



John 13 verses 21-32 New International Version (NIV)

Jesus is Betrayed

21 After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, “Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me.”

22 His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant.

23 One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him.

24 Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, “Ask him which one he means.”

25 Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?”

26 Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.” Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.

27 As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. So Jesus told him, “What you are about to do, do quickly.”

28 But no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him.

29 Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor.

30 As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

31 When he was gone, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him.

32 If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

We know that Jesus celebrated one last meal with his disciples before leaving to be ambushed by the mob and taken into custody. John’s Gospel is quite different from the other three as it leaves out much of the activities of that supper and focusses on two small parts of the whole – the washing of the disciples’ feet and the flight of Judas from the gathering so that he could go and betray Jesus.

After Jesus has finished washing his disciples’ feet, he becomes troubled, a black cloud seems to descend and he starts to speak of the journey that he has started and which is now coming to an end. You can imagine the disciples talking amongst themselves, then pausing as the mood of the gathering turns chilly.

“What’s that you say, one of us is going to betray you?”

“Who?”

“Tell us!”

And Jesus shares bread with Judas for the last time.

Judas accepts this final gift from Jesus, gets up and leaves the group never to return to them as a disciple.

We all know that Jesus prayed for a whole night before choosing his disciples. And he still chose Judas fully knowing that this man would betray his position of trust first of all by embezzling the gifts they received for their livelihood and ultimately be the one who gives Jesus up to the mob, leading to the crucifixion and death of the Son of God.

I cannot begin to understand how someone who was chosen and trusted with so much could turn his back and destroy all that he had been given. What was he thinking?

I truly feel sorry for any actor who has to play Judas in a play or film.

However, I like to believe that Jesus held out his hand to Judas right to the end by giving him bread and in that gift was all Jesus love and compassion for a Judas who could have been so different. In Jesus eyes, Judas was every bit as precious as any of his other disciples and as precious as anyone who has ever lived or will live in the future. Jesus died for Judas. Jesus dies for the whole of human creation. Jesus dies for me – what a precious and unfathomable thought. AMEN.