

The Temple was just across the Kidron Valley (Wadi en Nar) from the Mount of Olives. When Jesus finished praying in the Temple, He must have gone out the eastern exit and straight across the Kidron Valley. <sup>1</sup> *When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it.* Jesus knew what would happen that night. He had prepared His own heart and tried to prepare the disciples with warnings, encouragement, and prayer. (Luke 18:32-33)

The other Gospel writers tell us about Jesus continuing in prayer in the Garden. (Luke 22:41) He asked Peter, James and John to keep watch with Him, but they kept falling asleep. (Luke 22:45) The way that Jesus prayed shows His humanity, but also His sinless nature. He was willing to follow the Father's direction regardless of the cost. (Luke 22:42) Verse 4 tells us He knew exactly what was coming and yet He did not flee. In fact, He had chosen His place of prayer as the place of His arrest. When difficulties are coming our way, we'd be wise to let them meet us in our place of prayer. You do have one, don't you? How can we expect to face the difficulties of life if we don't? (Matthew 6:6)

The place that Jesus and the disciples went is still an olive grove today with ancient trees, some of which may even date back to that time. The Church of All Nations is built over the place that Jesus prayed. The cave in which the disciples would have slept has been turned into a small chapel. In Jesus' day, that cave had an olive press, which is what the word Gethsemane means. It would also have been used to store jars of olive oil. Protected from the weather, it was a place for the disciples to spend the cool Passover night. It sounds as if the grove was walled and guarded. The keeper must have known Jesus had permission from the owner to stay there. During Passover, worshipers stayed in Jerusalem and the city boundaries were extended to accommodate the crowds. (Deuteronomy 16:5-7)

In our last trip to Jerusalem, we were invited into a similar walled olive grove just above the Gethsemane cave. We took time to pray and meditate on this passage, envisioning what took place there and what it means to us.

<sup>2</sup> *Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples.* What a sad verse! The ones who are closest can be the ones who hurt us the most deeply. Judas knew Jesus was there because Jesus had made him a close friend and disciple. They often spent their nights in Jerusalem in the Gethsemane cave. Jesus chose Judas, the only disciple that wasn't from the north.

The most evil of persons are those who know so much truth but reject it. I recently heard of a scholar, A. N. Wilson, who had been an enemy of Scripture and written books on a secular interpretation of Paul and Jesus, but converted to genuine faith in Jesus. Imagine the rejoicing in heaven. (Luke 15:7) On the other hand, there are those who have been prominent names as Christians and have betrayed the cause of Christ. Judas tops the list. He lived with Jesus for three years. Jesus taught him everything He had heard from the Father. (John 15:15) He trusted Him to be

**Commented [notes1]:** 32 He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him.  
33 On the third day he will rise again."  
Luke 18:32-33 (NIV)

**Commented [notes2]:** 41 He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed,  
Luke 22:41 (NIV)

**Commented [notes3]:** 45 When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow.  
Luke 22:45 (NIV)

**Commented [notes4]:** 42 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."  
Luke 22:42 (NIV)

**Commented [notes5]:** 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.  
Matt 6:6 (NIV)

**Commented [notes6]:** 5 You must not sacrifice the Passover in any town the LORD your God gives you  
6 except in the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name. There you must sacrifice the Passover in the evening, when the sun goes down, on the anniversary of your departure from Egypt.  
7 Roast it and eat it at the place the LORD your God will choose. Then in the morning return to your tents.  
Deut 16:5-7 (NIV)

**Commented [notes7]:** 7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.  
Luke 15:7 (NIV)

**Commented [notes8]:** 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.  
John 15:15 (NIV)

treasurer. He washed his feet, but Judas turned his back on Jesus. He betrayed Jesus' love for thirty silver coins, a month's wages. (Matthew 26:15) Before we point the finger at Judas though, consider the ways in which we betray Jesus. Judas put his own plans before Jesus'. In many ways we can do the same.

