

## THE ARREST AND BETRAYAL IN THE GARDEN

Matthew 26:47-56

Delivering up Jesus had always been the *mission of Satan*...while on the *mind of Judas*...it was the *desire of the Jewish religious leaders*...and on the *mind of Rome*. But ultimately, it has always been *with the fore-knowledge of God* and *His predetermined plan and purpose*...ages before it ever entered the mind of Satan or the minds of those godless men (**Acts 2:23**). Even while doing Satan's business...*Judas* and the *Jewish religious leaders* were being used to *fulfill a divinely ordained plan* that would result in the *salvation of sinners*...just like the very ones set on killing Him.

### I. THE APPROACH OF JUDAS: (vs. 47)

**While He was still speaking, behold, 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 (vs. 47)...**

**While He was still speaking**...Jesus was *admonishing* the disciples to be *vigilant* and to *keep watch* with Him so they wouldn't fall into temptation...while announcing to them His *imminent betrayal* (vs. 45-46).

**Judas, one of the twelve, came up**...It's interesting that **Judas** would still be called **one of the twelve** even while he is in the very act of *betrayal*.

By the time **Matthew** wrote his gospel, the name **Judas** had long become a *synonym* for *deceit*, *betrayal*, and *shame*. As a matter of fact, many with the name **Judas** had changed their name to **Jude**.

One might think that **Matthew** would have referred to him as...*the false disciple*...or *the one who counted himself among the twelve*. But in fact...all *four* of the gospels specifically speak of **Judas** as **one of the twelve** (**Matthew 26:14, 47; Mark 14:10, 20, 43; Luke 22:47; John 6:71**).

**Judas was accompanied by a large crowd** that included both *Roman soldiers* (**John 18:3**) and Jews from the *temple guard* dispatched by **the chief priests and the elders** (**Luke 22:52**). The Jewish leaders probably requested that the *Roman soldiers* join in the arrest because they had to have *Roman permission* to exercise the *death penalty*. The soldiers were also included because on a

previous occasion when the *temple guard* was sent to arrest Jesus, they came back empty handed (**John 7:32, 44-46**).

**A large crowd with swords and clubs**...The **large crowd** not only had **swords and clubs**, but they were carrying *torches* and *lanterns* (**John 18:3**) to illuminate their way and to verify that it was indeed Jesus...the one they came to seize.

### II. THE ARREST BY THE SOLDIERS: (vs. 48-50)

**Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him."** (vs. 48)...

Although **Judas's** original arrangement to betray Jesus for *thirty pieces of silver* had only been with the **chief priests** and other *temple officials* (**Luke 22:4**)...now, the **Pharisees** had also become involved in the plot (**John 18:3**)...as were the **Sadducees** and the entire **Sanhedrin** (**Mark 15:1; Acts 23:6**). Not only did the crowd include *representatives* from the **chief priests** and **elders**...it included **the chief priests and elders themselves** (**Luke 22:52**). When all *four gospels* accounts are compared...the total number of people who came with **Judas** to the garden could have approached a *thousand*.

**Kiss**...is from the Gk. *phileo*...a verb referring to *an act of special respect and affection*...*brotherly love*. This type of greeting is still displayed today in many *Arab cultures* and even among many *European* and *Russian cultures*. In the *ancient Near East* such a greeting was a sign of *homage* and *respect*.

**Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and kissed Him** (vs. 49)...

**Hail, Rabbi**...Once again **Judas** call Jesus **Rabbi** (vs. 25) and not **Lord** as did the other disciples (vs. 22, 49).

**Kissed**...translates *an intensified form of the verb* used in **verse 48** and carries the idea of *fervent, continuous expression of affection*.

It's the *same word* used by **Luke** of *the woman who* came into the Pharisee's house and *kissed Jesus' feet, wiping them with her hair and anointing them with perfume* (**Luke 7:38, 45**). It was also used by **Luke** to describe *the father's reception of the repentant son* in the *parable of the prodigal* (**Luke 15:20**) and of the *grieving Ephesian elders on the beach near Miletus* as they *said farewell to Paul* (**Acts 20:37**).

And Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you have come for.” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him (vs. 50)...

Friend...Jesus didn't use the usual word for friend (*philos*). Instead He addressed Judas as *hetaire*, which is probably better translated fellow, comrade, companion, or associate. It has the connotation of a *working relationship*. It's only used 3 times in the New Testament (Matthew 20:13; Matthew 22:12; Matthew 26:50).

