



# Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

OCTOBER 2023

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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*A Five Day Devotional Guide*

**October 2023**

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## On the night He was betrayed

Prior to Christ's return at the end of the age, many believers will be deceived by false messengers and alternative gospels. **Mat 24:4-5**. They will be offended by the gospel of God and its cultural implications for their lives. Resisting the Holy Spirit through unbelief and disobedience to the word of present truth, they will betray and hate one another. This betrayal, which will occur within churches and Christian families, will be the fruit of lawlessness as their love grows cold. **Mat 24:10-12**.

Amazingly, individuals, families and churches who respond with repentance and faith to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and who embrace their fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ, will be washed, purified, and made adequate for their service and citizenship in the heavenly Jerusalem. As part of a restored remnant bride, they will participate in the proclamation of the gospel of sonship in all the world as witnesses to all nations. **Mat 24:13-14**. Christ will be publicly portrayed as crucified among their hearers as they are joined to the sufferings that were caused by Christ's betrayal. **Gal 3:1**.

The betrayal of the Lord was a key aspect of His offering and suffering journey. Emphasising its significance, the apostle Paul wrote, 'For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread'. **1Co 11:23**. Why did the Lord reveal to Paul that He took bread and the cup of the New Covenant on the night that He was betrayed? Why did he not nominate this as the night that Christ's offering and suffering journey commenced? Clearly, betrayal was central to this journey and its outcomes.

When we consider this subject of betrayal, it is helpful to understand the progressive nature of betrayal at a personal level. This was exemplified in the life of Judas, where we observe four key responses leading to the condemnation of Jesus. These responses include unbelief, opposition, betrayal, and treachery.

Further Study      MATTHEW 24

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## An unbeliever

The first stage in Judas' betrayal of Jesus was *unbelief*. This became apparent when Jesus taught His disciples that, in order to have eternal life, a believer needed to eat His flesh and drink His blood. **Joh 6:53**. At the conclusion of this message, many of His followers, including His disciples, were offended at His teaching. **Joh 6:60-61**. Their offence revealed their fleshly orientation to Christ and His message. We know this because Jesus responded, saying, 'It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. *But there are some of you who do not believe.*' **Joh 6:63-64**. Significantly, the apostle John noted that Jesus was speaking about Judas, who did not believe this particular message and who would later betray Him. **Joh 6:64**.

The words of Jesus confounded the prevailing knowledge, understanding, theology and expectations of all of His disciples, yet they were not all unbelievers. When many had departed from Jesus on account of His invitation to eat His flesh and drink His blood, He asked His disciples, 'Do you also want to go away?' **Joh 6:67**. However, Peter responded, saying, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. *Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*' **Joh 6:68-69**.

Although Peter was offended by the word, and initially complained, he did not deny that it was the truth. **Joh 6:61**. This is because he believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. In the church age, a believer is a person who has this same orientation to the presbytery. The Thessalonian Christians exemplified this disposition. They were commended by Paul, who said, 'When you received the word of God *which you heard from us*, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you *who believe.*' **1Th 2:13**.

Further Study      JOHN 6

## Becoming a satan through unbelief

Peter's simple confession concerning the words of Christ revealed that he was a believer. **2Co 4:13**. It demonstrated the faith that Jesus later prayed would not fail in the day of trial. **Luk 22:31-32**. Following Peter's confession of faith, Jesus said to the disciples, 'Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you *is a devil?*' **Joh 6:70**. John noted that Jesus was speaking specifically about Judas Iscariot, who would later betray Him. Jesus was not saying that Judas had been possessed by Satan. The word 'devil' literally means, 'an accuser, a slanderer'.

In Psalm 109, King David described those who had spoken against him, as 'satans', or devils. For example, he wrote, 'Do not keep silent, O God of my praise! For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful have opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They have also surrounded me with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause. In return for my love, they are my accusers [lit: satans], but I give myself to prayer. Thus they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.' **Psa 109:1-5**.

A person becomes a satan when the spirit of the world enters them, causing them to become a son of disobedience. They are of their father, the devil. **Joh 8:44**. Their assessments of the word, the presbytery, and their brethren, which they presume to make on the basis of their personal relationship with God, reveal this to be so. **Rev 12:10**. In the church, their expression has a distinctly religious hue that can be quite adamant in its assertions.

It was evident that Peter had become a satan when he rebuked Jesus concerning His forthcoming offering and suffering journey. **Mat 16:22**. Jesus responded, by saying to Peter, '*Get behind Me, Satan!* You are an offence to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.' **Mat 16:23**.