**Commented [notes9]:** 15 and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty silver coins. Matt 26:15 (NIV)

I imagine the sorrow and pain in Jesus' eyes as Judas sealed his own fate with a kiss on Jesus' cheek. (John 17:12) I can see the pain in Jesus' eyes when we choose to try to fill our heart with some physical thing He created for our good instead of Jesus Himself. It is usually because we desire to distort a thing's intended purpose for some kind of selfish thrill. We come to church and kiss Jesus with a song, while our heart is set on something else. That is a kind of betrayal as well. God have mercy on us, open our eyes, and give us a real love for the One who loves us and has our best interests at heart. (John 10:10)

**Commented [notes10]:** 12 While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. John 17:12 (NIV)

<sup>3</sup> So Judas came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons. This word "detachment" (*speira*) describes between 600 and 1000 Roman soldiers! "Officials" means the temple guards, the ones that would actually make the arrest. Chief priests are those who have held the office and the aristocratic families from whom the chief priest was chosen. Most people picture a little band of soldiers, but this was a small army.

**Commented [notes11]:** 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:10 (NIV)

Under the light of the full Passover moon, they would have exited the Temple through the same eastern gate that Jesus had recently passed. With their numbers, torches, and lanterns, they would have been readily visible from where Jesus was praying. He could have seen them make the entire trip across the Kidron Valley up to the Gethsemane grove. The gatekeeper would have fled. Jesus most likely went to the cave to wake the other disciples before the troops arrived.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" "Went out" not from the garden but from the cave. Jesus had time to flee. He could have simply left the garden and gone to Bethany when He saw the troops coming out of the Temple grounds. But He went out to meet them.

**Commented [notes12]:** 6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. John 14:6 (NIV)

Listen, the world has always tried to water down what Jesus did, because if you recognize what He really did, it'll break your heart or harden it. You'll surrender your life or you'll kiss Him in betrayal. The kiss of betrayal in academia today is the teaching that this nice, insightful man was misunderstood, captured, and unjustly killed. But Jesus was not just an insightful man as we will soon see. (John 14:6) He was not captured. He went out and met the army because He knew He was the Lamb of God that was to be sacrificed on Passover for the sins of all mankind. (John 1:29) He went out and met them because He loves you and me.

**Commented [notes13]:** 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29 (NIV)

<sup>5</sup> "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) Obviously the mob did not know what Jesus looked like or they would have responded, "It's You we seek!" In the chaos of the moment they probably missed Judas' sign. (Luke 22:47-48) The other disciples would be up and out of the cave. They had two swords among them. (Luke 22:38) There was

**Commented [notes14]:** 47 While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, 48 but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" Luke 22:47-48 (NIV)

**Commented [notes15]:** 38 The disciples said, "See, Lord, here are two swords." "That is enough," he replied. Luke 22:38 (NIV)

probably some posturing, but what could you do against such an army? Jesus just asked who they want, because it will force them to say, "The salvation of God, the branch of David!" Literally they just said, "Jesus of Nazareth" (Iesuos ha Nezoraios) but the Jews in the crowd knew all that name implied. They were seeking to take into custody the salvation of God, the promised Messiah! I wonder if a tingle went down the back of the religious leaders when they heard the Temple guard answer, "The salvation of YHWH, the Branch"?

<sup>6</sup> When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. Jesus answered, "I AM" (ego eimi), the divine name of God! (John 8:58) The roar of the lion of the tribe of Judah fell the men like trees before a volcanic blast! (Isaiah 11:4) Well, if they didn't get a tingle before, they got a 2x4 across the head now! Can you envision this army, lanterns, torches, weapons, Roman soldiers, Temple guards, and royally dressed elites all falling backward like dominoes?

