dying on the cross and shedding His Blood for our Forgiveness, in *addition* to rising the third day, in *addition* to ascending into Heaven and sitting at the Right hand of the Majesty on High, Jesus is very busy right now. And He is busy *interceding* for us so that all who are saved will *remain* saved, all the way to Glory. So, just like He personally intervened on John the Baptist’s behalf, and just as He personally prayed for Peter, Jesus is right this moment interceding for you and me. Jesus is praying for us that our faith will not fail.

Instead of welcoming the Son of God as their long-awaited and expected Messiah, they sent a group of vigilantes and soldiers to capture Him for the purpose of murdering Him. This is just an amazing way at how people look at Jesus Christ. It transcends this scene.

Because this is an act of serious injustice. These people have no right to arrest Him. There’s no moral or legal reason to arrest Jesus. He’s committed no crime. He committed no crime against God. He

committed no crime against Judaism. He committed no crime against Caesar.

There is no crime here. Jesus broke no law. These men are purely unjust, unfair, and evil murderers who have demonstrated now that they are the children of their father, the devil, who is a liar from the beginning and a murderer. Their deeds against Jesus Christ have no relation to reality, truth or justice. They have no ability to recognize Who is Just and Who is Righteous, and Who is, in fact, God. This is a great injustice.

But, it is also mindless. What did the soldiers and the majority of Jewish leaders have against Jesus legitimately? Nothing. He banished illness from the land of Israel. He fed the poor. He healed people. He cast out demons. He taught the Truth of God. He upheld the Glory of God and the Law of God and the Word of God. And their response was to arrest Him and beat Him and kill Him. But now look at how Judas betrayed the Lord:

Luke 22:47b-48

47 ... Judas, one of the twelve, was preceding them; and he approached Jesus to kiss Him.

48 But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

Jesus was betrayed with a kiss! What hypocrisy! What treachery!

Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?

... of course, this kiss was a signal, a sign that Judas had previously agreed to identify which one of the men was Jesus. So, even though it is night and there is the moon shining, they were in an olive grove, so it's dark and dense, and Jesus is surrounded by eleven men. So, there had to be a signal that identified Jesus.

Now this tells us that there wasn't any distinguishing marks about Jesus that would make Him stand out in the crowd. In His Humanity, Jesus didn't glow, there wasn't any distinguishing signs that made Him different. Jesus was an average man of average height and weight and looked like an average Jew of His day.

But, we need to remember at this point, at this moment, Jesus looked terrible. He had just spent hours in the most grueling agonizing prayer, a prayer so intense that the small blood vessels in His Body near the surface ruptured and Jesus was literally sweating Blood. He cried out in agony to His Father to find another way to redeem fallen man without Him having to be made sin for us. He begged God to not leave Him. Jesus had prayed so hard that God had sent an angel to comfort Him. He prayed so hard that the Church had to invent a word, "Agony", to describe it.

So, Jesus is disheveled, He is exhausted, He is sweating Blood. Jesus has blood running down His Face and Arms and Legs. And as He stands to receive the betrayal of Jesus with a kiss, Peter and James and John look on at Jesus in amazement. And they don't really like what they see. Their handsome, strong, powerful leader looks very vulnerable right now. Their Messiah looks very weak and very tired. In fact, Jesus looks resigned. He looks like He has come to terms with His fate, which as far as they know, is death. And this offends them. Just as Jesus told John the Baptist not to be offended at Him, these men are becoming offended at Jesus. Because they think messiah should rise up and fight, and Jesus looks like He is going to allow these people to arrest Him. And that doesn't sit well with these eleven men.

So, keep in mind that a lot is going on here. God is dealing with Judas to expose him as the hypocrite that he is so God can damn him in his own special place in hell. But God is also dealing with the other eleven men in a way that no one has ever been dealt with before.

The disciples are at the point now of either fighting to save Jesus or running away to save themselves. And we will see them do both. And how God is dealing with them here in the Garden to prepare them for their ministry is literally breathtaking. And Lord willing, we will look deeply into this over the next several weeks.

But once again, the Apostle Levi gives us further insight here. **Matthew 26:48-49** says:

48 Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him."

49 Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.

So, Judas is concerned that there might be an effort for one of the other disciples to step up and claim to be Jesus in the dark so they could get Jesus away to protect Him from the arrest. But Judas wants his money, so he doesn't want there to be any mistake. It was Judas himself who came up with the idea to betray Jesus with a kiss. Judas wanted the right one arrested and taken because only then would he get paid. And it's an unbelievable act of betrayal.

But we have to understand that Judas is a very keen hypocrite. He is very good at operating undercover, because he has been a part of this group of twelve men for three years, day and night, and yet he has never been exposed as a fraud. In fact, he was chosen to take care of the money because he was so trusted. Judas is good at playing the hypocritical game, day and night, and yet he has never had to reveal the truth in his heart.

