

The Gospel of *Mark*

The Servant Leadership of Jesus

The Servant's Ministry in Jerusalem (continued) (11 – 16)

Arrest, Trials and Crucifixion: *The Prayers at Gethsemane* (14:32-42)

14:32-34 Jesus went with His apostles to Gethsemane. He left eight of them, went a little farther with Peter, James & John, expressed His distress ^{John 12:27}, told them “stay” & “watch” and went on alone.

“Gethsemane” (oil press) was a garden of olive trees at the base of the western slope of the Mount of Olives, a familiar ^{Mark 13:3, Luke 21:37, John 8:1} and private place where Jesus could pray.

Peter, James and John were the inner circle for Jesus, with the privilege of being the only ones to witness certain important events ^{Mark 5:37, 9:2, 14:33}, but they also had greater responsibility.

Jesus was filled with terror, because His human side did not want to feel the physical torture ahead and His Spirit side did not want to be separated from His Father ^{Mark 15:34, Galatians 3:13}.

His stress was so great, His sweat was blood-stained ^{Luke 22:44} and nearly caused His death.

35-36 Once alone, Jesus knelt and passionately prayed to His omnipotent Father for release from the task ahead, and yet He was willing to accept and yield to His Father's perfect will ^{Psalms 40:6-8, John 6:38}.

The “hour” Jesus referred to ^{Matthew 26:18} included His being betrayed, tried, tortured & crucified.

Jesus called His Father “*Abba*”, an intimate Aramaic term (“Daddy”) ^{Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6}.

The “cup” refers to God's wrath ^{Job 21:20, Psalm 75:8, Revelation 14:9-10} that Jesus faced on the cross.

Jesus prayed for another way: His human side hoping yes, His Spirit side knowing no ^{Luke 22:37}.

He modeled the perfect prayer: share your heart, don't “tell” God what to do, accept God's will.

It is at this time Luke noted that an angel “appeared to [Jesus] and strengthened him” ^{Luke 22:43}.

37-40 Jesus returned to where His inner circle was waiting; finding them asleep, He confronted Peter, because they could not stay awake in support of Him for even an hour. Jesus added “pray” to His instruction to “watch” ^{v.34}, because Peter would need spiritual help to overcome the weakness of the flesh ^{Romans 7:15-25}. Jesus left to repeat His prayer, but came back to find them asleep again.

Jesus spoke directly to Simon either because he was the leading apostle and/or because of his bold proclamation to support Jesus even to death ^{v.31}. Jesus may have used the name Simon, because he was not living up to the meaning of his new name, Peter: rock ^{Matthew 16:18-19}.

The admonition of Jesus for them to “watch and pray” ^{Nehemiah 4:9, Ephesians 6:18, Colossians 4:2} illustrates the responsibility of all believers to blend faith with action ^{James 2:26}. “Watch” was Jesus’ way of telling them to be sharp in their discernment of spiritual attacks ^{Ephesians 6:10-18}. Jesus was also reemphasizing His earlier point to them about prayer and temptation ^{Matthew 6:13}.

41-42 Jesus prayed for a third time and returned to discover them asleep once again. He responded with an exasperated “Enough!” and let them know it was time for Him to face His betrayer ^{v.18-21}.

The three times the inner circle fell asleep was a foreshadowing of Peter’s three denials and the first step in the falling away of all of the disciples, as predicted earlier that night by Jesus ^{v.27}.

The statement by Jesus: “The hour has come” indicated that His Father had answered His prayers ^{v.35-36,39,41} with a “No”, because the hour did not pass, as He had asked it would ^{v.35}.

Two key lessons from Jesus’ perfect prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane:

Prayer should be dependent ^{Ephesians 6:19-20, Colossians 1:9} and never ceasing ^{1 Thessalonians 5:16-18}.

Arrest, Trials and Crucifixion: *The Arrest at Gethsemane* (14:43-52)

43-47 Judas went with a large number of temple and Roman soldiers sent by the Jewish leadership.

