

Verses 1-2 The Garden of Gethsemane is located across the Kidron ravine at the base of the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem. The name of the garden means “oil press.” The name of this garden suggests that it was a grove of olive trees, was most likely enclosed, and as contained an olive press. This garden was a place that Jesus and His disciples often frequented which Judas knew. Jesus was not trying to hide from this moment or from being found as He went to a place His betrayer knew He often went.

John does not give us the details of the prayer that Jesus had prayed asking for the cup to pass from Him if possible, but this prayer is found in other accounts of the gospel.

- **Mark 14:32-42** They *came to a place named Gethsemane; and He *said to His disciples, “Sit here until I have prayed.” ³³ And He *took with Him Peter and ^[a]James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. ³⁴ And He *said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch.” ³⁵ And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell to the ground and *began* to pray that if it were possible, the hour might ^[b]pass Him by. ³⁶ And He was saying, “Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will.” ³⁷ And He *came and *found them sleeping, and *said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? ³⁸ Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” ³⁹ Again He went away and prayed, saying the same ^[c]words. ⁴⁰ And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. ⁴¹ And He *came the third time, and *said to them, “^[d]Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being ^[e]betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!”

Verse 3 Judas had betrayed Christ and had led both the Romans soldiers and the temple police/officers to Christ. They came with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

- A Roman cohort in its maximal number would be 1,000 soldiers. However, often the number of actual available men would be between 600-700 men.
- The number of Roman soldiers plus the temple officers could have made the number of people coming to arrest Jesus in the garden over 1,000 men.
- The Roman troops were not routinely stationed in Jerusalem, but rather in Caesarea. During the feasts held in Jerusalem, the soldiers would be deployed to Jerusalem for security purposes.

Verses 4-9 Jesus asks them who they are seeking to which they answer, “Jesus the Nazarene.” Jesus answers by saying “Ego Eimi (I AM- **Exodus 3:14**)” as He declares that He is Yahweh. The weight and power of the proclamation that He is Yahweh, then men coming to arrest Him drew back and fell to the ground. After hearing the declaration that He is God and experiencing the power of that declaration that dropped them to the ground, they continue to proceed with arresting Christ. This speaks to the inability of man to respond to believe in Christ and the gospel outside of God regenerating the heart.

Jesus tells the men coming to arrest Him that if they are seeking Him, let the His disciples go which is to fulfill what He has stated in His prayer in **John 17:12** in specific reference to His 11 remaining disciples. He had ordained His disciples with mission of being His witnesses and spreading the gospel after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (**Acts 2**). He had kept them from physical ruin this evening and of even greater importance had kept and not lost one of them spiritually. The same is true of all the elect as He does not lose any of His sheep.

Verse 10 Simon Peter who was ready to fight and defend Christ, cut off the ear of the high priest's slave whose name was Malchus. Jesus is an act of kindness and power, healed the man's ear. Again, after seeing the power of Jesus, they still do not believe that He is who He claims to be which speaks to the inability of any human to respond to and believe the gospel outside of the sovereign working of God in their heart first via being born again in regeneration.

- **Luke 22:47-53** While He was still speaking, behold, a crowd *came*, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was preceding them; and he approached Jesus to kiss Him. ⁴⁸ But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" ⁴⁹ When those who were around Him saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" ⁵⁰ And one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹ But Jesus answered and said, "[u]Stop! No more of this." And He touched his ear and healed him. ⁵² Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders who had come against Him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as you would against a robber? ⁵³ While I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me; but [k]this hour and the power of darkness are yours."

Verse 11 Jesus tells Peter to put away his sword for the same reason He will later tell Pilate as why there was not a physical attempt to stop them arresting Him.

- **John 18:36** Jesus answered, "My kingdom [a]is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not [b]of this realm."

Jesus was sent to drink the cup of wrath and judgment from the Father as there was no other way that the elect could be redeemed and have their sins atoned for.

- **Matthew 26:39** And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."
- **John 12:27** "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

Verse 12 Only by the ordained plan of God, the soldiers arrest and bind Christ. Just like He would willingly lay down His life for the sheep, He is willingly allowed them to take Him. He is led away like a lamb that is being led to the slaughter.

- **Isaiah 53:7** He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.

The place and timing of the arrest of Christ was ordained before the foundation of the world as this was part of the eternal plan of redemption. With the sound of His voice all those who came to arrest Him could have been struck dead as the breath that He gives could have been taken away by His sovereign hand. All the soldiers and officers who came to seize Him did not overpower Him and arrest Him against His will. The men who thought they were strong in might and number as they came to arrest Him were knocked to the ground by the power of the proclamation from Jesus that He was Yahweh. Just as He willingly will lay down His life for the sheep, He willingly allows them to bind Him and lead Him away as this would lead to cross. It was for this hour that He came to drink the cup that the Father had given Him. As He was arrested and led away, He was the Lamb who was being led to the slaughter.

