

Law & Order, XII

Replacing Judas

July 17, 2016

Welcome to where we're coming to know and grow in God's Word!



We're examining the timeline of Jesus' resurrection, to address what critics call contradictions; and, to discover what Christ calls the *concealed* that's meant to be revealed. (Luke 8:17; 12:2)

Last week we looked at Jesus' ascension. This is the Sunday school rendition. But, this is closer to how the prophets depict it. But, that's on the south-east (Bethany) side of the Mount of Olives, as seen from Jerusalem.



When the tombs opened after His resurrection, (Mat 27:52-53) and the earth gave birth to her dead, (Is 26:18-19; 60:1-8; 66:7-9) and they entered the Holy City, around midnight, everybody saw it. (Dan 7:13; Mark 14:61-62; Rev 1:7)

Can you imagine the emotional roller coaster these disciples had been on that weekend?! **Thursday night He's alive and revered. Friday night He's dead and buried. Sunday morning His body is missing. Sunday night it's back. Alive! Scarred!** They're terrified. They're overjoyed! They're rebuked. They're enlightened. And, then they're in a cemetery and He ascends in a cloud.



Ever feel tossed around despite being grounded in Jesus? Well, the men who held on and rode that holy roller coaster were never again the fearful or faithless men they'd recently been.

Tiger & Turtle Walkable Roller Coaster

... they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. – Luke 24:52 NIV

Let's read **Luke 24:53 (GREEN)** and Acts 1:13-26 (**Dark Green** because **Luke also wrote Acts**). No verse is left out or out of its order.

When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those **present** [*katamenō: abode; dwelled (lit. "dwelling there")*] were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.

Critics point out that "Thomas" wasn't with 'em at their first encounter. But, this is only a list of who was dwelling in that upper room. And, maybe Thomas saw the light and came to join 'em.



Model of Herod's Temple

They all **joined together constantly** [*proskartereō: to continue all the time in a place*] in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his **brothers**. [*His male followers (there're too many to be limited to the other four sons of His mother, Mary)*] And they **stayed** [*ēn: were*] **continually** [*diapantos: constantly; always; continually*] **at** [*en: in; at*] the **temple**, praising God.

So, they “**joined together**” and were **always, continually in the temple**. *Always! Permanently. 24/7.*

Wouldn't leave that Temple for anything. **Know why?**

In him the whole building is **joined together** and **rises** [*ascends*] **to become a holy temple in the Lord**. [*As it did when he ascended*] And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. – Ephesians 2:21-22 NIV

Not in isolation; but, joined together as His limbs to bear fruit.

For **we are the temple of the living God**. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them ...” – 2 Corinthians 6:16b NIV

... the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says: **“Heaven is My throne, [as they saw firsthand at His ascension, Sunday night]** and earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me?” says the Lord ...” – Acts 7:48-49a NKJ

A place of worship is just a place. You are a house of worship.

Jesus answered them, **“Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.”** ... But **the temple** he had spoken of was **his body**. [*And, the Church is His Body/Bride/Temple/House*] After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. – John 2:19-22a NIV

And we are his house, if we **hold on to** our **courage** and the **hope** of which we boast [*i.e. rejoice*]. – Hebrews 3:6b NIV

Hold onto that holy roller coaster, because **we're blessed in the highs and we learn and grow in the lows. When the pain goes – and it will – we get to keep the lesson. Forever!** Thursday, He's their **Hope**. Friday, their **letdown**. Saturday, their **sorrow**. Sunday, their **Teacher**. And Monday, their **Faith!**

In those days [*immediately after the day when Jesus arose from the grave and arose into Heaven among the believers*] Peter **stood up** [*anistēmi: arose*] among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, “Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus — he was one of our number and shared in this ministry.” (With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field;

Critics call that a contradiction; because, as they point out ...

... Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and **hanged** [*apagchō: strangled*] himself. [The critics miss that] The chief priests picked up the coins and said, “It is **against the** [*religious*] **law** to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.” So they decided to use **the money** [belonging to Judas] **to buy** [in Judas’ name] the potter’s field as **a burial place for foreigners**. [Just before Paul says we’re joined together to become a holy temple, he writes: “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners ... (but) members of God’s household ... with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Eph 2:19-20)] That is why it has been called the **Field of Blood** to this day. Then what was spoken by **Jeremiah the prophet** was [*unwittingly*] fulfilled: “They took the thirty silver coins, the price set on him by the people of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter’s field ...” – Matthew 27:5-10a NIV



Aceldama (Field of Blood) Monetary

Critics say that “Jeremiah’s quote” is from Zechariah, and it’s incomplete and incorrect.