Judas approached, called Jesus “Rabbi” and “kissed him”, signaling the soldiers, who arrested Jesus. Reacting in anger to the arrest, “one of those standing near” (Peter ^{John 18:10}) took his sword and cut off an ear of the “servant of the high priest” (Malchus ^{John 18:10}), but Jesus healed Malchus ^{Luke 22:51}.

Peter ^{John 18:10} learned spiritual battles are not fought with physical weapons ^{2 Corinthians 10:3-5}.

The benign descriptions of Judas as “one of the Twelve” ^{v.43, Matthew 26:47, Luke 22:47} by the Gospel writers follow the lead of Jesus ^{v.18-20} and prove the Spirit authorship of Scripture ^{2 Timothy 3:16}.

John indicated a “cohort” (six hundred) of armed Roman soldiers ^{John 18:3, 12a} were there.

Judas’ act of using a kiss to betray Jesus was a despicable perversion of its usual meaning.

48-50 Jesus confronted the arresting soldiers with the unnecessary need for their weapons and their large numbers. He freely went with them, because it was His Father’s will. His disciples all “fled” ^{v.27}.

Jesus indicated He would willingly go ^{John 10:14-18} to fulfill God’s ordained ^{Acts 2:23} plan ^{Isaiah 53}.

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In John's account ^{John 18:8}, Jesus commanded they let His disciples go (sovereignty ^{John 6:39}).

51-52 Only Mark revealed this curious anecdote about a young man, who had been following Jesus, losing his clothes while trying to get away from the soldiers, as all of the disciples were escaping.

This is another example of a story (or an aspect of a story) only appearing in the gospel of Mark, leading to suspicions this story was in reference to Mark himself. ^{Mark 10:17-22, 14:13-15}

Arrest, Trials and Crucifixion: *The Religious Trial Before Caiaphas* (14:53-65)

53-54 Jesus was taken before the high priest and the Sanhedrin, with Peter following from a distance.

This was the second of the six illegal trials of Jesus: three trials were religious (Jewish): Annas, Caiaphas, Sanhedrin and three trials were civil (Roman): Pontius Pilate, Herod, Pilate again.

Caiaphas ^{John 18:24} was the high priest in A.D. 18-36 (son-in-law of Annas, high priest in A.D. 6-15).

55-59 After years of unsuccessfully trying to trap Jesus into saying something that violated the Law, the Jewish leaders desperately attempted to find some way to convict Jesus. They produced false witnesses whose testimonies were inconsistent and actually changed the words of Jesus ^{John 2:19}.

A legal conviction was only possible with at least two collaborative witnesses ^{Deuteronomy 17:6}.

60-62 The high priest prodded Jesus to say something that would be self-incriminating. Initially, Jesus stayed silent ^{Isaiah 53:7, 1 Peter 2:23}; however, when the high priest asked two direct questions to Jesus: was He the "Christ" (the Savior) and was He the "Son of the Blessed One" (question of His Deity)? Jesus responded positively ("I am"), and added that the high priest would see Him at the right-hand of the Father ("the Mighty One") and returning "on the clouds of heaven" ^{Daniel 7:13, Revelation 1:7}.

"Messiah" is the Hebrew word and "Christ" the Greek word for "the anointed one" (i.e., Savior).

The "I am" statement is a direct reference to God's name given at the burning bush ^{Exodus 3:14}.

In addition to this exchange, Jesus declared many times that He was/is the Messiah and the Son of God (both explicitly ^{John 4:25-26, 5:16-18, 8:58} and implicitly ^{Luke 4:18-21, 5:17-26, 7:36-50}).

63-65 Caiaphas "tore His clothes" (a priestly violation of the Law ^{Leviticus 10:6, 21:10}) and proclaimed Jesus' statement to have been a blasphemy (a Jewish capital crime ^{Leviticus 24:16}). He asked for opinions from the others present, and they "all condemned" Jesus. The Temple guards then blindfolded, spit on, hit, taunted and beat Jesus ^{Matthew 16:21}.

Spitting in the face of another person was the most hateful insult ^{Numbers 12:14, Deuteronomy 25:9}.

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