

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY: "Victory and Betrayal in Gethsemane" Luke 22

Scripture of Lesson: Luke's Gospel 22: 31-53

1. **Agony and victory in Gethsemane**

- a. In this night before His arrest, judgment and crucifixion, our Lord went to the Olive Hill with His disciples after the Passover supper, upon crossing Kidron Valley, just as King David crossed it long ago while facing the oncoming threat of his son's rebellion [2 Samuel 15:23]. Then, leaving the other eight disciples, He took three of them and went to Gethsemane to pray to overcome the anguish of the coming suffering and death.
- b. Gethsemane meant 'olive press.' It was an olive garden on the Hill of Olives, very close to Jerusalem. In an olive garden there usually was a small structure with an oil press inside. This oil press shop could have provided a humble lodging place for Lord Jesus and His disciples during their Jerusalem visits. Judas volunteered to guide the arresting party to arrest Jesus in the night because it was not known to them.
- c. Gethsemane was a place of agony as a human, but a place of spiritual victory as the Savior of humanity. In Matthew's recording, Lord Jesus expressed His agony and pleaded to the three disciples [Peter, James and John] who accompanied Him to watch and pray with Him:

Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me."
[Matt 26: 38]

Although the disciples fell asleep out of bewilderment and fatigue, an angel from heaven came and strengthened the Lord [22: 43]. *"Every life has a Gethsemane, and every Gethsemane has an angel."*

2. **The costly cup that faced Jesus**

- a. What was the cup in Jesus' prayer in verse 22: 42? *"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."* Drinking a cup has been mentioned several times in the Scriptures [Job 21: 20; Psalm 75:8, Isaiah 51:17, 22; Jeremiah 25:15, 17, 28]. All of these OT verses refer the cup to the vessel containing God's wrath to the disobedient Israel and the Gentile nations which were against God's will.
- b. When Salome, the mother of James and John, came to Lord Jesus seeking special privileges for her sons in heaven, He asked them if they were willing to drink the cup He was going to drink:
"You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, [e]and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." [Matt 20: 22-23]

Apparently, James and John did not know the nature of the cup. Their mother mentioned the time the Lord would sit on His throne in heaven. She had the correct revelation that Jesus was the King of kings. But, they did not know what suffering and death lay ahead of their Lord and before their own lives. James became the first martyr of the Christians and John suffered much through long years of service as an apostle.

- c. Isaiah 53 describes the unjust trial and condemnation, humiliation, rejection by His own people, and the cruel death on the cross that awaited our Lord in this night in Gethsemane, where He prayed alone and won the victory, thrusting aside the human temptation of shunning the suffering, but rather choosing to obey the Father's plan and will of Him choosing to lay down His body to be tortured and killed, just as Isaac chose to obey Abraham and lay himself down on the altar on Mount Moriah more than 1800 years ago.

who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek. [Hebrews 5: 7-10]

3. Contrast of attitudes demonstrated during the arrest of the Son of God

- a. Betrayal of Judas: Judas had met with the high priests upon leaving early from the Passover supper. The high priests promised to give him 30 pieces of silver to Judas [Matt 26: 15]. Then Judas began to seek an opportunity to betray His Lord. Judas was a liar just like Satan who entered into him [John 8:44, 13:27]. He defiled almost everything that he touched: his name [*Judah* = “*praise*”], the disciple band [Luke 6:13-16], gifts given to Christ [John 12:1-8], and the kiss in Gethsemane. He invaded a private place of prayer meeting of His Master, defiled it with the presence of himself and the armed band of the religious leaders, and betrayed Christ with a kiss.

Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. [Prov. 27:6]

- b. Peter’s rash action: The disciples misunderstood the Lord’s words about the sword [22: 35-38], so they asked Him if now was the time to make use of their two swords. Without waiting for His answer, Peter rushed ahead and attacked a man, who was Malchus, a servant of the high priest [John 18:10, 26-27]. Why did Peter do this? He had spoken of his resolve to go to prison or even to death with his Lord [Luke 22:33, Matt 26: 30-35].

Peter was sleeping when he should have been watching, talking when he should have been listening, and boasting when he should have been fearing. Now he was fighting when he should have been surrendering. He was fighting the wrong enemy with a wrong weapon. He failed to live out his Lord’s example of how to win victories against the enemy.

- c. Submission and grace of Lord Jesus: Christ submitted to His Father’s will and plan when He surrendered to the arresting party. Peter must have thought he could help prevent this arrest and “save” his Savior with a sword. Christ rebuked Peter for his presumptuous behavior, healed Malchus’ ear miraculously in His act of grace, and submitted to the arresting band when He could have summoned 12 legions of angels [Matt 26: 53]. He continued to ensure that the victory He had won in His prayer just minutes ago would carry Him all the way to the cross on Calvary.

4. Application to us today

- a. Each of us must decide whether we will go through life *pretending*, like Judas; or *fighting*, like Peter; or *yielding to God’s perfect will*, like Jesus. Will it be the kiss for worldly reward, the sword, or the cup given to us by God?

Discussion topics:

1. *What was the Gethsemane of your life?*

2. *Let’s compare the cup of agony that our Lord drank willingly and the cup of the communion He instituted for our participation – their similarities and differences.*

