

### 68.3 The Traitor<sup>1</sup>

**John 18:1-3 (NKJV)**

**When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. <sup>2</sup>And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. <sup>3</sup>Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.**

I am sure that a friend has betrayed you at one time or another. Welcome to the club. You are in good company. Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus for the price of a slave, thirty pieces of silver. In our time, the people of President Trump's inner circle betrayed him frequently. It seems that betrayal happens in many, if not most, organizations. Today I want to focus on the most famous traitor in American history, Benedict Arnold.

If Benedict Arnold had stayed faithful to the cause of Liberty, Americans would have honored him by naming schools after him and celebrating his birthday. No one in America or England named a school for Arnold. If they had, many of our politicians, media, and medical leaders could claim it as their alma mater.

Whether we are talking about Judas Iscariot, Trump's inner circle, many politicians, or Benedict Arnold, we might ask, "How does one become a traitor?"

Judas lost sight of Jesus as Messiah or perhaps had different expectations for Him. He may have been like John the Baptist, who questioned Jesus because his expectations differed from what he witnessed in Jesus. John, and perhaps Judas, expected a militant Messiah who would set things right (see **Matthew 11** and **Luke 7**). However, Jesus came with "grace and truth" (**John 1:14, 17**) on His first trip to earth. We are familiar with **John 3:16**, but notice the following verse, **John 3:17** (NKJV):

**<sup>17</sup>For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.**

The next time Jesus comes, He will fulfill John's expectations and bring the fire of judgment, "**taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ**" (**2 Thessalonians 1:8**, NKJV). This is one of the reasons we share the gospel with others. As Paul stated in **2 Corinthians 5:10-11** (NKJV):

**<sup>10</sup>For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;**

By the way, Judas is not the only one to have betrayed Jesus. Peter betrayed Him in his denials, and you and I deny Him in our sins. Peter repented and became a champion for Jesus. Judas did not and hanged himself. The good news is that Jesus will take us back in our repentance when we flounder.

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<sup>1</sup> For More Information on Benedict Arnold see: Cummings, Brad, and Lance Wubbels, editors. *The Founders' Bible*. Newbury Park, CA, Shiloh Road Publishers, 2012, pp. 1637-1638.

In the case of Benedict Arnold, he lost sight of the cause of American liberty. Arnold had been a hero to the American cause, especially at Saratoga in 1777. We might have lost that battle and the War had it not been for his military brilliance and leadership.

George Washington appointed Arnold to serve as the Military Commander of Philadelphia in June of 1778. It was here that Arnold made some war-related business deals to recoup his own finances angering many of the citizens. Arnold lived lavishly in Philadelphia and eventually married Peggy Shippen, the daughter of a British sympathizer or “Tory.”

Arnold went further into debt, became bitter over his lack of recognition, and disgusted over politics. He began reaching out to the British in May of 1779, providing them with military intelligence, then maneuvered the command of West Point, NY, based on George Washington’s trust in August of 1780. Arnold brokered a deal with Major Andre to surrender the post. The two met on September 21, 1780, and Arnold promised to deliver West Point to the British for 20,000 Sterling (an excess of \$3 Million today).

The Americans captured Andre and exposed the plot on September 23. Arnold fled the next morning, having heard of the arrest. The Americans hanged Andre as a spy, and Washington sent a message to the troops explaining General Arnold’s treachery. General Washington believed the providential hand of God was with them and declared:

*The treason has been timely discovered to prevent the fatal misfortune. The providential train of circumstances which led to it affords the most convincing proof that the liberties of America are the object of divine protection.*

The British commissioned Arnold as a Major General, and he led successful attacks against the Americans in Virginia and Connecticut. After the War, he moved to England, where he found that the British did not trust him. As a result, his business ventures had little success. He died in England in poverty and unknown.

Benedict Arnold could have been an American hero but chose the path of betrayal, motivated by the love of money. Today we equate his name with one who is a “traitor,” and by law, we are not allowed to inscribe his name anywhere in America. In a letter to Lafayette, **Benjamin Franklin** said of him:

*“Judas sold only one man, Arnold three millions.”*

God has a way of working all things for good (**Romans 8:28**). He did so with Judas and Arnold and will do so with our modern traitors who have sold out America for money and power. God is not finished with America, but we need to wake up and reengage Him. Paul wrote in **Romans 13:11-12** (NKJV):

**<sup>11</sup>And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup>The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.**

Keep The Light of Genuine Loyalty to God and America Burning!