Further Study      PSALM 109

## Collegiality is unbelief

When Jesus rebuked Peter, we note that He did not rebuke an evil spirit in Peter. **Mat 16:23**. Rather, Jesus identified Peter himself as Satan. He could address Peter in this manner because Peter had received faith and believed that Jesus was the Christ. Jesus was not able to speak to Judas in this way, even though he, too, was a devil. This is because Judas did not believe that Jesus was the Son proceeding from the Father. Consequently, he viewed himself as a colleague of Jesus, whose interpretations of the Scriptures were equal, or even superior, to Christ's.

A person who has become a satan is different from a person who is possessed by an evil spirit. Such possession usually manifests as multiple personalities on account of multiple unclean spirits. Jesus noted this principle in His description of a person who was delivered from an unclean spirit that returned with seven other spirits more wicked than himself. **Mat 12:43-45**.

Like Satan himself, a person who has become a devil presumes upon the right to judge the word, and to judge those by whom it is delivered. They make this judgement on the basis of their interpretation of the Law, which is the word of God. In so doing, they set themselves as the measure of what is true, making themselves equal to Christ and His messengers. This is the carnal conduct of *collegiality*.

A person who has a collegial bearing towards the word, the presbytery, and their brethren in Christ, is an unbeliever, even though they may claim to believe in God or even agree with certain expressions and applications of the word. Through their response to the word, the messenger is either rejected or patronised. The associated actions that they take are not obedience; rather, they are compliance. They comply because the word that they have heard appears to align with their private interpretation of the Scriptures. **2Pe 1:19-21**. Such a hearer is unable to be discipled or fathered by the presbytery, which is the face of Christ in the church.



## Becoming an opposer

Those who are disobedient to the word, stumble on the way of holiness. **1Pe 2:7-8.** They are then dislocated in their allegiance to Christ and His messengers and become lame in relation to their sanctification. Consequently, they cease to proceed in their most holy faith. **Jud 1:20.** They stumble at the word when it calls for obedience, claiming another view in the name of collegial fellowship. This is the basis for betrayal within a church. Unless they are illuminated by the Spirit, and are granted repentance, they will become an opposer.

Unwilling to relinquish his presumed right to be the measure of the truth, Judas progressed from being an unbeliever to become an *opposer* of Christ. This was acutely manifest in the worthy house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. During the meal, Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. John recorded that the house was filled with the fragrance of this anointing oil. **Joh 12:1-3.** Upon witnessing this action of worship, Judas Iscariot said, 'Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?' **Joh 12:5.** John noted that Judas did not say this because he cared for the poor, 'but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it'. **Joh 12:6.**

Unbelief has progressed to opposition when a person begins to speak against the administration of worship and offering in the church. In their conversations with others, an opposer signals their misgivings about particular decisions or directions taken by the presbytery. They propose alternatives, which they believe better service the church and its mandate. These suggestions are not an expression of offering by which others are revealed. Rather, they represent initiatives through which an opposer's own projections may be expressed and validated. They presume that their conversations and reflections are fellowship, but, in reality, they are the basis of factions in the church which war against the *agape* fellowship of the Lord's table. **1Pe 2:11-12.**

Further Study      JUDE 1

## From an opposer to a betrayer

Paul instructed Timothy on how to interact with those who manifest an oppositional spirit. He warned Timothy to avoid foolish and ignorant disputes because they generate strife. He then said, 'A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility *correcting those who are in opposition*, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.' **2Ti 2:23-26**. Overseers in the church should maintain the demeanour of the Spirit in their interactions with an opposer. They should remain gracious, yet faithful to the culture of sanctification established by the word.

Judas did not come to his senses, even though Jesus gently responded to his opposition with correction, saying, 'Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.' **Joh 12:7-8**. Clearly, Judas did not give heed to this correction, but became increasingly indignant. In a similar situation, after witnessing a woman pour fragrant oil from an alabaster flask upon the head of Jesus, Judas went to the chief priests and asked them, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver [lit: betray] Him to you?' **Mat 26:6-16**.

In response to Judas' query, the chief priests counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. From that time, Judas sought opportunity to betray Jesus. **Mat 26:15-16**. The word 'betray' literally means, 'to deliver, or commend, a person or thing to be kept by another'. For example, the apostle Luke used the Greek word for 'betray' in his account of the deliverance of Paul and his companions into the custody of the centurion, Julius. **Act 27:1**. The point to note is that a person can only betray someone if they have the authority or capacity to deliver them into the custody of another.

