

Matthew 26:45-50

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Judas's Betrayal

Jesus awakens His disciples to inform them that Judas has betrayed Him. Judas is accompanied by an armed crowd who have been sent by the priests and elders to arrest Jesus. Judas identifies His master with a kiss.

The parallel gospel accounts of this event are found in Mark 14:41-46, Luke 22:47-48, and John 18:2-9.

- Note: Throughout this portion of commentary, each time a Jewish law was broken by the chief priests and elders as they prosecuted *Jesus*, we identify that rule by means of brackets—i.e. [Rule 2: Neutrality]. The numbering of these rules is according to The Bible Says series about the Religious Prosecution of *Jesus*.

For a complete listing of the broken rules see [Jesus's Trial: Part 1. The Laws Broken by the Religious Leaders](#).

Matthew continues his narrative of *Jesus's* final night before His crucifixion.

Jesus's arrest and *Judas's* betrayal of his *Rabbi* in the Garden of Gethsemane most likely took place on the night of Nisan 15 (sometime after midnight on Friday by Roman reckoning).

See "[Timeline of Jesus's Final Day](#)" to learn more about the timing and sequencing of this event.

For the past few hours *Jesus* had been fervently praying (Luke 22:44) in the Garden of Gethsemane ("the olive press") to His Father, asking God "If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me" (Matthew 26:39). Shortly after they arrived at Gethsemane, *He* asked His *disciples* to "sit here while I go over there and pray" (Matthew 26:36). *He* also asked *them* to "pray that you may not enter into temptation" (Luke 22:40).

Jesus then took Peter, James, and John further into the garden and confided to them how deeply troubled *He* was, and asked *them* to *keep watch* (Matthew 26:37-38). *Jesus* then went a little further ("about a stone's throw") to pray (Luke 22:41). *Jesus* returned to His *disciples* twice, only to find *them sleeping* both times (Matthew 26:40-41, 43). Both times *He* woke them up and exhorted *them* to pray (Mark 14:40). *Jesus* went back to *praying* again (Matthew 26:44).

It appears that three things occur as the events of this passage unfold. Matthew, Mark, and Luke mention two of them. John mentions the other. The three events are:

- 1. JESUS AWAKENS HIS DISCIPLES TO LET THEM KNOW THE HOUR HAS COME**
- 2. JESUS ADDRESSES THE LARGE CROWD (John 18:4-8)**
- 3. JUDAS IDENTIFIES AND BETRAYS JESUS WITH A KISS**

It is unclear which of these events took place second or third. The commentary for this section will use these events in the order listed above as an outline to unfold what happened.

Before we continue, it is worth pointing out a few things about *Judas* Iscariot.

Jesus had numerous *disciples*, but *He* selected *twelve* to be among His closest apprentices and *He* commissioned them with special authority (Matthew 10:1).

Judas Iscariot was *one of the twelve* (Matthew 10:4). The name *Judas* Iscariot means “Judah of Kerioth.” Kerioth was a town located in the far south of Judea, approximately 25 miles south of Jerusalem and 10 miles west of the Dead Sea. *Judas* had the distinction of being the only disciple from Judea, the southern part of Israel. The other eleven were from the north, the Galilee region ([see map](#)).

The Gospel of John indicates that *Jesus* spent His first year in Judea, with little known fruit from His efforts. It could be that *Judas* was His first and only disciple (from *the twelve*) from that year of effort. As *the one* who would betray *Him*, that would make complete Judea’s rejection of *Jesus*.

Moreover, in Hebrew, *Judas*’s actual name was “Judah,” just as Zacharias’ actual name was “Zachariah.” The Hellenization of these Jewish names can cause us to miss some prophetic connections. Judah, the patriarch of the tribe of Judah (the tribe of the Jews) prefigured Judah from Kerioth (*Judas* Iscariot). In Genesis, Judah betrayed his brother Joseph. (Joseph serves as a type of the Suffering Servant Messiah predicted in the Old Testament (Isaiah 52:13- 53:12), while King David is a type of the Conquering Messiah.)

Judah plotted to kill Joseph. He put Joseph in the ground for 3 days and then sold him for shekels of silver (Genesis 37:26-28). Later Judah of Genesis repented of his betrayal (Genesis 43:8-9, 44:18-34). So would “Judah Iscariot” (Matthew 27:3).