You could have put all the armies on the planet and all the spiritual armies of demons in that olive grove and they all would have fallen on their backsides when He declared that He is the I AM. (Exodus 3:14) Jesus wasn't just some nice guy that was captured by the bad guys that misunderstood Him. He is the eternal God and He has all authority in heaven and on earth. He could have said, "OK, game's over!" and all of matter, time and space would be gone! (Hebrews 1:3)

Here are these pathetic little humans clinging to little swords and torches addressing their Creator. Who is in control of this scenario? Jesus is going to die for you and me of His own free will. He just wants us all to understand that no one made Him do it. (John 10:17-18) The idea that someone forced Him is laughable. The only reason seminaries are fleeing from this truth is because they want to be their own god. The Scriptures are clear. The so-called scholars that try to distort this truth with their twisted reasoning and denials are as sad as those soldiers with their swords and torches. But never mind them; will we face this truth? Jesus chose this path to save us!

<sup>7</sup> Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

<sup>8</sup> "I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go." Why did that small army let all of Jesus' disciples leave? Imagine finding Bin Laden in a cave and letting everyone else in the cave walk away. Don't you think the original intent was to arrest and crucify them all? Jesus commands that they leave the disciples alone, and after a demonstration of the power in His little finger, they do just as He commands. (Jeremiah 23:29) They had just picked themselves up off the grass and all they could probably say was, "Yes, sir! Just please don't say, "I AM" with the force with which you said it before."

Satan comes before the child of God and Jesus commands, "If you are looking for me, then let (this one) go." Satan accuses us, points to all our failures, and Jesus stands in the gap. Our iniquities have fallen on Him. (Isaiah 53:11) He keeps His own.

<sup>9</sup> This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost

**Commented [notes16]:** 58 "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" John 8:58 (NIV)

**Commented [notes17]:** 4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Isaiah 11:4 (NIV)

**Commented [notes18]:** 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" Ex 3:14 (NIV)

**Commented [notes19]:** 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. Heb 1:3 (NIV)

**Commented [notes20]:** 17 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life--only to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father." John 10:17-18 (NIV)

**Commented [notes21]:** 29 "Is not my word like fire," declares the LORD, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?" Jer 23:29 (NIV)

**Commented [notes22]:** 11 After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied ; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Isaiah 53:11 (NIV)

*one of those you gave me.* "Oh what comforting phrase! The Great Shepherd loses none. And He will never lose one. Charles Spurgeon penned a sermon on this passage. I think you'll enjoy the way he pictured this. (paraphrased from the sermon The Captive Savior Freeing His People) Spurgeon imagined Jesus leading all His sheep to the gates of heaven and declaring, "Here I am and the children you have given me." The Father asks, "Is everyone safely home?" The Son answers, "Of all those you have given me, I have lost none." "But what of Peter who cursed and denied three times that he ever knew You." The Great Shepherd answers, "Yes, but I caused him to go out and weep bitterly, and then I washed him in my blood, and here he is." The Father will answer, "But what of the very least of all the saints?" Listener, you may think you are the weakest, most undeserving, most stubborn of all Jesus' sheep, but Jesus will answer, "He is here. *I have not lost one of those you gave me.*" Let that sink in a minute. He will not lose you to the wolves!

**10** Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) Malchus is an Arab name. The right ear was the more valuable ear, the one that was always to be attentive to the master. The Gospel writers tell us Jesus healed this man's ear. (Luke 22:51) This man was not considered to be on the same level as Jews and in the role of a servant he was taking part in the arrest of Jesus, but Jesus stopped everything to heal him. You have to wonder how it affected the man's life. You have to wonder how it affected those who observed what took place. What did the Roman soldiers think after being knocked to the ground and then to witness a compassionate act of healing to a seemingly insignificant Gentile?

Peter was ready to take things into his own hands. Earlier, Jesus had told them to buy swords (Luke 22:36), but He never told them to resist the arrest and crucifixion. In fact, He rebuked Peter for telling Him not to go this route. (Matthew 16:23) I imagine Jesus' suggestion to carry swords was to deter those who might want to attack the disciples. Jesus said two swords were enough, and two were certainly not enough to resist this army. But Peter seems to have misunderstood and been ready to take them all on. That was pretty gutsy, but not God's will. How often we think we are doing something for God, even being valiant, when we are really getting in the way. May God help us to look to Jesus' leading and not our own ideas or good intentions.

