

2.10.19 ~ John 18:1-12, Jesus is Arrested at Gethsemane

Previously in **John 12:23**, Jesus said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." In **John 13:1**, we are told, that before the Feast Passover, "Jesus knew that His hour had come." And in **John 17:1**, "Jesus... lifting up His eyes to heaven, said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You."

Jesus has just finished praying His marvelous and priestly prayer (**John 17**) to His Father in heaven: first for Himself, that He will glorify the Father; and then, for the Father to protect the eleven, that they might know the love of the Father, as they take the message of the Gospel to a world that will hate them on account of Christ; and finally, for all future believers to know the unity that belongs to the Father and the Son, and to all those who belong to God.

Read John 18:1-4... The disciples were with Jesus all evening, celebrating the Passover, turned into the Lord's Supper, then following Him from the upper room, across Jerusalem in the dark, stopping to hear Him pray, and then walking again, in the very early morning on Friday.

The time has come for Jesus' arrest, trials, flogging, crucifixion, burial, and His resurrection from the grave.

We are told (**verse 1**) that when Jesus finished praying, He took the disciples across the Kidron valley to a garden, a favored place for Jesus, at the foot of the Mount of Olives [Olivet]. The other gospel writers (**Matthew 26:36; Mark 14:32**) tell us the name of this garden is Gethsemane [lit. oil press, because there are olive tree orchards and this is where the olive oil is pressed out of the olives].

Note: To get to the garden, Jesus (and the eleven) would have had to step over a small brook that was flowing red with the blood of the Passover lambs being slaughtered at the temple; although, their blood would not provide forgiveness for any sins; for only the shed blood of God's Son can purchase that forgiveness.

Gethsemane was a kind of "home" to Jesus, He visited it often, to pray in the quiet and secluded garden, and He had taken the disciples there many times.

But Jesus was now going there, because He knew that is where Judas would bring the religious leaders and soldiers, to arrest Him (**verse 2**). Jesus purposely got there, willingly, knowingly, obediently to fulfill His reason for coming from the Father (**1Corinthians 15:3**), "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."

Judas knew where Jesus would be, so he informed the authorities. Jesus wasn't a victim, He voluntarily gave up Himself (**John 10:17-18**), "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so 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. This commandment I received from My Father."

Many times the Jews tried to capture Him, but it was not yet time, the hour had not yet come (**John 7:30; 8:20**), it was now time (**John 18:1, 4**), "He went forth."

Judas was fulfilling his treachery, as we studied in **John 13:18-30**, when Judas left the upper room to do his evil deed, before Jesus' instruction to the eleven concerning the Lord's Table. Judas willfully allowed Satan to control and possess him, and now Judas led the Jews and the Romans to take Christ captive.

In fact, in **Matthew 26:47** we are told, "Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, *who came* from the chief priests and elders of the people." There could have been several hundred, as many as 600 soldiers and more than a hundred of the temple police in this large crowd.

Perhaps there were so many, because they knew the power of this Jesus, for He had raised Lazarus from the dead and had performed many supernatural healings and miracles; not to mention that He had a large following among the people of Jerusalem, and perhaps the Chief Priests and the Roman soldiers were concerned that there might be an uprising. No wonder they used the cover of darkness and this secluded garden to perform their evil deed.

But of all those who came to arrest Jesus, only two names are mentioned: Judas and Malchus (the slave of the high priest).

Read John 18:4-9... Judas has come with this large group to point out Jesus to them. Which seems rather ridiculous, considering all the times the Jews had tried to capture Him. The important aspect of Judas being there is to perform his treachery. The other gospel writers tell us that Judas would point out Jesus to the authorities by giving Him a kiss on the face (cf. **Luke 22:48**, "Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?").

Note: A slave would kiss the foot of his master; an inferior or subordinate would kiss the hand of a superior; but a kiss on the face was a sign of intimacy and affection between equals.

Jesus had repeatedly told His disciples that He was going to be rejected, arrested, beaten, crucified and buried, but on the third day He would rise from the grave (**Matthew 20:17-19; Mark 8:31-33; 9:31; 10:33-34; Luke 9:22**). Jesus was God, and so He knew all that was going to happen to Him.

Notice (**verse 4**) Jesus asks them who they are looking for, and they answer "Jesus the Nazarene," to which Jesus replies "I AM *He!*" **Verse 6** tells us, that at Jesus' response, they "drew back and fell to the ground." The power of Jesus' words caused them (hundreds of men) to fall like dominos against each other.

Jesus speaks the Name of God, "I AM," and they collapse! They are probably just getting up off the ground, when He asks them again (**verse 7**), who they seek, and they say "Jesus the Nazarene." Again Jesus says, I AM the one you are looking for, so let these men go, basically saying, you have no charge against them, it is Me that you want.

Notice (**verse 9**), John inserts that this is said to fulfill the Scripture, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one." In **John 17**, Jesus had prayed for the Father to protect and care for these eleven when He was gone, because He had cared for them like a shepherd cares for his own sheep, and He had not lost any of those who were His

John 17:12, "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition [Judas], so that the Scripture would be fulfilled."

Read John 18:10-11... At this point, Peter pulls out his sword and takes a swing at the head of Malchus (the high priest's servant), cutting off his ear.

All I can say here is, really Peter, a few moments ago Jesus spoke *I AM*, and hundreds of armed men fell to the ground. Does Jesus need a fisherman swinging a sword to save Him? Jesus rebukes Peter (**verse 11**), commanding him to put the sword away. Jesus is fulfilling the will of the Father so that we might receive forgiveness and be made acceptable to the Holy God of Creation. Jesus was born for the purpose of dying for our sins; He willfully lays His own life down, it is not taken from Him.

In fact in Matthew's narrative of this event (**Matthew 26:52-54**), Jesus rebukes Peter, saying, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, *which say* that it must happen this way?"

God doesn't need the help of men to protect His Son! In fact, although John doesn't record the healing of Malchus here, the apostle Luke, who was a doctor, tells us what happened after Peter attempted to strike the high priest's servant with his sword (**Luke 22:51**), Jesus commanded, "'Stop! No more of this.' And He touched [Malchus'] ear and healed him."

In front of this very large crowd of religious leaders, temple guards, Roman soldiers, and other onlookers, the Lord performs His last miracle before going to the cross. Only then does He allow Himself to be taken captive, much like a lamb being led to the slaughter.

Read John 18:12...

Pastor Mike
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