Further Study      LUKE 22

## Betrayed with a kiss

Judas had the authority and opportunity to betray Jesus into the hands of the Jews because of his appointment as an apostolic minister, a shepherd, and the keeper of the money box. In fact, he had been predestined by God as Christ's representative for the purpose of delivering Him into the hands of the chief priests. By this, we mean that Judas was supposed to deliver Jesus to the Jews, but he should have done so as Christ's ambassador. However, because of his unbelief, his self-righteousness, and his unresolved thieving, Judas was manifest as a traitor, rather than as Christ's vassal.

Judas betrayed Jesus into the hands of the Jewish council with a kiss. **Luk 22:47-48.** This was not feigned affection. Judas considered himself to be the friend of Jesus. He did not believe that he was condemning his friend to death through this action. We know this because, later, when it became apparent that Jesus was going to die, Judas was deeply remorseful. **Mat 27:3-5.** What is clear is that the friendship that Judas extended to Jesus was not the friendship that Jesus extended to him. Jesus said that true friendship involved laying down one's life for another. Judas was endeavouring to find his own life by using Jesus for empowerment and self-verification.

Toward the end of His earthly ministry, 'Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day'. **Mat 16:21.** Moreover, He directly confronted the religious presumption of the Jews and their leaders, provoking them to anger. From Judas' perspective, the teachings of Jesus and His engagement with the Jews were counterproductive; they were hindering His manifestation as the Messiah. Judas took it upon himself to connect Jesus with the Jewish council. He presumed that Jesus would make Himself known to them through the demonstration of a fitting sign. By association, Judas would be empowered to rule and judge the restored nation.

Further Study      MARK 14

## Becoming a traitor

Judas believed that he was a friend of Jesus, but he was completely deceived. He was, in fact, an enemy of Christ. **Luk 6:16**. His kiss was deceitful because the actions that he was taking in the name of friendship were sourced from the darkness of his own understanding and perspective. **Pro 27:6**. We see that betrayal is not, in the first instance, the actions that a brother or sister take to cause injury. Rather, it is the initiative that a person presumes, through their carnal, self-righteous belief, to be in the best interest of themselves, the messengers, the church, and their families. Their actions, while perhaps well-meaning, deliver the messengers and their brethren into the hands of those who hate them.

Significantly, with respect to the thirty pieces of silver, the Greek text that is translated 'counted out to him' literally means 'made covenant with him'. This transaction signified a relationship that Judas had established with this group, who were of the spirit of the world. This new friendship resulted in the demise of the One whom he also professed to love. This is a fundamental implication of betrayal, particularly in families when Christian parents accommodate a rebellious child. In doing so, they discriminate against their believing children who are 'of God'. **Jas 4:4**.

Judas' betrayal of Jesus was exposed as treachery when Jesus was condemned to death by the chief priests. His self-sourced endeavours, whether he wanted it or not, resulted in the bloodshed of the Messenger of the Covenant. As Matthew recorded, 'Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" **Mat 27:3-4**.

Having missed the prayer meeting of Gethsemane, Judas found no grace for repentance or for deliverance from his self-righteousness. In fact, he demonstrated the ultimate expression of self-righteousness by passing judgement on himself. **Mat 27:5**.

Further Study      MATTHEW 27

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## Zechariah's prophecy

Judas' betrayal of Jesus into the hands of the Jewish council was prophesied by Zechariah. Central to this prophetic message was Zechariah's account of his interaction with three worthless shepherds. Because of their treatment of the sheep, they were denounced by the Lord, who said that 'their owners slaughter them and feel no guilt; those who sell them say, "Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich"; and their shepherds do not pity them.' **Zec 11:5**. These shepherds represented three ruling establishments that had misappropriated the authority granted to them by God through covenants – the Jewish council; the Idumeans (descending from Esau and Ishmael); and the kings of the world.

The covenant initiative of the Lord toward the shepherds and the sheep was signified by two staffs. A staff represents the authority and care of a shepherd. In this instance, it signified the initiative of Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd, toward all people. Concerning these staffs, Zechariah said, 'I took for myself two staffs: the one I called Beauty [meaning, 'grace'], and the other I called Bonds [meaning, 'unity']; and I fed the flock.' **Zec 11:7**. It is apparent that these staffs were the basis of the Covenants that the great Shepherd had made with the shepherds and the sheep, because Zechariah said, 'And I took my staff, Beauty [meaning, 'grace'], and cut it in two, *that I might break the covenant which I had made with all the peoples* [of the world].' **Zec 11:10**.

Zechariah cut the other staff, called 'Bonds', indicating the dissolution of the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. **Zec 11:14**. Drawing from the prophet Jeremiah, Paul described the breaking of the staff called 'Bonds' as the removal, and later the recovery, of branches from the root of the Green Olive Tree. **Rom 11:16-24. Jer 11:14-16**. When the brotherhood was broken between Judah and Israel, they became two different branches. God dealt with the two nations differently. Paul taught that the recovery of the two branches would establish the true Israel of God in the time of the end.