Jesus is of the lineage of King David, who is descended from the tribe of Judah (Matthew 1:2, 6, 16). Judah also serves as a type of the Messiah, as he offered himself as a ransom for his brother Benjamin. This event foreshadows *Jesus*, who gave His life as a ransom for the world (Genesis 44:33-34, 1 Timothy 2:5-6).

- 1. JESUS AWAKENS HIS DISCIPLES TO LET THEM KNOW THE HOUR HAS COME**

Then He came to the disciples a third time. Again, they were *sleeping*. *Jesus* woke *them* up and *said to them*: “*Are you still sleeping and resting?*” (vs 45). There appears to be a note of disappointment in *Jesus*’s rhetorical question (the question presumes an answer of “Yes”). He is chastising *the disciples* because they were *still sleeping* when they should have been praying.

But instead of asking His *disciples* to pray, *Jesus* announced *the hour is at hand* (vs 45). From Luke's account it appears as though *Jesus* was in the middle of asking *them* to pray again when His enemies appeared (Luke 22:46). But "while He was still speaking, behold, a crowd came" to arrest *Him* (Luke 22:47).

When *Jesus* saw this, *He said*: "*Behold, the hour is at hand.*"

And when *He said* this, *He* was announcing that the moment *He* had long been preparing for had finally come.

The hour refers to the moment for *Jesus* to fulfill the Messianic mission of His first advent to earth. It was *the hour* for *Him* to suffer and die for the sins of the world (Isaiah 53, Matthew 20:28, John 1:29, 3:17).

This was the same terrible *hour* *Jesus* was referring to when *He* told *the disciples*:

"Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour."
(John 12:27-28)

As the Messiah, this *hour* was the defining moment of *Jesus*'s first coming.

Jesus had been mindful of this *hour* throughout His ministry:

- When His family pressured *Him* to be more public, *Jesus* reminded them that "My hour/time has not yet come" (John 2:4, 7:6).
- *Jesus* had been able to avoid arrest on multiple occasions before because, "His hour had not yet come" (John 7:30, 8:20).
- It was likely for this reason also, that when the Jews came to make *Him* king by force, that *He* "withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone" (John 6:15)
- And it was likely because His time had not yet come that *Jesus* constantly told people to keep quiet about the miracles *He* had done for them (Matthew 8:4, 9:30, 12:16, 17:9).

Jesus was keenly aware of His assigned destiny as this *hour* approached:

- *He* knew it was imminent

(Matthew 26:18, John 12:23-28, 13:1).

- *He* had long been preparing *the disciples* for this *hour*

(Matthew 10:38, 16:21, 17:12, 17:22-23, 20:17-19).

- And *Jesus* had been preparing *the disciples* for this *hour* throughout that night

(Matthew 26:21, 26:31-32, 26:41, John 13:33, 14:1-3, 14:18-19, 14:27-29, 16:1, 16:4-7, 16:12, 16:16-22, 16:32-33).

But now His *hour* had come.

So, *Jesus* awoke His *disciples* and told *them*: *Behold, the hour is at hand.*

After making this significant announcement, *Jesus* continued with a startling remark: *and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners* (vs 45).

The phrase, *the Son of Man*, was a Messianic title and reference from Daniel (Daniel 7:13-14).

To learn more about the meaning of this title, see our article on "[The Son of Man.](#)"

Jesus had previously identified Himself as *the Son of Man* to the *disciples* (Matthew 16:13, 15-17, 16:27-28). And *Jesus* had previously told *them* that as *the Son of Man*, that *He* would be *betrayed into the hands of men* to be killed (Matthew 17:22-23). Earlier that night, during the [Passover Seder](#), *Jesus* had identified *Judas*, His disciple, as *the one who would betray Him* (Matthew 26:21-25). However, it appears as if none of *the disciples* suspected or fully perceived that it would be *Judas* until now.

The expression, *the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners* is an expression meaning that the Messiah would be handed over to the Gentiles (who are pagans, and *sinners*). This was foretold in the prophetic twenty second psalm,

“For dogs have surrounded me;
A band of evildoers has encompassed me;
They pierced my hands and my feet.”
(Psalm 22:16)

“Dogs” was a derogatory expression that Jews commonly used to describe Gentiles. Ultimately, *Jesus* would be handed over to the Roman authorities, who were Gentiles, to be crucified. Crucifixion entailed nailing His hands and feet to a cross. One modern understanding of the cruelty of crucifixion is that the person hanging on the cross would eventually become so exhausted they could no longer raise themselves up by their nailed-feet and hands to breathe, and would die of suffocation. Each time they raised themselves up to take a breath, they would have to put their body weight on their wounded hands and feet.