And this actually *emboldens* him. Little does he realize that the reason he has not been exposed is not because he fooled Jesus, but because Jesus doesn't want to save him. Jesus allows Judas to continue in his deception precisely so he will do what he is doing right now.

And this speaks to human nature. We think that being able to hide and to continue in secret sin is good because we haven't been exposed. And to be able to sin and not be exposed actually emboldens us. But, in reality, the opposite is true. All whom God is truly desiring to save will be exposed. Nothing will be hidden that will not eventually come out. And that exposure is called "Mercy". That exposure is the Love of God. It means that Jesus is personally intervening in your life to correct you so He can save you and rescue you from God's Wrath and Damnation.

When you can sin with impunity and never exposed, when you can live in ongoing continual sin and never have that sin brought to light, that is the frightening sign that Jesus is not dealing with you at all and that He is allowing you to continue on in your wickedness so God can damn you. And that is exactly the way it was with Judas.

Yet, Judas is so deceived that he thinks that everybody thinks so highly of him and thinks that he is genuine, and so they will not think anything of him kissing Jesus.

Now the kind of kiss we're talking about here is a *repeated* kiss along with an embrace. And this is what will make it crystal-clear to the soldiers Who Jesus is, because Judas is going to hold on to Jesus

and kiss Him repeatedly and tenderly while embracing Him, and Judas is going to look Jesus in the eye and call Him "Rabbi". And Jesus responds to this hypocrisy with a question of Truth,

Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?

Really, Judas? A kiss? An embrace? A friendly greeting? You're actually looking Me in the Eye? Even now, you're going to act like you really love Me, when, in fact, you are betraying Me?

Now back in the first century, there were different kinds of kisses. For example, a slave would kiss the back of the hand or maybe the palm of the hand of his master. Slaves also kissed the foot of someone superior to them. Kissing the hem of the garment expressed great reverence. But a kiss on the face, a kiss on the cheek, a full embrace and a tender greeting was a sign of close, intimacy, and warm affection between equals. It is the mark not of gratitude, it is the mark not of homage, it is the mark of selfless love and affection. And so, this kiss is the most ugly act of treachery ever conceived. **Proverbs 27:6** says:

Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

This is what it is like when people in the Church say they love Jesus, but, in reality, that simply *endure* Him. They physically come to Church, but their heart is far from the Lord. They *endure* Church, they *endure* Bible Study, they *endure* being in the Presence of Jesus. They publicly kiss Jesus, but they are willing to walk away from Him in a moment. They say they love Him, but they are willing to trade Jesus for the pleasures of the world in an instant.

And the ones whom God has called and chosen, this hypocrisy will be exposed. Jesus will personally intervene in the lives of these hypocrites to bring conviction and repentance to them. And the rest, Jesus will leave to themselves and they will continue to embrace Jesus and kiss Him and call Him "Lord", while all the while they are betraying Him with the world.

Now we need to know that at this point, Judas knows that Jesus knows, but he doesn't care. Jesus exposed him back in the Upper Room. And Jesus sent him out and told him to go do what he was going to do. So, Judas knew. But he overrides whatever was left of his tortured

conscience, his fevered brain is now under the complete domination of Satan.

Now people have often asked me why Jesus had to have a Body. What is the significance of God putting on human flesh? Well, there are several very important reasons, and over the years we have gone over many of the reasons for the “fleshing of God” or the Incarnation.

But one reason that you might not think much about is that in order for Jesus to suffer and die, He had to have a Body. And He had to plan it way ahead of time because, as the *logos* [word] Who existed before Creation, He couldn't die, He was immortal.

But, God didn't have a body, and so He could not die. And yet, if He didn't die in payment of our sins, nobody would be saved. So, God chose to die for you. He planned the whole thing by clothing Himself with a Body so that He could get hungry and get weary, and so He could be betrayed.

So, the Incarnation is the preparation of nerve endings for the nails. That is another reason God took on flesh. The Incarnation is the preparation of a brow for thorns to press through. He needed to have a broad back so that there was a place for the whip. He needed to have feet so that there was a place for spikes. He needed to have a side so that there was a place for the sword to go in. Jesus needed a Body so there would be a place for the spit to run down when the soldiers spit on Him. He needed a brain and a spinal column with no vinegar and no gall so that the exquisiteness of the pain could be fully felt. And God needed cheeks, fleshy cheeks, so that Judas would have a place to kiss, so Jesus could be betrayed.

But may we *not* betray Jesus. May we embrace Jesus and hold Him and kiss Him and call Him “Lord”, and may we value Jesus and treasure Him, take up our cross and deny ourselves and follow Him because we have been born again and we love Him.

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.