Further Study      ZECHARIAH 11

## The payment to break all covenants

Christ could not be betrayed unless it was proclaimed and authorised by the Scriptures. **Mat 26:54. Mar 14:49. Joh 17:12.** This is a key point. Prior to His betrayal by Judas, no-one was able to lay a hand on Jesus, even though the Jewish leaders were already determined to kill Him. **Joh 7:30.** However, when Judas betrayed Jesus into the hands of the cohort in Gethsemane, He said to them, 'Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. *But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.*' **Mat 26:55-56.**

Prophetically declaring the state of the Lord's relationship with the leaders and peoples of the world prior to His crucifixion, Zechariah said, 'My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.' **Zec 11:8.** The Lord, acting through His ambassador, Zechariah, gave the worthless shepherds the opportunity to dissolve their covenant relationship with Him. With this prospect in view, Zechariah said to the shepherds, 'If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain.' In response, they weighed out thirty pieces of silver. **Zec 11:12.**

Thirty pieces of silver was the value of a deceased male or female slave who had been gored by an ox. **Exo 21:32.** This was the value that the shepherds placed on their relationship with the Lord. It, therefore, represented *the cost to end their covenant* relationship with the great Shepherd of the sheep.

Zechariah's request for wages, at the behest of the Lord, foreshadowed Christ's *own request* for His wages to be paid to *His representative*. Christ's representative was Judas. Judas had been commissioned by Jesus as an apostolic minister and as a shepherd of the Lord's flock. **Mat 19:28.** He had also been appointed by Jesus as the keeper of the money box, and was, therefore, the one who should have received the Lord's wages. **Joh 13:29.**

Further Study      PSALM 55

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## An ambassador of Christ

When Judas departed the last Passover, Jesus directed him, saying, 'What you do, do quickly.' **Joh 13:27**. This ought to have been Judas' work of collecting Christ's wages. He needed to do it quickly in order to return in time for the prayer meeting in Gethsemane. Through the misappropriation of his authority, Judas obtained the wages for himself as he betrayed Jesus into the hands of the Jewish leaders. In the course of making this transaction, he missed the prayer meeting in Gethsemane.

The appointments by which Judas was established as an ambassador of Christ, were according to his predestination. Yet, Judas was 'a devil'. **Joh 6:70**. He was a devil because of *unbelief*. He did not believe that eternal life was dependent upon eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood. **Joh 6:64,70-71**. Moreover, he *opposed* the preparations that Mary and another woman made for Christ's sufferings, death and burial. In this regard, he rejected the notion that Christ would suffer and die and establish a pathway of salvation upon which he was to follow later. **Mat 17:22-23**. And, although Judas was appointed by Christ as a shepherd, he did not care for the flock. We recall that Judas was indignant that the oil with which Mary anointed Jesus had not been sold so that the proceeds could be given to the poor. However, his indignation was not because of his care for 'the poor of the flock', but because he was a thief who was stealing from the money box. **Joh 12:5-6**.

Like Zechariah, Judas did not ask for a particular sum of money from the chief priests. Rather, he asked them what they were willing to give to him to deliver Jesus into their hands. Note the record of this interaction in Matthew's Gospel: 'Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "*What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?*" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.' **Mat 26:14-16**.

Further Study      JOHN 13

## The work of Judas

Judas had been predestined to participate in the breaking of the Covenant between Jesus and the worthless shepherds. However, this ought to have been as the Lord's ambassador, in the same manner as Zechariah. As the representative of Christ, Judas should have approached the Jews to proclaim the arrival of 'the Man whose name is the BRANCH', prophesied by Zechariah. **Zec 6:12.** He should have directed them to retrieve the dual crown that Zechariah had crafted, that had been kept in trust for the appearance of the King-Priest, Melchizedek. **Zec 6:11.** In the event of their rejection of Christ, Judas was to receive from them the wages that they would give to break their covenant with the Lord. Judas would have given the thirty pieces of silver to Christ, who would then, by one means or another, have been delivered into the hands of the Jews.

Instead, Judas misappropriated his authority in the deluded attempt to cultivate a relationship between Jesus and the Jewish council that benefited him culturally and financially. He did this because he was a devil, on account of his unbelief and his opposition to the way of offering expressed by Christ. According to his own interpretation of the Scriptures, the introduction of Jesus to the chief priests was necessary for Christ's appointment as the Melchizedek King-Priest; for the recovery of natural Israel; and for the attainment of his own rulership within this restored nation-state. Acting on the basis of his self-righteous understanding, Judas went from being the Lord's ambassador to being a traitor.

