

When Did Satan Enter Judas?

When did Satan enter Judas? Two different times are mentioned in Scripture. Luke 22:3 says that “Satan entered into Judas” Iscariot prior to the Passover meal. John 13:27 says “Satan entered” into Judas as they were eating the Passover meal. There are two different ways to interpret these passages.

1. Some Bible scholars believe that **Satan entered Judas only one time** (John 13:27). We are not informed exactly what is meant by Satan “entering” Judas. According to this interpretation, Satan opened Judas’s heart to insert thoughts of betrayal but not to take possession of him at that time. Luke 22:3 would mean that Satan **put the idea into Judas’s heart** to betray Jesus. If this was the case, Satan filled his heart with evil thoughts in the same way that Satan filled Ananias’s heart. Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?” (Acts 5:3). John 13:2 seems to confirm this interpretation because it says, “And during the supper, **the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him.**” Then, at the Passover meal in John 13:27, Satan entered Judas to take possession of him.

2. Others believe that **Satan entered Judas on two different occasions**. The fact that a second entrance into Judas is mentioned implies that Satan exited from him after the first entrance. According to this interpretation, Satan entered Judas to betray Him, but then left him to orchestrate the other people involved in the act. After accomplishing that, he returned at the Passover Meal to enter Judas to complete the betrayal.

It’s interesting to note that this entrance into Judas happened at the moment Jesus handed Judas the bread, which symbolized His body being handed over. Earlier Jesus had said, “I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but **I lay it down on My own initiative**. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it up again” (John 10:17-18). By handing Judas the bread, it symbolized handing Himself over for betrayal and laying down His life by His own initiative. Satan had been waiting for this and at that moment entered Judas to carry out the final act. This is the only place in the gospel of John where Satan is mentioned.

This interpretation means the devil entered Judas more than one time, just as there are verses implying that demons have re-entered people. Scripture informs us that demons have entered into people but would leave at some point and later return to re-enter them. Jesus said, “**When an unclean spirit goes out of a man**, it passes through waterless places, seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, ‘**I will return to my house from which I came.**’” (Luke 11:24). The “house” is a person’s body where the demon once dwelt.

King Saul in the Old Testament was tormented by an evil spirit that would come and go. When David played his harp for Saul (as David was apparently worshipping God), “the evil spirit would depart from him (Saul)” (see 1 Samuel 16:14-16, 23). At times the demon would take over Saul and attempt to kill David (see 1 Samuel 18:10-11, 19:9-10). If evil spirits can come and enter at will, then surely Satan can too. The devil did not need to be continually residing in Judas for him to betray Jesus. The devil was influencing Judas at critical moments—and when Jesus was betrayed it was at two separate times.

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