

Like many Christians, I was brought up with an image of Judas as the arch-villain ... a man with no discernable redeeming features who is now, doubtless, consigned to place of fire and eternal damnation (or whatever your personal vision of hell is like).

As I get older, though, things seem less black and white. For a start, if there was no good in him, what was he doing with Jesus in the first place – I mean, was Jesus such a bad judge of character – I think not!

I like the way that Judas is portrayed in Jesus Christ Superstar, as a slightly hot-headed individual who was duped by powerful and devious men. And, to be honest, who among us could be sure that we wouldn't buckle under that sort of pressure.

Judas was clearly remorseful – after all, he hung himself, didn't he.

This song tries to put into words what I think might have been going through Judas's mind just before he hung himself. It is a song of despair and yet, at its heart, there shines a tiny ray of hope. You see, I worship a God who has an infinite capacity for forgiveness, and if Judas was truly remorseful, wouldn't God forgive even him? If I am right, that would surely make Judas the most grateful sinner in the whole of heaven!

I am Judas

It was I betrayed my Master with a kiss

Tell me, how was I to know it would work out like this?

Have mercy on me

I am Judas

Just a tool of Satan, though I didn't know

And though Jesus knew my mission, he still let me go

Have pity on me

If I could have my life again

I wouldn't make the same mistake

I wouldn't fall for all their lies

Or the promises they make
All that the world could offer me
I would give up for his sake

I am Judas

Put me in a cell and throw away the key

In the deepest stinking pit where I deserve to be

I am Judas

Crucify me, it's the least that I deserve

Surely no-one could be further from the God of love

If I knew then what I know now

I'd gladly hang there in his place

If he were standing where you are

I couldn't look him in the face

My deeds have surely put me way

Beyond the limits of his grace

I am Judas

All the world knows of the evil I have done

Yet my Saviour still looks down on me and calls me "Son"

I am Judas

It was I betrayed my Master with a kiss

Tell me, how was I to know it would work out like this?

I am Judas

How I wish I'd never heard the name of "Judas"

Nothing but this tree should bear the name of Judas

Call me anything, but please don't call me