It is significant that the chief priests paid Judas, what Zechariah described as, '*that princely price*' of thirty pieces of silver. **Zec 11:13.** Thirty pieces of silver was not a princely sum because it was a generous amount or worthy of royalty. It was a princely price because it was obtained through the exercise of misappropriated authority from the kingdom to which Judas belonged. It is only possible for someone to betray a person if they have the authority or capacity to deliver them to another.

Further Study      ZECHARIAH 6

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## The authority of Judas

Judas possessed authority from heaven to receive the princely sum, which was designated for the annulment of the Covenants between the Lord and the peoples of the earth, because he had been appointed to rule Israel from a heavenly throne. **Mat 19:28**. This God-given authority was noted by Jesus in His interaction with Pilate, the representative of the kings of the world. He said to Pilate, 'You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you [Judas, and then the chief priests] has the greater sin.' **Joh 19:11**. The apostle Peter also acknowledged the authority that belonged to Judas, saying, 'Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry.' **Act 1:16-17**.

Judas received the thirty pieces of silver and betrayed, or delivered, Jesus into the hands of the Jewish leaders. However, instead of acknowledging who He was and crowning Him as Melchizedek with the dual crown that Zechariah had prepared for His coming, the chief priests and scribes received Him from Judas for the purpose of shedding His blood and, thereby, ending their covenant relationship with Him. The thirty pieces of silver was the value of a dying slave. Jesus was the Father's slave, and this sum of money became the price of blood. The Covenants were annulled by the shedding of Christ's blood.

The precious blood of Jesus was first shed in Gethsemane. This blood was not shed as a consequence of betrayal. The Son was not betrayed by the Father. This was the blood of atonement that was brought forth through the fellowship of prayer between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Through this offering, the Godhead was torn and bleeding. Christ's blood gave us redemption into the fellowship of Yahweh. **Col 1:13-14**. **Rev 5:9**.

Further Study ACTS 1

## The precious blood of Jesus

At the conclusion of the prayer meeting in Gethsemane, Judas came to the garden and betrayed Jesus into the hands of the Jews with a kiss. As Judas and the cohort approached the garden, Jesus Himself said, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, *the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners*. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.' **Mar 14:41-42**. This is when the Shepherd of the sheep began to be struck. The blood that was shed, through the wounds that Christ then received, was the consequence of His betrayal into the hands of the three loathsome shepherds – the Jewish leaders; the descendants of Esau and Ishmael; and the kings of the world.

From this point, as He was being struck, every grouping of sheep under the authority of these shepherds was being scattered according to the word of the Lord in the book of Zechariah. The prophet declared, "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion", says the Lord of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered". **Zec 13:7**. Jesus warned the disciples that this would happen. **Mat 26:31**. They were the first group to be scattered as a consequence of the betrayal by one from their midst. **Mat 26:56**.

Each wounding event was an implication of, and a participation in, betrayal for the princely sum of thirty pieces of silver. Significantly, as Jesus encountered each worthless shepherding authority, they were unable to establish His guilt or justify His abuse. **Luk 23:13-15**. His sufferings at their hands, and then His deliverance from one ruling authority to another, were truly a progressive betrayal by the whole of mankind through the shedding of innocent blood. Furthermore, when the Jewish leaders betrayed Christ, their King, they betrayed the Jewish nation itself. **Zec 11:10-11**.

Further Study      HEBREWS 9

## Redemption by the blood

On His offering journey, the Lord replaced the worthless shepherds with a new shepherding administration, whom Paul identified as ascension-gift overseers. To this end, he charged the leaders of the Ephesian church, writing, 'Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood'. **Act 20:28**.

At each site – in the court of Caiaphas; before Herod; and before Pilate – a specific covenant was broken as those who laid hands on Jesus chose, instead, to make a covenant with death. **Isa 28:14-15**. However, through these wounds, Jesus' blood was shed for the redemption and recovery of everyone who was now under eternal judgement. Every person now had the opportunity to turn, and to be connected to the Lord in a new way. **Act 17:30-31**.

In this regard, the shedding of Christ's blood under the hands of those who participated in His betrayal, revealed the two-edged sword that was being applied to the great Shepherd. On the one side of this covenantal breach, every person was being judged for their participation in the betrayal of Christ. The former covenants that the Lord had with the people were being annulled, and they were being eternally forgotten by God, in judgement.

