

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 24 Jesus
The Last Week of the Life of Jesus VI

Psalm 113:1-2 Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, you, his servants; praise the name of the Lord. Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and forevermore. Today's lesson is in Matthew 26 and John 18.

Going to Gethsemane and Its Agony

Matthew 26:30 Then, after singing songs of praise, they went to the Mount of Olives.

Following the Lord's Supper, the little band sang a hymn, probably taken from Psalms 113-118 which is called "the Great Hallel." These Psalms are recited during Passover, one source said while the lambs were slaughtered at the temple. I have picked Psalm 117 because it is short. One commentator quoted verses from Psalm 116 as being significant. We used verses from Psalm 113 as our opening and we will close with the first verse of Psalm 115.

Psalm 117 The Lord's Faithfulness Endures Forever

Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord! Then they left Jerusalem, crossed the Brook Kidron, and climbed the western slope of Mount Olive to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Read Matthew 26:36-46

1. Where did Jesus and the disciples go after leaving the upper room? The went to the Garden of Gethsemane. The name Gethsemane means a place of oil presses and since it was on Mount Olive the name was appropriate. But the place was now a garden about a half mile from the city. Luke mentions that Jesus often resorted to it while in Jerusalem at the festivals.
2. After telling the remainder of the disciples to wait for Him, which of His disciples accompanied Him further into the garden? Peter, James and John. He probably expected the disciples to pray too. He wanted them to have strength to withstand the coming temptations. As a human, he took His three closest friends a little further so that He could have them closer. While He may have longed for some support from them, He didn't get any. Jesus fortified himself against

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 24 Jesus
The Last Week of the Life of Jesus VI

The coming events by prayer. And he asked his disciples do likewise, for his arrest would involve them also in temptations which he foresaw that they would not be able to withstand. Jesus is showing his desire for human sympathy.

Luke 22:42-44 He said, "Father, if it's your will, take this cup of suffering away from me. However, not my will but your will must be done." Then a heavenly angel appeared to him and strengthened him. He was in anguish and prayed even more earnestly. His sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.

3. For what did Jesus pray at this time? He asked that the cup of suffering be removed, if possible, but He wanted His father's will to be done. What indicated the intensity of His prayer? He sweat drops of blood. He also fell down on His face indicating the most intense supplication. Fourfold speculates that Jesus' human side is the more dominant and that the Godly side recedes so that He can be the sacrifice. Here He is praying to the Father for another way if possible.

4. According to Luke 22:43, who appeared to Jesus at this time? An angel appeared. What was the purpose of this appearance? To give Him strength.

5. What did Jesus do when He found His disciples sleeping? He said to Peter, "Couldn't you stay alert one hour with me? Stay alert and pray so that you won't give in to temptation. The spirit is eager, but the flesh is weak." Remember that Peter had boasted that he would go to the death with Jesus. Jesus went to pray again. When we remember the excitement of that night, the tender words spoken by Jesus, the sadness of which was intensified by the atmosphere of mystery which pervaded them, Jesus' prayer, and lastly this agony in the garden, it is no wonder that the apostles, with no sense of danger, fell asleep. When he found them sleeping a second time? The "cup" was a common Hebrew figure used to denote one's divinely appointed lot or fortune. When He saw their eyes were heavy with sleep, He left them and again went and prayed the same words for the third time. Any of them who were awoken, didn't know what to answer. A third time? He said, "Will you sleep and rest all night? Get up. Let's go. Look, here comes my

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 24 Jesus
The Last Week of the Life of Jesus VI

betrayed." Fourfold translates this as "So far as I am concerned, you may sleep on and take your rest, for the time to be of comfort or assistance to me has wholly passed. But so far as you yourselves are concerned, you must arise and be going, because Judas with his band of temple police is upon us."

Jesus Betrayed, Arrested and Forsaken

Read Matthew 26:47-56

6. How did Judas know where to find Jesus? Luke tells us that Judas would know where to find them because they went there often. Who accompanied him? Judas treachery made a deep impression upon the gospel writers because they all mention him. The arresting party which accompanied Judas consisted of the band of officers and men from the temple guard or Levitical police, Pharisees, scribes, servants, chief priests, captains of the temple and elders. They were well supplied with lights, for while the Passover is always held when the moon is full, the moon at this time of night would be near setting, and the shadow of the mountain would make the Garden of Gethsemane dark. How did he identify Jesus to them? He kissed Him. Taking the lead, Jesus said this for at least two reasons. He wanted any potential violence to be directed to Him and not to His disciples, so He wanted to identify Himself. Jesus also wanted Judas and the detachment of troops to announce their evil intention.