But ironically, the generic term *sinners*, which *Jesus* used to refer to Gentiles, also included the Jewish religious establishment (Pharisees and Sadducees) along with the Gentile ‘dogs.’ The Jewish religious leaders abused their power to exploit those they were to serve (Matthew 21:13, 23:2-33). Their self-righteousness was hypocritical, hollow, and evil (Matthew 4:7, 5:20, 16:6).

The armed force that had come to arrest *Him came from the chief priests (Sadducees) and elders of the people (Pharisees)* (vs 47). This force also included a Roman cohort (John 18:3). A Roman cohort consisted of 100 troops. If a complete Roman cohort *came with Judas and priests' servants*, then this was *a very large crowd* indeed.

After startling *the disciples* awake with this disquieting news that *He was being betrayed into the hands of sinners*, *Jesus said: "Get up, let us be going, behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!"*" (vs 46).

The one who betrays me is a reference to *Judas Iscariot*, the disciple *who betrayed Jesus to the chief priests* for thirty pieces of silver (the price of a slave) (Matthew 26:14-16, Exodus 31:22). This payment constituted a bribe, which meant that the prosecution against *Jesus* was illegal [Rule 4: Bribery]. This will be one of many illegalities they will commit in their passion to eliminate *Jesus* as a perceived threat to their political position.

Jesus might either have seen *Judas* when *He said* this or simply recognized what was happening.

Jesus's remark—*Get up, let us be going*—suggests that *the disciples* were not fully awake until they were surrounded. It also seems as though *Jesus* was trying to find a way to accomplish the Father's will through His prayer (Matthew 26:39). But once *Jesus* recognized there was no other possible way, *He* accepted this dreadful circumstance as His Father's will (Matthew 26:39) and *He* submitted to arrest.

While He 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 (vs 47).

The second phase of *Jesus's* prosecution—His arrest—had begun.

To learn more about the five stages of *Jesus's* religious condemnation see "[Jesus's Trial, Part 3. The 5 Stages of Jesus's Trial.](#)"

While Jesus was still saying these things and waking up His disciples, Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples came to Gethsemane. Judas was not alone.

From *the disciples'* perspective, this was likely a shocking and disturbing turn of events. We can tell from the fact that they fell asleep that they didn't seem particularly anxious on that evening. Even though *Jesus* had told them many times that he would be betrayed, none of them seemingly believed that it would happen, or that it would be arranged by the trusted disciple who kept the money box—*Judas* (John 13:29).

The disciples did not appear to know what was happening even when *Jesus* dismissed *Judas* at the Seder meal, saying "What you do, do quickly" (John 13:28-29). *Judas's* betrayal completely took them by surprise. This was likely why Matthew included the word, *behold*, in his narrative—for dramatic effect. Matthew quoted *Jesus* as saying *behold* twice already in the previous two verses (vs 45, 46). Saying—*behold*—three times in so short a span emphasizes how traumatic this hour was for *the disciples* as they were startled from their slumber.

Accompanying *Judas* was a *large crowd*, armed with *swords and clubs*. John reports they also had torches and lanterns and that a Roman cohort *accompanied him* (John 18:3). If this was a full Roman cohort, then it meant anywhere from one hundred to six hundred soldiers. Estimates of the total *crowd* range from as *large* as a hundred to several hundred men.

John tells us that *Judas* “knew the place” where Jesus would be, because *Jesus* had often met in the garden of Gethsemane with His *disciples* during His time in Jerusalem (John 18:3).

This armed *crowd* came from the *chief priests* (Sadducees—the temple overseers) and *elders of the people* (Pharisees—the leaders of the community synagogues). Mark adds they also came from “the scribes” (the religious lawyers) (Mark 14:43). These three groups were the same groups that *Jesus* told His *disciples* would cause *Him* to suffer and who would kill *Him*, before *He* came back to life on the third day (Matthew 16:21).

The reason the *large crowd* came was to arrest and seize *Jesus*. Matthew and Mark (Mark 14:43) both say that the *crowd* **came from** the *chief priests and elders of the people*. This indicates the *chief priests and elders* were orchestrating *Jesus*’s arrest. The armed *crowd* came from them. Luke includes the significant detail that some of the *crowd* included “chief priests and officers of the temple and the elders” themselves (Luke 22:52). The *priests and elders* who came likely did so to oversee and manage *Jesus*’s arrest to ensure that nothing went wrong and to act quickly if things went sideways.

