



"Were You There" Lenten Devotional
Wednesday March, 27 2024
Luke 22:1-6
Submitted Bro. Jaimie

Devotion:

LUKE 22:1-6 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.

Devotion:

Luke 22:1-6 tells of the plot to kill Jesus and lays out the three central players in that plot. While there would be many personalities and many sources of opposition and hostility the Lord would face in the days leading up to the fulfillment of His earthly mission in His death, burial, and triumphant resurrection, the foundations of the plot against him involved three initial actors: the governing religionists, Judas Iscariot, and Satan himself.

Notice it was Satan and not one of his demons that entered Judas. This passage says much about Satan along with his techniques and purposes. Satan took control of the priorities, focus, and, ultimately, the actions of Judas Iscariot as the tragic day of the Lord's betrayal drew near. Correctly understood, this declaration doesn't imply that Judas became possessed by Satan. Rather, Judas yielded his mind and heart to the designs of Satan.

Why did Judas yield his mind, heart, and life to Satan's influence? Some scholars argue that it was for the money, while others believe that the money was a secondary concern. The Scripture makes it abundantly clear that the money was certainly involved, but the mention of money in the Gospel of Luke appears more incidental than motivating in relation to Judas's actions. Both Mark 14:11 and Luke 22:5 imply that the money was agreed upon after Judas resolved to betray Jesus.

If not the money, what could it have been? We don't know for certain. Power, arrogance, pride, and conceit are definite possibilities. Judas, like many of the Lord's followers, was likely expecting a worldly, earthly, political Messiah – one who would gain military might and thereby deliver the Jewish people from the clutches of Roman domination. As the Lord focused upon the greatest need of all – the salvation of His people from their sins – Judas may well have thought that he could do better. That is, under the influence of Satan, Judas may well have resolved that if Jesus wouldn't rise up and cast off Rome, perhaps he could.

Judas' actions teach us that refusal to trust in God and His timing in our lives can lead us to futile, tragic, and destructive decisions in life. Trust in God!!!

Prayer:

Lord, Your love is everlasting and life transforming. Help me to never fail to claim your love and to always trust in you in all my seasons of life. In your name I pray, Amen.

"Were You There" Lenten Devotional

Maundy Thursday March 28, 2024

Matthew 26:36- 39

Submitted from a devotional by Pastor Greg Laurie

Scripture:

He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, 'My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.'

—Matthew 26:39

Devotion:

As Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, He was in anguish. So much so that Luke's Gospel says He "was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood" (22:44 NLT).

In addition, Mark's Gospel gives us a very important detail that we could easily miss: Jesus cried out, "Abba, Father" (14:36 NLT). We might not catch the significance of this. But today, it isn't unusual to hear Israeli children calling out to their fathers, "Abba!" It's the equivalent of our English word "Daddy."

There is a difference between the terms "Father" and "Daddy." Both describe the same person, but they indicate a difference in relationship. That is not to suggest that Jesus was manipulating God the Father. Rather, it indicated intimacy. Jesus was saying, in effect, "I trust You, Father. I know You are in control."

Then Jesus went on to say, "Everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine" (verse 36 NLT).

That is a hard thing for many of us to say. We might say the words, "Not my will, but Yours, be done." But do we really mean it? What if His will is different from ours? And how can we know the will of God?

We discover God's will through careful study of the Scriptures. And frankly, there will be times when we read things in the Bible and think, "Wow, that is hard. I don't know if I want to forgive this person who has wronged me, but Lord, You have told me in Scripture to do so."

Or, "I don't know that I want to break that relationship off with this nonbeliever that I was thinking of marrying. But Lord, You have told me in Your Word to do so. Not my will, but Yours, be done."

It is okay to think about the future and make plans for our lives. In fact, we should. But we also need to say, "Lord, here are my plans. But if You have a different plan in mind, I am willing for You to overrule what I have decided,

because I've come to discover that Your plan is better than my own. So not my will, but Yours, be done."

This is very important to say to God, especially if you're young. Dwight L. Moody said, "Spread out your petition before God, and then say, 'not my will but yours be done.' " He concludes, "The sweetest lesson I have learned in God's school is to let the Lord choose for me."

We are going to have our Gethsemanes in life. We will face times of ultimate stress, moments of pressure that seem to be too much. What will we do then? Will we say, like Jesus, "Abba, Father"? Will we say, "Your will be done"?

Would you let the Lord choose for you? Would you be willing to take your future and place it in God's hands?