However, the blood that Christ shed on account of betrayal was also the fruit of a *circumcision*. **Rom 15:8**. Accordingly, as all former covenants were being annulled through the shedding of Christ's blood on account of betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, every person was being given the opportunity to join the fellowship of this circumcision. **Col 2:11-12**. In the course of His offering journey, Christ's blood was speaking and granting faith to those who, by a spirit of grace and supplication, would look on Him whom they had betrayed through their sinful, self-righteous actions. **Heb 12:24**. They could be born again and established, through the circumcision of Christ, *as children of Abraham!*

## Thirty pieces of silver

The thirty pieces of silver, which was paid by the Jewish authorities for the deliverance of Jesus into their hands, was equivalent to the sum that Hosea paid to redeem Gomer from her slavery to the one with whom she had committed adultery. **Hos 3:1-2.** Hosea was directed by the Lord to love his unfaithful wife with the same love that the Lord has for the children of Israel. In this regard, Hosea's action foreshadowed the redemption of Christ's bride through His offering on the cross.

Thirty pieces of silver was the cost to the Lord for the annulment of His old marriage covenant with Israel, the church in the wilderness. This marriage was consecrated when the Law Covenant was made with the flesh at Mount Sinai. Israel was bound by the Law of this covenant while her husband lived. This meant that if she committed adultery, she would be condemned to death. **Exo 20:14. Lev 20:10.**

Israel committed adultery through the pursuit of idols. **Eze 23:37.** Her idolatry marked her union with the spirit of the world. Like Gomer, she was brought into bondage to the law of sin through her religious idolatry. The implication of this slavery was her condemnation as an adulteress. By betrayal, for the princely sum of thirty pieces of silver, her husband was delivered to death. Through the shedding of His blood, He redeemed her back from her bondage to sin and death. She was able to be married to Him by a new covenant established in His blood. **1Pe 1:18-19.**

It is important to understand that the thirty pieces of silver were not paid to anyone. It was the sum for which Jesus was delivered to death. Furthermore, neither was the shedding of His blood a price that was paid to anyone. It was the cost to God to bring back a great multitude of sons and daughters of men from the dead through the resurrection life that was in the Son of Man's blood. **Lev 17:11.**

Further Study      HOSEA 3

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## Not walking in Abraham's faith

The death of Christ as the husband of the bride was not only for the purpose of annulling a fruitless old marriage covenant. The Father came to kill Christ because the Covenant of circumcision that had been delivered to Abraham had not been honoured by the children of Israel. **Jer 11:10**. Their circumcision was not a commitment to walk blamelessly by the Spirit. Rather, it indicated their confidence to keep the Law through the exercise of their flesh. God's intention to kill Moses, because his children were uncircumcised, foreshadowed Christ's death for this same reason. **Exo 4:24-25**.

Moses married a Midianite named Zipporah, and they had a son whom Moses named 'Gershom'. Zipporah was unwilling to allow Moses to circumcise their son. By failing to circumcise Gershom, Moses had not observed the Covenant that the Lord had made with Abraham. Evidently, Moses and Zipporah were not one Spirit; nor were they walking blamelessly by the Spirit. Even though the Law Covenant had not yet been given, their marriage was not of the Spirit, but of the flesh. Consequently, they were not of the family of Abraham and Sarah.

The apostle Stephen highlighted that the unrepentant Jews were the fruit of an unfaithful marriage covenant. Israel, the Lord's bride, had been unwilling to allow her children to be circumcised with the circumcision that had been delivered to Abraham prior to the Law. Their circumcision, according to the Law, was not according to faith. He said to them, 'You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! *You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who have received the Law by the direction of angels and have not kept it!* **Act 7:51-53**.

Further Study      ROMANS 4

## A covenant of blood

As Moses made his way to Egypt to deliver them from their bondage, the Lord met him and sought to kill him. The issue was the failure to circumcise his son. This must have been an initiative that Moses had sought to take, and had spoken about with Zipporah, for she knew the reason why Moses was at death's door. The Scripture recorded, 'Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moses' feet, and said, "Surely you are a husband of blood to me!" So He let him go. Then she said, "You are a husband of blood!" – because of the circumcision.' **Exo 4:25-26.**

Moses was a type of Christ. He said himself, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.' **Deu 18:15.** In contrast to Moses, Christ, who had come to deliver His people from their slavery to the ruler of this world, *did die* on account of the uncircumcised children brought forth from His marriage covenant with the church in the wilderness. However, His death was the circumcision that had been given to Abraham as an Everlasting Covenant. **Gen 17:1-14.**

Christ's circumcision produced the blood that established a new covenant with His bride. Jesus called this 'the New Covenant in My blood'. Specifically, He said, 'This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!' **Luk 22:20-22.** Through this death, and the shedding of blood because of betrayal, Jesus established the pathway of blamelessness upon which His bride could be sanctified and cleansed from her adulteries, and her children could be legitimate.

