

Tuesday 12 April 2022

Luke 22: 1 - 6

22 Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, 2 and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people. 3 Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. 4 And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. 5 They were delighted and agreed to give him money. 6 He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

I don't know what motivated Judas to do what he did but Luke tells us Satan entered him and so he went to betray Jesus. Last Sunday we read in John that Judas was stealing from the money Jesus and his disciples were collecting, so maybe Satan played on his greed and his ego. Maybe he was angry at Jesus for rebuking him over his comment about Mary. Maybe money had taken over his life and he just needed more and more of it or maybe he was desperately trying to pay back some debt or support some family member and he saw this opportunity for some quick cash. Maybe he was just totally disillusioned and Satan played on that. All the disciples believed that Jesus was the Messiah, the one who would come and save Israel and conquer Rome but all Jesus does is talk about himself dying and nothing about victory for Israel and maybe Judas was having second thoughts that Jesus really was the Messiah and Satan played on that. Maybe he thought he was doing the right thing getting this fake Messiah off the streets.

Whatever the reasons, we know that after Jesus' crucifixion, he is so torn up about what he has done, that he gives back the money and he commits suicide. He never sees Jesus resurrected. He never sees that Jesus really was the Messiah. I have always felt really sorry for Judas and I hope that he repented before he committed suicide and received forgiveness. I hope with all my heart that he like the murderer crucified with Jesus is with Jesus in paradise. We all commit sin, we all betray Jesus in one way or another, even Peter denied knowing Jesus. It's easy to judge and condemn others from the side lines but none of us is perfect and all of us make mistakes. We are just lucky that our mistakes aren't written down for everyone to read. As we think back to Jesus' temptation, we remember that Jesus is the only human who has battled Satan's temptation and won every time.

Prayer

Awesome God, we read the story of Judas and we recognise ourselves in him, we may not have betrayed you for money to the chief priests but when we are faced with temptations by Satan we too give in. We have betrayed you in other ways, not loving our neighbours, not being grateful for what you have done for us, not standing up for you when others speak badly about you. We have proclaimed to yours and have called ourselves Christians but our lives have not always reflected that we truly belong to you. Others have seen our actions and judged you because we have hurt them. Forgive us Lord. Just as Judas regretted his actions, we too regret what we have done and ask for your mercy.