Both the orchestration and presence of the *chief priests and elders* are significant because according to the Jewish cultural laws and oral traditions (later written down around 200 B.C. in the Mishnah), it was forbidden for the judges of the Jewish council (the Sanhedrin) to participate in an arrest of someone they were to later judge. The Sanhedrin had to remain neutral in all trials they judged [Rule 2: Neutrality]. If the *chief priests and elders* orchestrated, oversaw, or participated in some other way in the arrest of someone they tried, they could not be deemed neutral judges.

Therefore, according to their own rules, the *chief priests and elders of the people* legally disqualified themselves as *Jesus*’s judge by their orchestration, their commissioning of the proxy *crowds* they sent, and their managing presence at His arrest.

Their involvement in His arrest includes two other violations of Jewish law. It reveals their conspiracy to murder *Jesus* [Rule 1: Conspiracy] (Matthew 26:2-3, 26:14-16). And it strongly suggests that the verdict was predetermined and that the trial was rigged against *Him* [Rule 3: Rigged].

The presence of a Roman Cohort meant that a high level official or officials in the Sanhedrin requested its force, which would have to be granted from Pilate. Such a request would have required Caiaphas’s authorization. This also may explain why Pilate was awake and already in court so early in the morning (John 18:28). Pilate may have already known about the arrest and anticipated that the Jews were going to bring *Jesus* to him for execution.

The Roman Cohort's presence also reveals the extreme level of fear that the religious leaders had concerning *Jesus*. They urgently needed to arrest *Him* that night. We can infer that *Jesus*'s identification of *Judas* as His betrayer a few hours earlier set off alarms that their evil conspiracy to kill the Man many in Israel hoped was the Messiah could be made public. Such an exposure could be disastrous for them on many levels, not the least of which was their removal of power by *the people* or Rome. So, it appears that they took no chances and mustered the largest force they could summon.

Two additional reasons the Roman cohort may have been summoned were fear of *Jesus*'s power and His disciples' loyalty. They were prepared for either *Jesus* and/or His disciples to fight. It is likely that *Judas* had been part of discussions about their commitment to apply armed resistance when the time came (Mark 14:31).

The Pharisees and Sadducees also may have feared *Jesus*'s miraculous powers. They had heard about His mighty acts and even witnessed some of them. Even though *Jesus* had never used His miraculous powers for violence against anyone, in their minds a large force may be necessary to compete with such capability.

Judas may have also made *the chief priest and elders* aware of the disciples' fierce loyalty to *Jesus* and their willingness to fight and die for Him. The religious authorities may have felt that an insurmountable show of force in the form of a Roman cohort would be sufficient to prevent any attack, or more than sufficient to subdue a skirmish should things turn violent.

Recall, how just a few hours earlier the disciples had all promised that they were ready to fight and die for *Jesus* (Matthew 26:35). As *one of the twelve*, *Judas* would have known how *the other disciples* felt about *Jesus* and how committed they were to *Him*. The eleven from the Galilee in the north were from an area near the center of influence by the Jewish Zealots, a party committed to an armed revolt against Rome. They all exhibited the basic attitude of the Zealots. One was apparently a "card-carrying member" of the Zealots (Simon the Zealot, Luke 6:15). And they carried the weapon of a Zealot, a small sword (Luke 22:49).

If *the disciples* were able to fight their way out and secure *Jesus*'s escape, then it would be a disaster for *the chief priests and elders*. It could possibly result in a Jewish civil war, which Rome would likely seek to end by removing them from power. And the resulting Roman oppression would be even more severe than the present.

This fear was already in the religious leaders' hearts (Matthew 22:46, John 11:48). This was their opportunity (Matthew 26:3-5). And the priests and elders were going to take no chances that *Jesus*'s *disciples* would ruin it by letting *Him* escape. The Sadducees and Pharisees wanted to ensure nothing went wrong.

For a brief moment it seemed their precautions of sending *a large armed crowd* was validated when Peter began attacking them as soon as he was alert enough to see what was going on (Luke 22:49-50, John 18:10). But, in accordance to His Father's will, *Jesus* freely submitted to their illegal arrest.

