



AND Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? 27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. 28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt. (Gen 37:26-28)

AND I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people. 11 And it was broken in that day: and so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the Lord. 12 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. 13 And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord. 14 Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. (Zech 11:10-14)

THEN one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, 15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. 16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him. (Matt 26:14-16)

The rulers of the Jews paid a very low price for the opportunity to crucify our Lord. The price was symbolic, however, of judgment. Our Lord would be subject to a false trial at which even the judge (Pontius Pilate) pronounced Him innocent. Thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave gored by another's ox. 32 *If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.* (Ex 21:32) The servant was guiltless, as was Christ, yet it suffered at the horns of another's ox.

Moreover, silver is a symbol of redemption, or atonement. *14 Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the Lord. 15 The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel (of silver), when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls. 16 And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.* (Ex 30:14-16)

You will remember that the young boy, Joseph, was sold into slavery to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver. Twenty is also significant. Two is the number of witnessing. At least two witnesses are necessary to prove a point at the bar. But three will secure a judgment. Joseph, being a type of Christ, was sold into slavery for twenty pieces of silver as a witness and testimony against all of Israel whom he saved during a time of draught. The text from Zechariah above demonstrates the prophetic selling of Jesus by Judas unto the hands of the enemy. Two symbols are used therein – 1) a staff called Beauty which likely represented the Tabernacle and Temple worship of the Old Testament. It was broken asunder in judgment as Jesus establishes His new covenant. The second staff, Bands, was broken symbolizing the breaking of the union of the Jewish rulership which was represented by the Jewish High Priest, scribes, and Pharisees. *Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall TAKEN FROM YOU, and GIVEN TO A NATION BRINGING FORTH THE FRUITS THEREOF.* (Matt 21:42-43)

For Judas, Jesus was worth only a very low sum of money, but even a small sum of silver figured high on the value scale of Judas Iscariot. It goes without saying that he derived no benefit at all from the trade and, in the process, lost everything. After going out from the supper into the night, Judas did not see another sunrise. As prophesied by Zechariah, the money was used to purchase a potter's field in which to bury Judas. *And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord. And next we have the text from Zechariah quoted, but attributed to Jeremiah. Why? It is because Jeremiah was the foremost of the prophets under whom Zechariah labored and recorded his works: 3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. 5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. 6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. 7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. 8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. 9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; 10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.* (Matt 27:2-10)

Now, brethren, Judas is not the only one to sell the Lord out for meager value. All of us, at some point, have sold out on Christ. Peter did three times during the night of His betrayal. All of the disciples sold out the Lord by fleeing from the Garden when Jesus was taken. Many today will sell out our Lord for social standing, prestige, economic gain, and political correctness. Many will claim Christ, as did Judas, but sell out over cardinal issues of sin, grace, and redemption. Many will accept doctrines such as homosexual marriage, abortion, the prosperity gospel, etc. in order to appear 'broad-minded' and accepted by sophisticates.

Well, may I offer a word to such sellers and money changers of the Temple: Being broad-minded will not gain any favor with Heaven. Christ was not 'broad-minded' nor tolerant of sinful actions and lifestyles. Of course, He is able to forgive and save to the

uttermost; but He saves FROM sin, not IN sin. The 11th verse of John, chapter 8, expresses that principle – a verse not often emphasized by modern ‘Pulpit Wonders’: *go, and sin no more!* John 8:11 (KJV) This woman was dragged before Christ by enemies intent upon her demise. But they had brought her to the ONLY ONE who could save her to the uttermost. She recognized Christ, during the moments of hearing His rebuttal of the scribes and Pharisees (and in her great terror), as LORD! That makes all the difference!

Many will sell out our Lord Jesus Christ to the State believing it can provide all that is needful for survival. If we look about us, it is obvious that wherever the powers of the state are greatest, the people suffer in squalid and servile conditions. In nations where Islam bears absolute rule, the people live in filth and penury. In nations where the state considers itself to stand in the place of a little god (such as North Korea), the people are eating grass and fearful to even think a thought against their little god, Kim Jong In.

IN America, God used His elect men to establish a nation in which men and women would be free. We were given, by the Providence of God, a Republic in which all laws applied equally to every citizen without exception. As the years of an increasing greed and indifference to our blood-bought freedoms on the part of our citizenry rolled on, we began to discount the importance of personal freedom with a growing reliance upon the state to address the most mundane of our problems. Finally, we find that, in selling out our faith in the Lord and His Liberty, we have come to embrace the most egregious of sins mandated by that once God-inspired nation called America. We have allowed the very institution of marriage to be demeaned and perverted, and we have turned to that abominable sin mentioned in Leviticus: *Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.* (Lev 18:22) and Romans Chapter 1:19-32. We have turned from the alabaster mountains and grained-endowed plains of America to lesser little gods. We have looked at the confused and inept governments of Europe and said, “Let us be like them. Give us a king other than King Jesus to rule over us.”

Please remember the somber words from the days of Samuel the prophet: *4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, 5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now **MAKE US A KING TO JUDGE US LIKE ALL THE OTHER NATIONS.** 6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. 7 And the Lord said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.* (1 Sam 8:4-7)

We have enjoyed great blessings as a nation. Our azure skies have never known warplanes of another nation. Our seas and coastal defenses have been inviolate. Our freedoms have provided a zeal and enterprising spirit excelling all nations preceding us. Yet, we were not happy with those blessings. We desire to have ANOTHER king rule over us in the place of the Lord – a secular power that cares neither for body nor soul. Shall we continue, AMERICA, to forge the chains of our own enslavement; or shall we again look upon God as our Preserver and Benefactor?