Do what you have come for...These are Jesus' final words to Judas...the son of perdition (*hell, purgatory, punishment, abyss, damnation*). Judas is the classic example of a *false believer*...a tare planted among *wheat*.

Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him...

Before they seized Him John reported that they asked to verify that He was indeed Jesus.

*“So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, ‘Whom do you seek?’ They answered Him, ‘Jesus the Nazarene.’ He said to them, ‘I am He.’ And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. So when He said to them, ‘I am He,’ they drew back and fell to the ground.”*

~John 18:4-6

I am He...Gk. *ego eimi*, literally means I AM...the *covenant name* of God (Exodus 3:14).

### III. THE ATTACK BY PETER: (vs. 51-53)

And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear (vs. 51)...

One of those who were with Jesus...John identifies the one as Peter (John 18:10).

Having just awakened and perhaps still not fully aware of what was going on...Peter grabbed his sword and attempted to defend Jesus by striking out at one of the arresting group.

The slave of the high priest...John even gives the name of the high priest's slave (John 18:10)...Malchus.

Though Matthew doesn't mention it, Luke, the physician, noted that Jesus after rebuking Peter, healed the man's severed ear (Luke 22:51).

*“But Jesus answered and said, ‘Stop! No more of this.’ And He touched his ear and healed him.”*

~Luke 22:51

Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword (vs. 52)...

Jesus immediately stopped the violence and reprimanded Peter for his efforts. He didn't need anyone to defend Him. Again, Jesus is emphasizing the fact that *no one is taking His life...He is willingly giving His life*.

*“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.”*

~John 10:17-18

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? (vs. 53)...

Twelve legions of angels...A Roman legion numbered about 6,000 soldiers. As a result, such angelic protection would have numbered at least 72,000 angels. If a single angel of God could slay 185,000 men in one night, as with the Assyrian troops in II Kings 19:35, the power of 72,000 angels is unimaginable. They could have easily defended Jesus from any opposition.

But it wasn't God's will for Jesus to be rescued. Jesus' arrest occurred because it was part of God's *sovereign plan* and *purpose*.

### IV. THE ASSURANCE OF PROPHECY: (vs. 54-56)

How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way? (vs. 54)...

It must happen this way...On at least three other occasions (Matthew 16:21; Matthew 17:22-23; Matthew 20:18-19) Jesus

had told the disciples that it was necessary that He *suffer, die, and be raised from the dead*.

The Old Testament prophesied the same thing. **David** had predicted that a *close* and *trusted friend* would *betray* the **Messiah** (**Psalm 41:9; Psalm 55:12-14**). **Isaiah** foretold that the **Messiah** would be *despised* and *forsaken of men*, a *man of sorrows*, and *acquainted with grief* (**Isaiah 53:3**).

**At that time Jesus said to the crowds, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as you would against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me (vs. 55)...**

**Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as you would against a robber...**Jesus hadn't broken either *Mosaic* or *Roman law*. He hadn't committed any *immoral* or *illegal act*. His only offense was in *not recognizing* or *obeying* the *man-made, legalistic rabbinical traditions*.

Even though **Pilate** had no *love* or *respect* for Jesus...he acknowledged that He was *not guilty* of breaking any *Roman law*...much less of *inciting a rebellion* (**John 19:4**) or anything else *deserving death*. Yet, to protect his own position with *Rome*...and to keep peace among the people and with the Jewish leaders...he was perfectly willing to allow an innocent man to be executed.

**Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me...**

In essence, Jesus was revealing the *cowardice* of the *religious leaders* when He made this statement. He not only had been in **Jerusalem** every day of **Passover** week...but had been the focus of public attention on several occasions...most notably when He *entered the city triumphantly* and when He *cleansed the Temple* of the *money changers* and *merchants*.

**But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets. Then all the disciples left Him and fled (vs. 56)...**

**But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets...**Completely apart from everyone's *evil intentions*...God was *sovereignly using them* to accomplish His *righteous* and *predetermined plan of redemption*. In doing so, God demonstrated

that His *infallible Word...spoken by the prophets...would be fulfilled*.

**Then all the disciples left Him and fled...**At that point **all the disciples** deserted **Him and fled** into the night...even though they had vowed that they would never do so (**vs. 33, 35**)! *The sheep of the flock were scattering (vs. 31)*.

#### LESSONS TO BE LEARNED:

- Keep in mind...the unbelieving world has always *despised* the *name of God*...the *Word of God*...and the *things of God*.
- There has always been...as there is now...*false believers* that are intertwined with *true believers*...*tares* among the *wheat*...*Judas* among the rest of the *faithful disciples*.