7. Upon seeing Judas and those who accompanied him, what questions did Jesus ask of them? John mentions the foreknowledge of Jesus to remind us that he could have avoided the arrest had he chosen to do so. "Judas, would you betray the Human One with a kiss?" Jesus made Judas feel his utter nothingness, and his worthlessness even as a betrayer. The kiss was the common mode of salutation between men, especially between teacher and pupils, and when Judas brazenly persists in completing the sign, Jesus bids him do it, not as a friend, but as a traitor. Little did he know that this would become a proverb through the ages.

8. Briefly summarize the events which took place during the arrest of Jesus. When the disciples realized what was happening, they began to fight back with

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 24 Jesus
The Last Week of the Life of Jesus VI

their swords. Jesus healed the man whose ear was cut off. He told His disciples to stop fighting. He asked the crowd why they hadn't arrested Him in the temple, but He said, darkness is your time.

9. What was the initial reaction of Jesus' disciples to His arrest? They began fighting with their swords. Seeing His submission to the soldiers, what did His disciples then do? Matthew 26:56 says "Then all the disciples left Jesus and ran away." Despite all His warnings, each apostle sought his own safety. The disciples took the words let these go their way as recorded in John as their signal to leave. Some commentators point out that Jesus was still protecting the disciples.

10. Who was Malchus? He was a servant or slave of the high priest. What happened to him? Peter evidently carried one of the two swords that were mentioned earlier. Fourfold thinks that he struck a downward blow to Malchus head and Malchus dodged, and Peter cut his ear off with a sword. but Jesus healed his ear. John knew the household of the high priest and would know the name of the servant. What lesson did Jesus teach in regard to this incident? By the healing of Malchus' ear and the words spoken to Peter, Jesus shows that the sword is not to be used either to defend the truth or to advance his kingdom. Had he not thus spoken and acted, Pilate might have doubted his words when he testified that his kingdom was not of this world. Jesus still addresses Peter. If the divine purpose had dictated that Jesus should resist this arrest, angels would have rescued Him. But, on the contrary, it was God's purpose that he should be arrested, as the Scripture had foretold.

The First Stage of the Jewish Trial: Examination by Annas

Read John 18:12-14

11. After arresting and then binding Him, where did the officers take Jesus? To the home of Annas.

12. Who was Annas? He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest. The high priesthood was a life office. According to Moses, Annas was high priest, but

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 24 Jesus
The Last Week of the Life of Jesus VI

the Romans had given the office to Caiaphas with input from Annas. Why was Jesus taken to him? As head of the Sadducean party, the people looked to Annas before Caiaphas, taking Jesus to him first. The influence of Annas is shown by the fact that he made five of his son and sons-in-law high priests. He questioned Jesus for the purpose of obtaining, if possible, some material out of which to frame an accusation. Barclay says Annas and his household were notorious.

Read John 11: 49-53

13. Who was Caiaphas? Caiaphas was the high priest. This unknowing prophecy of Caiaphas is recorded. Without knowing, Caiaphas spoke the truth that it was good for Jesus to die for the people. While this may have made logical sense it was morally wrong to put the innocence Messiah to death.

Read John 18:19-24

14. What question did the high priest ask Jesus? He asked questions about His disciples and His teachings. Annas basically brought the prisoner before him and asked, "Tell us all what You're guilty of and everyone who is with You." In His reply, Jesus did not mention His disciples at all. He protected them in every way possible. What was His response? Jesus said that He had always taught openly, ask some of the listeners. Bruce tells us it was the high priest's duty to call forth the witnesses first, beginning with those for the defense. These basic legal protections for the accused under Jewish law were not observed in the trial of Jesus. "Jesus therefore claimed that, if his teaching was in question, evidence should be heard in the normal way."

15. What did an officer do to Jesus? Without warning he strongly slapped Jesus with the palm of his hand and accused Him of disrespect to the high priest. What did he then ask Him? Is this how you answer the High Priest? How did Jesus reply? "If I speak wrongly, testify about what was wrong. But if I speak correctly, why do you strike me?" Jesus asked both the unnamed official and Annas to justify

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 24 Jesus
The Last Week of the Life of Jesus VI

this physical abuse. Jesus exposed the shameful truth, that they did not follow their own standards and practice of justice.

16. Where was Jesus then sent? Jesus was bound and sent to Caiaphas the high priest. Since Annas had nothing to answer to Jesus, he sent Jesus on to a more official trial to the actual office of high priest. Jesus was bound as if He were a dangerous criminal. Remember that Jesus could have easily broken the bindings.