2. JESUS ADDRESSES THE LARGE CROWD (John 18:4-8)

(It is unclear whether *Judas* identified and *betrayed Jesus* with a *kiss* before or after *Jesus* addressed the *crowd* and displayed His divine power.)

According to John's Gospel, it appears that when the *large crowd* first came, *Jesus*, "knowing all things that were coming upon *Him*, went forth and said to them 'Whom do you seek?'" (John 18:4).

"They answered Him, 'Jesus the Nazarene'" (John 18:5a).

When they said "Jesus the Nazarene" they were referring to *Jesus's* legal name according to their human customs. *Jesus* was raised in the small town of Nazareth (Matthew 2:23, Mark 1:9, Luke 4:16, John 1:45) They were speaking to *Him* as though *He* were a subject beneath their authority and no more.

Then *Jesus*, replied, "I am He" (John 18:5b).

To our modern eyes this seems like a direct and simple response to their question. It was. But it was also much more than that. It was also a claim to be the LORD, God. The name the LORD used of Himself when He spoke to Moses at the burning bush was "I AM WHO I AM" (Exodus 3:14). This was likely a word play on the name, Yahweh—the term translated as LORD.

When *Jesus* replied, "I am He," *He* was both answering their question truthfully (He was *Jesus* of Nazareth)—AND—*He* was claiming to be the LORD God. John's Gospel underscores this divine claim with the following observation:

"So when He said to them, 'I am He,' He projected the power of God and they drew back and fell to the ground" (John 18:6). Many translations italicize "*He*" indicating that it is implied rather than spoken. This would infer that *Jesus* answered the question the same way God answered Moses at the burning bush, saying "I Am" (Exodus 3:14). The Hebrew covenant name for God is "Yahweh" which means "the One who exists." *Jesus*, the essence and author of existence, is proclaiming to His creation His reality (Colossians 1:16-17). His creation, being evil, did not recognize *Him* (John 1:5).

The impact of *Jesus* saying "I Am" was a remarkable display of power, possibly designed to shock the large crowd to their senses that they were arresting no mere man. It was a sign that they were trying to seize God Himself.

After giving them a moment to recover and possibly reconsider their purpose, *Jesus* asked them again, "Who do you seek?" (John 18:7). They remained blind to their folly and again replied, "Jesus the Nazarene" (John 18:7).

This time *Jesus* answered them without the display of divine power. "I told you that I am He, so if you seek Me, let these go their way" (John 18:8).

By freely submitting to arrest, *Jesus* was not only following His Father's will (Matthew 26:39), *He* also was negotiating the release of His *disciples*, who would go onto spread the good news of God's kingdom, the forgiveness of sins, and eternal life across the earth after *Jesus* returned to life (Acts 1:8). And as John points out their release was "to fulfill the word which [*Jesus*] spoke, 'Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one'" (John 18:9, apparently referencing John 10:28-29).

3. JUDAS IDENTIFIES AND BETRAYS JESUS WITH A KISS

(It is unclear whether *Judas* identified and *betrayed Jesus* with a *kiss* before or after *Jesus* addressed the *crowd* and displayed His divine power.)

At this point "after coming" (Mark 14:45), *Judas immediately* came forward from among the *crowd* to identify *Jesus* (Luke 22:47).

Matthew next says *Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him"* (vs 48). Matthew introduces this comment with the word, *Now*, to indicate that he was taking a quick pause in his narration to explain this.

The reason *Judas gave the crowd a sign* is because they would not necessarily be able to distinguish *Jesus* from *the disciples* without *him*. *Jesus* spent comparatively little of His ministry in Jerusalem. And the armed *crowd from the priests* may have only had one or two moments or fewer to ever see *Him*. They would not easily recognize *Him*, especially in the dark garden. But *Judas*, as *one of the twelve disciples*, was familiar with *Jesus*. *He* would easily know who *Jesus* was. *Judas* had lived and served with *Jesus* for several years.

Moreover, *Judas and the priests and elders* also knew His *disciples* were committed and fiercely loyal to their *Rabbi*. Consequently, they may deceptively offer themselves as *Jesus* in order to help *Him* escape. (They all swore they would die for *Him*—Matthew 26:35). By *Judas* giving them a prearranged-*sign*, *he* could identify *Jesus* for the *priests'* cohort despite what *Jesus* or *the other disciples* might say or do.

