

Luke 22:47

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

Analysis

While he yet spake, behold a multitude—The betrayal arrived even as Jesus warned about temptation, giving the disciples no additional time to prepare. **He that was called Judas** (ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰούδας, ho legomenos Ioudas)—Luke's phrasing distances Judas from his identity as disciple, as if the title no longer fits the traitor. One of the twelve underscores the horror: this betrayer was among Christ's inner circle, chosen personally by Jesus (6:13-16). The verb **drew near unto Jesus to kiss him** (ῆγγισεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ φιλῆσαι αὐτόν, ēngisen tō Iēsou philēsai auton) describes intimate approach for a gesture of affection.

The kiss (φιλέω, phileō) was the prearranged signal to identify Jesus in the dark (Matthew 26:48). Judas weaponized intimacy, turning a gesture of honor and friendship into an act of treachery. This kiss is history's vilest hypocrisy—betraying the Son of God with a sign of love. Yet Jesus had known from the beginning (John 6:64, 70) and could have prevented it. Instead, He submitted to betrayal as part of the Father's redemptive plan. Judas' kiss sealed not Christ's doom but Judas' own damnation (Luke 22:22).

Historical Context

The 'multitude' (ὄχλος, ochlos) included temple guards, Roman soldiers, and representatives of the Sanhedrin armed with swords and clubs (Matthew 26:47, John 18:3, 12). They came with torches and lanterns expecting resistance, though

Jesus surrendered peacefully. The customary greeting kiss between rabbi and disciple made Judas' betrayal method especially contemptible—he perverted sacred tradition into an act of evil. Judas had left the Upper Room hours earlier to finalize his betrayal with the chief priests (22:3-6), receiving 30 pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14-16). He knew Jesus' custom of praying at Gethsemane (John 18:2) and led the arresting party directly there.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Judas' use of the kiss to betray Christ expose the danger of religious externalism without heart devotion?
2. In what ways might you be 'kissing' Jesus with outward religious gestures while betraying Him through disobedience?
3. What does Jesus' willing submission to Judas' betrayal reveal about His commitment to accomplishing your salvation at any cost?

Interlinear Text

"Ἐτι δέ αὐτόν λαλοῦντος ἵδού, ὅχλος καὶ ὁ
while he yet And him spake behold a multitude and G3588
G2089 G1161 G846 G2980 G2400 G3793 G2532

λεγόμενος Ἰούδας εἷς τῶν δώδεκα προήρχετο αὐτόν
he that was called Judas one of the twelve went before him
G3004 G2455 G1520 G3588 G1427 G4281 G846

καὶ ἤγγισεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ φιλῆσαι αὐτόν
and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him
G2532 G1448 G2424 G3588 G5368 G846

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org