In response to my recent thread on the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot, a number of readers have asked me about the aftermath. OK, supposing, as I’m arguing, there really was a Judas, one of Jesus twelve disciples, who betrayed something about Jesus (his whereabouts? his claim to be the future king?) that led to his arrest and execution. What happened next? Did Judas really kill himself?

Many people don’t realize that Judas’s death, after he betrayed Jesus, is not mentioned in three of our Gospels: Mark, Luke, and John. It is mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew, however, and just as important, in the book of Acts, written by the same author who produced the Gospel of Luke (so, well, let’s call him Luke). What is striking is that the descriptions of Judas’ death in these two accounts are at odds with one another, even though there are, at the same time, some striking similarities.

Matthew’s account (ch. 27) is the one more people are familiar with, since here we are told that ….

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