Further Study      GENESIS 17

## For many days

The adulteries of the nation of Israel, as the Lord's bride, were a betrayal. Even more than this, they were *treachery*! As the Lord Himself declared, 'Surely, as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel.' **Jer 3:20**. Her unfaithfulness was treachery because her redemption from slavery to sin and death, which she had chosen, cost the Lord His life. In this regard, she was not redeemed by gold or thirty pieces of silver, but by the precious blood of Jesus Christ! **1Pe 1:18-19**.

In the account of Gomer's redemption by Hosea, we read, 'And I said to her, "You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man – so, too, will I be toward you." For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days.' **Hos 3:3-5**.

We recall that Gomer symbolised Ephraim, the ten northern tribes of the nation of Israel. Having received Gomer back to his house, she was preserved by Hosea from her harlotry for she was neither able to be joined to another man, nor was she able to be joined to him. In relation to His bride, Ephraim, the Lord preserved her by scattering her so that she was no longer a nation who could commit harlotry through idolatry. **Jer 31:10. Eze 22:15**. However, 'in the latter days', meaning 'in the time of the end', this great company would be received back to the Lord as His bride and would again be fruitful as a mother. **Jer 31:20. Jer 31:9**.

Further Study      JEREMIAH 31

## A remnant church

What was the composition of the bride of Christ who was formed from His 'rib' and then manifest as coming down out of heaven on the Day of Pentecost? Paul, through the prophetic Scriptures, described the bride of Christ as *a remnant church*. Significantly, the apostle John identified those who were a part of the bride of Christ as 'the elect', addressing his second epistle to 'the elect lady and her children'. **2Jn 1:1**.

In his discussion about the Jews, Paul also referred to the bride of Christ as those who had the election. He wrote, 'Concerning the gospel they [the Jews] are enemies for your sake, but concerning the *election* they are beloved for the sake of the fathers [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob]. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.' **Rom 11:28-29**. Just prior to this statement, Paul identified this elect company as a remnant in the church age, writing, 'Even so then, *at this present time* there is a *remnant* according to *the election of grace*'. **Rom 11:5**.

Isaiah described this remnant as being 'very small', proclaiming, 'Unless the Lord of hosts had left to us a very small remnant, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been made like Gomorrah [totally decimated and lost]'. **Isa 1:9**. The question is, what happened to the rest of the nation? Their hearts were hardened by the word of Isaiah, who was sent to proclaim to them, 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and return and be healed.' **Isa 6:9-10**. In other words, they no longer had any capacity for illumination that could give them understanding of God's purpose for their lives. Without this understanding, they were unable to believe and then receive grace.

Further Study      ROMANS 11



## The house of Jacob

In his letter to the Romans, Paul established that the elect were the children of Jacob. In this regard, he explained, 'And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated"' **Rom 9:10-13.**

The remnant church, who are the elect, are drawn from *all* nations and, through faith, become the tribes of the true Israel of God. As the remnant church, they are typified by Jacob's family who returned to Bethel. **Gen 35:6-15.** This is the place where Jacob had previously witnessed angels ascending and descending on a ladder between heaven and earth. The stone upon which he had laid his head was set as a pillar, and he poured oil onto it. He named that place Bethel, meaning 'house of God'. **Gen 28:18-19.**

In the same chapter, Paul further developed this point. He explained that God made known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy. **Rom 9:22-24.** The vessels of mercy are the children of Jacob (Israel), for he had confessed before the Lord that he was not worthy of all the mercies that he had been shown by Him. **Gen 32:10.** Significantly, Paul described these vessels, belonging to Israel, as Jews and Gentiles! **Rom 9:23-24.** He then quoted the words of the Lord through the prophet Hosea, who said, 'I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, "You are not My people", there they shall be called sons of the living God.' **Rom 9:25-26. Hos 2:23. Hos 1:10.**

Further Study      ROMANS 9

## Do not be haughty, but fear

The elect are the children of Israel who receive their calling as a son of God and are established as part of the remnant church, the bride of Christ. They are the remnant of the true Israel of God, drawn from both Jew and Gentile. This point was reiterated by Paul, who then quoted the prophet Isaiah, writing, 'Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, *the remnant will be saved*. For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because the Lord will make a short work upon the earth.' **Rom 9:27-28**. The remnant are those who are being built on Christ.