The Second Stage of the Jewish Trial: Jesus Condemned by Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin

Matthew 26:57 Those who arrested Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest. The legal experts and the elders had gathered there.

Read Matthew 26:59-68

17. Who had assembled with Caiaphas? The legal experts and the elders. What was their purpose in being there? They were looking for false testimony so they could condemn Him to death. After interrogation, Annas sent Jesus to Caiaphas for a trial in two parts. The first was a hastily gathered assembly of the council recorded in Matthew 26:57-68. The second was the official, daylight meeting of the Sanhedrin in Luke 22:66. John 18 goes on to tell us John used an ironic touch to expose the hypocrisy of the Jewish rulers. They refused to break relatively small commands regarding ceremonial defilement, but broke much greater commands in rejecting God's Messiah and condemning an innocent Man to death. This nighttime trial was illegal according to the Sanhedrin's own laws. According to Jewish law, all criminal trials must begin and end in the daylight. They conducted a second trial in daylight, because they knew the first one - the real trial - had no legal standing. According to Jewish law, only an acquittal could be issued on the day of the trial. Guilty verdicts had to wait one night to allow for feelings of mercy to rise. According to Jewish law, all evidence had to be guaranteed by two

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 24 Jesus
The Last Week of the Life of Jesus VI

witnesses, who were separately examined and could not have contact with each other.

18. Of what did the two "witnesses" accuse Jesus? Jesus said "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" John 2:19. But this glorious prophecy of His resurrection was twisted into a terrorist threat. John 2:21 makes it clear that He was speaking of the temple of His body." The false witness said "This man said, 'I can destroy God's temple and rebuild it in three days.'" After all the false witnesses had their say, Jesus was finally charged with threatening to destroy the temple (as in a modern-day bomb threat).

19. What did the high priest ask Jesus? Aren't you going to respond to the testimony these people have brought against you?" What was Jesus' response? He was silent. What was the high priest's reaction? "By the living God, I demand that you tell us whether you are the Christ, God's Son." "You said it," Jesus replied. "But I say to you that from now on you'll see the Human One sitting on the right side of the Almighty and coming on the heavenly clouds." The accusation of blasphemy would have been correct, except that Jesus was whom He said He was. It is no crime for the Christ, the Son of God, to declare who He really is.

20. What was the reaction of the others who were present to what Jesus said? "He deserves to die!" Then they spit in his face and beat him. They hit him and said, "Prophecy for us, Christ! Who hit you?" As these religious leaders vented their hatred, fear, and anger upon Jesus, spitting in His face and beating Him, it was remarkable that the immediate judgment of God did not rain down from heaven. It was remarkable that a legion of angels did not spring to the defense of Jesus. This shows the amazing forbearance towards sin that God has, and the staggering riches of His mercy.

Peter's Denial of Jesus

Matthew 26: 58 Peter followed him from a distance until he came to the high priest's courtyard. He entered that area and sat outside with the officers to see how it would turn out.

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 24 Jesus
The Last Week of the Life of Jesus VI

Read Matthew 26: 69-75

21. Where was Peter during the time Jesus was being tried? Peter follows and because John was known by the high priest, he got Peter into the courtyard. Peter does care enough about Jesus that he follows to find out what will happen to Jesus. John's connection to the high priest and his servants explains how Peter and John had any access to the property of the high priest on such a night.

22. Briefly summarize the three denials of Peter. A woman confronts him saying that he was with Jesus. Peter says he doesn't know what she is talking about. This first test of Peter's loyalty seemed easy; he could have answered nothing, mumbled something, or said, "I know Him." A second woman says that he was with Jesus. Peter says I don't know the man. Then some people standing with him said that his voice gave him away. The second denial involved at least four people according to Fourfold but is regarded as one incident. Then Peter cursed saying he didn't know the man. Exasperated by the repeated accusations, Peter loses his temper and begins to emphasize his denial by profanity. Desire to make good his denial is now supreme in his thoughts and the Lord whom he denies is all but forgotten. The relative of Malchus would pay special notice of the man who attacked his kin. Even in the light of the night fire in the courtyard he thought he recognized Peter as the man who attacked Malchus with a sword.

23. What immediately happened after Peter denied Jesus the third time? The cock crowed. Who looked at Peter at that time? Jesus. What was Peter's reaction? He went out and wept. When Peter remembered how Jesus had foretold this with all tenderness, it contrasted with his sin.

Psalm 115: 1 Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.

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| Matthew 26:36-46 | John 18:12-14 | John 11: 49-53 |
| Matthew 26:59-68 | John 18:19-24 | |
| Matthew 26: 69-75 | | |