Judas likely agreed upon this *sign* either when *he* initially struck a deal with *the chief priests* to betray *Jesus* (Matthew 26:14:16) or when *he* met *them* after *Jesus* dismissed him from the Passover Seder (John 13:26-27, 30).

The *sign Judas* would use to identify and betray his *Rabbi into the hands* of His enemies was a customary greeting—a *kiss* of friendship. There is a twisted irony in using a *kiss*, a gesture of friendship, to betray and destroy a *friend*. This ironic gesture is an image of sin which is always a perversion of God's good gifts into something distorted and ugly. And *Jesus* seems to have picked up on this wicked irony (Luke 22:48).

Both Matthew and Mark's Gospels highlight the grotesque way *Judas* betrayed *Jesus*. The Greek word translated as "kissed" in Matthew 26:49 and Mark 14:45 is καταφιλέω (G2705—pronounced: "kat-af-ee-leh'-o"). It means to "kiss much"; to "kiss tenderly", to "kiss again and

again”; or to “kiss earnestly.” Their point seems to be that Judas seemed to be embellishing, even relishing, his betrayal of the Messiah.

Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, “Hail, Rabbi!” and kissed Him (vs 49).

Matthew and Mark’s Gospels record how after *Judas* arrived, *he immediately went to Jesus*, indicating that *Judas* acted promptly. *Judas* did not flinch or hesitate to betray *Jesus* at this decisive moment (Mark 14:45).

Judas, used an expression of honor, *Hail Rabbi*, to greet *Jesus*. The term *Rabbi* was a revered Hebrew term for “teacher” (John 1:38). Jewish Rabbis had followers who would devote their lives to learn from them. *Jesus* was *Judas’s* and the other *disciples Rabbi*. But instead of following *Jesus* and being devoted to his *Rabbi*, *Judas* was *betraying Him into the hands of men* who wished to kill *Him*.

Judas’s expression of *Hail Rabbi* and his choice to betray *Jesus* with a *kiss* were sinister acts that distorted their typical meaning and purpose. And they seemed unnecessarily cruel. But within a few hours of his betraying of *Jesus*, *Judas* would show remorse. *He* would bitterly regret His actions and attempt to undo them. But it was too late. They could not be undone. Tragically, instead of seeking God’s love and forgiveness, *Judas* took his own life (Matthew 27:3-5).

As *Judas* came to *Jesus* to kiss *Him*, *Jesus* knew what *he* was going to do in advance—and *He* called out His disciple’s wicked act of betrayal: “*Judas*, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” (Luke 22:48).

Judas’s hollow salutation (*Hail Rabbi*), and *kiss* of betrayal brings additional meaning to Isaiah’s prophecy:

“Because this people approaches Me with their words,
And honors Me with their lips,
But their heart is far away from Me.”
(Isaiah 29:13)

When *Judas* came to *Jesus*, *he kissed Him*, signifying to the *large crowd* that this was in fact the man *they* came to arrest.

Jesus’s final recorded words to *Judas* were of disappointment,

Friend, do what you have come for (vs 50).

It is not clear if *Jesus’s* use of the word *Friend* to describe *Judas* was intended to be sincere or sarcastic. In either case it was ironic. *Jesus’s* use of *Friend* reveals the closeness of *Jesus’s* and *Judas’s* relationship. *Jesus* regarded *Judas* as a *friend*. *Judas’s* betrayal was personal. And the fact that His own disciple, His close *friend* betrayed *Him*, made it all the more painful for *Jesus*.

Recall how earlier this night, *Judas* and *Jesus* broke bread together as they ate the Passover Seder (Matthew 26:20-23). By using the term, *friend*, *Jesus* may also have been calling to mind how *Judas*'s betrayal fulfilled the Messianic prophecy of Psalm 41,

“Even my close friend in whom I trusted,
Who ate my bread,
Has lifted up his heel against me.”
(Psalm 41:9)

As soon as *Judas* betrayed *Jesus* with a *kiss*, the *large crowd* knew which man was really *Jesus*.

Then they came to arrest Him. Matthew wrote that *they laid hands on Him and seized Him* (vs 50). This seemingly matter of fact statement is actually rather jarring. *Jesus*, the Messiah, the Son of God was now *in the hands of sinners*. The victorious One was now vulnerable. The true King of Israel was in serious danger.

Biblical Text

⁴⁵ **Then He came to the disciples and said to them, “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!”⁴⁷ While He 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. 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. ⁵⁰ And Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you have come for.” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him.****