The remnant church is the seven churches that Jesus addressed by letter in the book of Revelation. These churches are described as 'seven unclean daughters of Zion', to whom Christ is coming in a spirit of judgement and burning to wash away her filth and to sanctify her that He might present her to Himself as a glorious church. **Isa 4:1,4. Eph 5:26-27**. Importantly, Paul warned that if we did not continue in the goodness of God (meaning, in the mercy and illumination shown by God to Jacob from Bethel), we would suffer the same fate as Ephraim and Judah. That is, as wild branches that had been grafted into the fatness of the root of the olive tree, we would be removed. We would no longer be heirs of the promise that was made to Abraham and his children. **Rom 11:20-22**.

For this reason, Paul exhorted us to not be haughty, but to fear. Furthermore, he said, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.' **Rom 12:1-2**. Our fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ is the evidence of our continuation in the goodness of God.

Further Study      EPHESIANS 5

## Water, blood and Spirit

The remnant church that was established on the Day of Pentecost included representatives from every nation, tongue and people. **Act 2:5**. Those who belong to this remnant church are committed to the process of being made comparable to Christ through the ministry of water, blood and Spirit. **Joh 19:34**. **Zec 12:10**. These were the elements that comprised the rib that was taken from Christ. These are the elements that are now active in the church to cleanse every believing household as they continue in the way of blamelessness.

The apostle John highlighted this cleansing and purifying work among the unclean daughters of Zion, declaring, 'For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.' **1Jn 5:7-8**.

In this passage, John identified the order by which the grace of life is ministered to every person for their participation in the New Covenant – the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. The elements of Spirit, the water, and the blood, bear witness in our lives as we are established in the order of headship. It is first *the Spirit* who is Lord of the church age. **2Co 3:17**. He is the One who ministers the *water of the word* of present truth, through which we are washed. **Tit 3:4-5**. **Eph 5:25-26**. The word is the light of life in which we are to walk. **2Pe 1:19**. As we walk in the light, we have a participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, where His life, which is in *His blood*, is becoming our life as we are being delivered from our carnality. **1Jn 1:7**. **Lev 17:11**. This is the implication of the Covenant of blood between Christ and His church.

Further Study      1 JOHN 5

## Corrupt shepherds in the church age

The dissolution of the Covenants between the Lord and all people, through the shedding of Christ's blood, was typified by Zechariah when he broke the staffs called 'Beauty' and 'Bonds'. **Zec 11:7**. Zechariah was later directed by the Lord to take for himself the implements of a foolish shepherd. **Zec 11:15**. This action symbolised the establishment of a shepherding order in the church following the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. These shepherds would rule in the church by the same fallen principles as the worthless shepherds who betrayed Jesus in the course of His offering journey.

Specifically, the Lord said, 'For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces. Woe to the worthless shepherd, who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm and against his right eye; his arm shall completely wither, and his right eye shall be totally blinded.' **Zec 11:16-17**.

In this prophecy, the Lord was referring to shepherds in the church age who would not care for the sheep. Rather, they would exploit the sheep for their own gain. These leaders began to emerge even while the apostles were still ministering. The apostle Paul warned the overseers in the Ephesian church concerning the advent of these worthless shepherds, declaring, 'For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.' **Act 20:29-30**. Even before the death of Paul, these fraudulent shepherds arose in the church and began to draw away the sheep. **2Ti 1:15**.

Further Study      EZEKIEL 34

## The loss of first love

The worthless shepherds in the early church forsook first love as the basis for fellowship in presbyteries and replaced it with a form of church governance that formalised a distinction between a clergy class and the laity of the church. **Rev 2:4.** Significantly, the power of the clergy was consolidated through the celebration of the Eucharist, replacing the *agape* meal, or love feast, as the cultural foundation of the church. The early church fathers taught that a believer could only receive the benefits of Christ's life if they partook of bread and wine that was blessed to them by an ordained minister. Through this blessing, they asserted that the elements of the Eucharist became the body and blood of Jesus Christ to the congregant.

These and other gospel propositions, formalised by church theologians across the centuries, have been a *betrayal* of Christ and His sheep. It is not insignificant that the greatest of these abominable heresies pertains to the elements of the *agape* meal. We recall that the antecedent to Judas' betrayal of Jesus was his unbelief and misunderstanding of the command to eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood. **Joh 6:53,64.**

Why did the Lord allow corrupt shepherds to arise in the church, and alternative gospels to proliferate? Helpfully, in his discussion about corrupting influences upon the fellowship of the *agape* meal, Paul explained that this was for the purpose of manifesting those who were *approved*. To this end, he wrote, 'For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, that those who are *approved* may be recognised among you.' **1Co 11:18-19.** James taught that those who were *approved* by their commitment to first love, under the sufferings associated with betrayal, would receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. **Jas 1:12.**

Further Study      JEREMIAH 2



Restoring  
my Soul