Verses 13-14 The first person they took Jesus to after His arrest was Annas who was the father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. Annas was the high priest prior but was removed by the Romans leadership. However, according to the Jews, Annas was still the high priest as that role was held until death. The Jews still considering Annas the high priest (although his son-in-law Caiaphas was recognized by the Romans) went to him first with Jesus. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people.

- **John 11:47-53** Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, “What are we doing? For this man is performing many [u]signs. ⁴⁸ If we let Him *go on* like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.” ⁴⁹ But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, ⁵⁰ nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish.” ⁵¹ Now he did not say this [u]on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, ⁵² and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. ⁵³ So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.

Verses 15-18 Peter and another disciple were following Jesus after His arrest. Although the name of the other disciple is not mentioned, but the traditional and historical view is John as John never mentioned his name (**John 1:35-40**) John somehow knew the high priest and entered into the high priest’s court where Jesus was at while Peter was standing at the door outside. John had gotten Peter entrance into the door after speaking to the doorkeeper. The woman who was keeping the door recognized Peter and questioned him if he was a disciple of Jesus. Peter denied that he was a disciple of Christ which is His first denial of Christ.

Verses 19-24 Jesus would stand on trial before Jews and Romans. The Jewish questioning begins with Annas as he asks Jesus about His disciples and His teaching. Jesus declares that He has nothing to hide as all He has spoken and taught has been in public places such as in the temple and synagogues. He mentions those who heard His teaching as no one could be convicted with the witness of two or three people (**Deuteronomy 17:6,19:15**). This answer causes one of the officers to strike Jesus. Jesus puts them in a dilemma: if He has spoken wrongly, then bring the witnesses and prove He is in error or if He is not, then there is no reason or merit to strike Him. When Annas cannot get satisfactory answers, he sends Jesus to Caiaphas the high priest.

Caiaphas examined Jesus in **Matthew 26:57-68**

- **Matthew 26:57-68** Those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. ⁵⁸ But Peter was following Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and sat down with the [u]officers to see the outcome. ⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole [u]Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death. ⁶⁰ They did not find *any*, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, ⁶¹ and said, “This man stated, ‘I am able to destroy the [u]temple of God and to rebuild it [s]in three days.’” ⁶² The high priest stood up and said to Him, “Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?” ⁶³ But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, “I [u]adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are [u]the Christ, the Son of God.” ⁶⁴ Jesus *said to him, “You have said it *yourself*; nevertheless I tell you, [u]hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his [u]robes and said, “He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; ⁶⁶ what do you think?” They answered, “He deserves death!” ⁶⁷ Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others [u]slapped Him, ⁶⁸ and said, “Prophecy to us, You [u]Christ; who is the one who hit You?”

Verses 25-27 These verses reveal the second and third denials of Christ by Peter. After His third denial of Christ, the rooster crowed immediately as Jesus has foretold.

- **John 13:36-38** Simon Peter *said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered, “Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later.” ³⁷ Peter *said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You.” ³⁸ Jesus *answered, “Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times.
- **Luke 22:54-62** Having arrested Him, they led Him *away* and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance. ⁵⁵ After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting among them. ⁵⁶ And a servant-girl, seeing him as he sat in the firelight and looking intently at him, said, “This man was with Him too.” ⁵⁷ But he denied *it*, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.” ⁵⁸ A little later, another saw him and said, “You are *one* of them too!” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!” ⁵⁹ After about an hour had passed, another man *began* to insist, saying, “Certainly this man also was with Him, for he is a Galilean too.” ⁶⁰ But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. ⁶¹ The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, “Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.” ⁶² And he went out and wept bitterly.

Peter would be forgiven and restored by Jesus. Just as Christ prayed for His disciples and elect in the High Priestly prayer in John 17, He personally prayed for Peter regarding his denial and restoration.

- **Luke 22:31-34** “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has ^[d]demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat; ³² but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” ³³ But he said to Him, “Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!” ³⁴ And He said, “I say to you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me.”

*The examination and questioning of Jesus has begun as they will look to find a way to bring Him to death. There are no credible witnesses against Jesus because He is the spotless, unblemished Lamb of God who is without sin. As Jesus stands before the high priest for questioning, what the high priest does not realize is that the One who they are questioning is God in flesh, the true eternal High Priest who intercedes for His people forever. He was perfect and innocent and God sovereignly hardened their hearts and blinded their eyes for if they understood they would not have not crucified the Lord of glory (**1 Cor 2:8**) and we would have no hope of salvation. We see Peter denied Christ three times even after walking with Him closely, see countless miracles, hearing His teaching, and professing He would never deny Him. So let us pray for boldness and courage in the time of testing and witnessing around friends, family, co-workers, etc so that at no time we deny Christ by our actions or words and hear the rooster crow. However, Peter would be restored because Jesus had prayed for Him (**Luke 22:31-32**). Beloved take heart, if you are numbered among the elect, He prays for you as well.*