

Matthew Chapter 26-28 – The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus – Part 6
Matthew 27:1-10 – Contrasting Peter and Judas

Introduction

For three and a half years, Jesus has traveled, ministered, and taught, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom to Israel. For three and a half years, the disciples, later called the apostles, followed Him.

After Jesus' baptism, He was identified by John the Baptizer as the Messiah (John 1:29-34). From the very first, Jesus began to accumulate followers (John 1:35-42). This is not where Jesus calls Peter and Andrew to follow Him. That account is recorded in Matthew 4:18-22.

Peter

In Matthew 10:2, Peter is called the first. This is not in order of calling but in primacy. He was the leader of the apostles and the pillar (Galatians 2:9), along with John and James, the half-brother of Jesus.

Luke's account of Peter's calling has some added details (Luke 5:1-11). Peter was in his boat when Jesus came and spoke to the people and told Peter to cast his net, and they caught a large catch. Then Peter makes a very astute observation, saying, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man."

Peter was told that Jesus was the Messiah, but it does not appear that he became His disciple immediately. Later, after Jesus demonstrated who He was in the miracle, Peter humbled himself before Jesus, but Jesus gave him His first commission, "Follow Me."

The Twelve

In the first year, Jesus went all over Galilee and Israel, proclaiming the truth and performing miracles (Matthew 4:23-25). It appears that during these initial days, only the first few whom Jesus called (Andrew, Peter, James, John, Phillip, and Nathanael) were with Him. Then, a large number of disciples followed Him.

Later, we do see the call of Matthew from the tax booth, but the others, James, son of Alphaeus (James the Less, brother of Matthew), Thomas, Thaddaeus (Judas, son of James), and Simon the Zealot are probably being selected out of the large population of disciples within the first year of Jesus' ministry.

Judas Iscariot

Like the latter four, Judas Iscariot was probably selected from the crowd during the first year of Jesus' ministry. There is much about Judas we do not know. Was Judas sincere early on and became corrupted, or was he an opportunist and simply looking for money from the beginning?

John 6:64-71, 12:4-6, 17:12

Judas was a *devil* – διάβολος diabolos – this is an adjective that means slanderous, false accuser. To be labeled with the same descriptor as the Devil is not a good indication of Judas being sincere and then corrupted. Taking in all the passages about Judas, I am convinced that Judas was a betrayer from the beginning and was probably a corrupt businessman or a simple thief who lived his life trying to look for opportunities to steal.

Betrayal and Denial

Judas betrayed Jesus.

1. Matthew 26:14-16 – Judas intended and instigated the betrayal.
2. Matthew 26:24 – Jesus gave him a full warning, but Judas betrayed Him anyway.
3. Matthew 26:47-49 (John 18:3) – Judas was given the cohort and officers and led them to Jesus.

Peter denied knowing Jesus.

1. Matthew 26:31-35 – Peter was insisting that he would not deny Jesus and was willing to die.
2. Matthew 26:57-58 – Peter initially came back to the high priest's house to observe the trial.
3. Matthew 26:69-74 – Peter reacted in fear, unprepared for the moment.

Regret and Weeping

Peter's response was one of shame and sorrow.

Luke 22:60-62; Matthew 26:75 – Peter went out, left the area, left Jesus, and the records indicate that he did not return to see the Lord before His death.

In the Gospels, this is the last narrative involving Peter before the resurrection and the investigation of the empty tomb.

Peter wept bitterly –

Wept – κλαίω klaio – weep, cry, to bewail (to beat the breast accompanying loud lamentations)

Bitterly - πικρῶς pikros - pertaining to feeling mental agony. This adverb in Scripture is reserved only for Peter's wailing in Matthew and Luke.

The words chosen indicate regret and sorrow that I do not know if we can fully understand.

Judas' response was one of remorse.

Matthew 27:1-10 – This is the only account of Judas' re-confrontation with the chief priests. Acts 1 recounts that Judas is dead and that they bought a field with the blood money. But only this section of Scripture tells us what happened.

When Judas saw that Jesus was condemned, he felt remorse.

Condemned – κατακρίνω katakrino – to be found guilty and have a sentence declared. All uses of this word indicate a damnation or a sentence of death.

Remorse – μεταμελομαι metamelomai – to have regrets about something, in the sense that one wishes it could be undone.

This word is not the same as μετανοια metanoia – to change one's mind, the word that is used for Israel to prepare for the Messiah and the kingdom (Matthew 3:1-3, 4:17; Acts 19:4).

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Some claim that Judas repented, but this is not accurate. Judas' regret did not lead him to change his mind; Judas did not seek to reconcile with God and with Jesus, and there is no indication that Judas believed in Jesus. Instead, he went away and hanged himself.

The contrast of Peter in Matthew 26:75 and Judas in Matthew 27:5 is clear. The Greek words for "went out" and "went away" are cognates of one another (erchromai). Peter's remorse resulted in his restoration. Judas' remorse led him to shame, despair, and death.

Restoration of Peter

When was Peter restored? It is not by the lakeside (do you love Me?). Peter was with John when Mary Magdalene told them the tomb was empty. I don't know what Peter was thinking when he got this news. When Peter saw the empty tomb, he was in a state of disbelief, fear, and sadness (John 20:6-9).

There is an indication that between the tomb and the appearance in the room with the other apostles, Jesus and Peter had a talk.

Luke 24:8-13 – This is the road to Emmaus going out of Jerusalem.

Luke 24:22-27 – Jesus cuts them off and explains the Scripture about Himself.

Luke 24:31-34 – The Lord has indeed risen and appeared to Simon (Peter).

1 Corinthians 15:3-5 – Peter is set apart from the other apostles who saw the risen Jesus.

Here is my theory – on the initial visit before appearing to the apostles, Jesus forgave Peter.