Actually, it’s an incredible composite of several passages from both; (Zech 11:12-13; Jer 18:1-12; 19:1-4, 10-11; 32:6-10); and, as was custom with composite quotes, only the predominant author is cited. (See Mark 1:2)

The chief priests bought the field when Judas bought the farm!

... there [in that same field] he **fell headlong**, [lit. *became (ginomai); head before body (prēnēs)* which, I’m guessing, wasn’t part of the plan] his body **burst open** [*lakaō: cracked; crashed*] and all his intestines spilled out. [It’s not a coincidence that this is the field they buy] Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, [*horrific mess*] so they called that field in their [*Aramaic*] language Akeldama, that is, **Field of Blood.**) [You don’t want to be the agent trying to unload *that* property] “For,” said Peter, “it is written in the book of Psalms, [69:25] **“May his place [his field of death] be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it.”** [Paul writes (1 Cor 3:9, 16) “You are God’s field, God’s building ... Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?”] And, then Peter quotes Psalm 109:8] and, “May another take his place of leadership.”

Peter didn’t come up with this; Jesus opened their minds to the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the *Psalms of David*. (Luke 24:44-45) And, Peter is wasting no time acting on what he’s been shown. **Where does your obedience fall, on a scale of Peter to Judas?** Learn a lesson from Peter: **delayed obedience is disobedience.** Peter denied Jesus; he didn’t wait at the tomb; he didn’t go to Galilee; he didn’t believe Mary. And, he didn’t stand up and speak out when *he* was the only one of ‘em who’d seen Jesus. **But with this choice all that changes; and, none of it matters.**

We’re not defined by past mistakes (YAY!) or triumphs (BOO!). It’s not by wealth, career, car, power, popularity, or prestige. **We’re defined by our current choices.** How quick are you, on a scale of Peter to Judas, to obey Jesus’ commands when He opens *your* mind to understand His Word?

Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

So they proposed two men: **Joseph called Barsabbas** ["*Son of Sabbas*"] (also **known as Justus** [the *Just*]) and **Matthias**. [Just called and known as Matthias (maw-THEE-uhs)] Then [now get this:] **they prayed**, [Wow! Can you see what we're seeing?! They prayed ... for the first time ... to *Jesus!* Ever! Prior to this, they only prayed to Jehovah. What'd they pray?] "**Lord, [Jesus] you know everyone's heart.** [Hmm. In 1 Kings (8:39) it says: "*You (Jehovah) know each man's heart (for you alone know the hearts of all men)*"] Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left **to go where he belongs.**" [The Field of Blood; the place of foreigners; the house/temple of desolation; the place of the dead] Then **they cast lots**, [An Old Testament practice. They likely wrote each name on a small rock, put 'em in a container, and cast 'em out; the first out was regarded as a divine decision] and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven [original, official] apostles.

Really? They basically roll the dice? *That's how we do?* No. That's how they *used* to do. It's how Old Testament men of God communicated with the Lord, *before* the Holy Spirit came.



The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from **the Lord**. [*Jehovah*] – Proverbs 16:33 NIV

Do you get that this is one of the biggest moments in the NT? This is such a passing of the baton thing. Praying to Jesus is such a New Testament thing – *obviously!* And, casting lots is such an Old Testament thing; and these guys are in the middle. They'll receive the Spirit in just a few days.

The last casting of lots in the Bible, a system of communication used exclusively by *Jehovah*, is used to determine *Jesus' will*. Replacing Judas is far more about the passing of the baton from First Covenant to Last Covenant, death to life, and the earthly temple to the true and holy and living body of Christ. I've read commentators who question the disciples casting of lots. But, this was an Old Testament method established and instructed by God Himself, and employed carefully, by the godly, in faith. After all, **how do you think *Jesus chose the Twelve?*** (Luke 6:12)

[Judas] was **numbered** [*katarithmeō: given a number*] **with us** and **obtained** [*lagchanō: obtain by lot; receive by divine allotment; to cast lots; determine by lot*] a **part** [*klēros: an object cast as a lot; usually a rock*] in this ministry." – Acts 1:17 NKJ

These guys were Jesus' choice "rocks". Remember when He said ...

"... you are **Peter**, [*Petros: rock*] and **on** [*epi: on; over; in*] **this** [*tautē: the same*] **rock** [*or: rocks*] I will build my church ..." – Matthew 16:18a NIV

Jesus is building His church with faithful rocks like Peter. And, Peter knew that he was just one of a vast number to be built into Jesus' Church/House/Body/Bride. Because, he writes:

As you come to him, the living Stone ... you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house ... – 1 Peter 2:4-5a NIV

So, let your next choice be the one that defines you.