**11** Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" Jesus put a stop to the violence immediately. The cup in the Old Testament often referred to the cup of wrath. (Psalm 75:8) Jesus was determined to drink the cup of wrath that our sins deserved. He had settled the matter in prayer and knew there was no other way. He had to go through with it to save us. (Acts 4:12) After that assault, it is even more amazing that the disciples weren't arrested. Jesus is in charge of each event as it unfolds.

**12** Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him ...as if the Creator could be bound by His creation. Jesus let Himself be bound. Once they knew He was not going to physically resist them, they swooped in. It reminds me of the scene in the Lion, the Witch, and the

**Commented [notes23]:** 51 But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.  
Luke 22:51 (NIV)

**Commented [notes24]:** 36 He said to them, "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one."  
Luke 22:36 (NIV)

**Commented [notes25]:** 23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."  
Matt 16:23 (NIV)

**Commented [notes26]:** In the hand of the LORD is a cup full of foaming wine mixed with spices; he pours it out, and all the wicked of the earth drink it down to its very dregs.  
Psalms 75:8 (NIV)

**Commented [notes27]:** 12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."  
Acts 4:12 (NIV)

Wardrobe when the evil beasts come up to touch bound Aslan the Lion who represented Jesus. They quickly steal a poke and draw back fearing what will happen. When nothing does they grew bolder and bolder until they began to abuse Him without fear. What a picture of what was happening here. No one knew if Jesus would use His power to stop them, but when He didn't, they sprang into action.

<sup>13</sup> and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. A high priest was to be high priest for life, but the Romans changed that. They would install whoever best suited their purposes. Annas had been High Priest from AD 6-15, the first to be installed by a Roman procurator. He was the one that established the selling of animals and exchanging money in the Temple for a fee. After him, a number of his sons and this son-in-law served as High Priest. Caiaphas was in office AD 18-36/37. John is the only one that mentioned the appearance before Annas. He may have been the only disciple that knew about it, since it was a short appearance and probably in the same compound as Caiaphas' home. Annas probably questioned Jesus until the Sanhedrin could be gathered.

<sup>14</sup> Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be good if one man died for the people. Caiaphas had suggested that Jesus must be killed or the Romans would end the reign of the Sanhedrin and the nation of Israel. Ironically it was because of Caiaphas intervention that that actually did happen. Caiaphas didn't prevent it; he ended up setting up a scenario in which it would happen. Of course the disciples saw his words as being prophetic of Jesus dying for the sins of the nation. (John 11:51) They believed that because of his office, he unknowingly prophesied of the atoning work of Jesus through the cross.

Jesus' determination to drink the cup on our behalf, His protection of the disciples, His power over His enemies, and even His grace to heal the least in this hour of danger show that He is in charge. It may look like He was facing the end of the road gallantly, but it is much more than gallantry. He is in charge and out of this dark hour will come a glorious dawn, resurrection, our salvation, and eternal life.

Why did Jesus submit Himself to all this? Next week we'll see even more clearly that He is walking through this like He walked on the storm waves on Galilee. (Matthew 14:24-25) He is Master of all. Even when men think they have the upper hand, He reigns, undeterred, unhindered, all-powerful. We become agitated and start to draw our own swords and Jesus asks us, <sup>53</sup> Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? Matthew 26:53 (NIV) What He predetermined was coming to pass. (Isaiah 46:10) The words of the prophets were being fulfilled, and those who studied those writings didn't even realize their role in bringing them to pass. God even told them what He would do and they still played their evil role while Jesus marched steadily toward triumph over sin and death.

Are you walking with the Victor? I wouldn't want to walk through the storm of this life with anyone else!

**Commented [notes28]:** 51 He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, John 11:51 (NIV)

**Commented [notes29]:** 24 but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. 25 During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. Matt 14:24-25 (NIV)

**Commented [notes30]:** 10 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. Isaiah 46:10 (NIV)