

Bi123 The Gospels 2

Lesson Bi123-17 Jesus Arrested

In our last lesson we learned about the human reaction of Jesus in the Garden. He agonized in prayer as he thought about the terrible kind of death he would suffer. The one who had no sin knew that the weight of mankind's sins was great. Though he sweat drops of blood, he submitted to the Father's will.

The incarnate Christ was both 100 per cent human and 100 per cent God. In this lesson we will consider the spiritual reaction of Jesus in the Garden. Through study of the Scriptures and communing with the Holy Spirit, Christ knew that what was happening to him was part of God's eternal plan. The detailed events had been foretold hundreds of years before they happened by God's prophets. Then Jesus himself made it clear that he had come to earth to conquer sin and death once for all.

Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the Garden because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. So Judas came, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons. Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him." Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" meaning 'my teacher.' Then the disciple kissed him.

Jesus replied, "Do what you came for, friend" (Matt 26:47-50). In those days men often greeted other men with a kiss on both cheeks. This would be a sign of friendship, and not of betrayal. In the darkness, with only torches for light, this sign assured they were arresting the right man. It would not have been necessary, however, because Jesus identified himself.

Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went forward and asked them, "Who is it you want?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.

"I am he," Jesus said. When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.

Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they said.

"I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go." This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me" (John 18:2-9).

Since Jesus knew that the plan of God included his arrest, he didn't resist or flee. He had been strengthened by his time of prayer. When asked, he willingly identified himself as the one they were seeking. When he answered "I am he," he was not just saying "I am the one you seek." He rather invoked the personal name of Jehovah, the 'I AM,' who met Moses in the burning

bush. What makes this event interesting is that when Moses encountered God, he also fell to the ground.

Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

Matthew recalls that Jesus added, "Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

Jesus demonstrated his concern that prophecy be fulfilled. Jesus also expressed his concern for the disciples, that they not be arrested with him. As Jesus tried to guarantee freedom for his men, Peter used his sword on Malchus. Christ reminded Peter that violence was not the way his kingdom advanced. He also touched the man's ear and healed him. To allow such an action would have been contrary to the teaching of Jesus. This is the last recorded healing miracle of our Lord.

Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled (Matt 26:53-56).

Jesus addressed the mob and their leaders. He reminded them of his teaching in public and their refusal to arrest him while teaching. They rather chose to use the darkness in which to do their evil work. Jesus made it plain that he was submitting to them of his own free will. He had authority to call six legions, up to 72,000 angels, if he wanted to be set free. He again drew attention to the fulfillment of prophecy in every detail he encountered.

Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the current high priest. The Romans appointed the high priests and changed them frequently, though the position was supposed to be for life. Annas had been deposed by the Romans, around A.D. 15. So he was still viewed by many as their true leader.

Caiaphas, his son-in-law, was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people. The Bible tells us that as high priest, he prophesied the truth of God's Word, though he did not realize it. Caiaphas was concerned with politics, not with guilt or innocence. He believed it was better for one man, no matter how innocent, to die rather than the nation perish (John 11:50). The Holy Spirit, speaking through him, meant that Jesus would die to take away the sins of all who would believe.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed at a distance. Because this other disciple was known to the high priest, when they arrived he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard. Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple soon came back, spoke to the servant girl on duty, and brought Peter inside (John 18:12-16).

Jesus was taken first to the home of high priest's family for a hearing. Soon a council meeting would convene in the darkness to make further plans. Though all the other disciples had fled, Peter and John had followed the crowd. John entered the courtyard of the high priest to see what would happen next, because the high priest knew him. Peter waited outside the door. Then before John followed the leaders to an upstairs room, he came back and made sure Peter was allowed into the courtyard. There he could warm himself at the fire.

Meanwhile Annas proceeded to question Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. This was not according to Jewish law. Witnesses were supposed to be brought in first, to establish guilt. The accused was not required to prove his innocence. Trials were not supposed to be at night either.

Jesus responded to the questions anyway. "I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews came together. I said nothing in secret. Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said."

When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby slapped him in the face. "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded.

"If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?" Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas who was the ruling high priest (John 18:20-23).

This story is **important** because it shows that even in the middle of Christ's betrayal and arrest; he ministered to both the disciples and those who opposed him.

The **main truth** of this story is that during these events, Jesus knew that prophecy was being fulfilled and that he was in God's will. God used even those motivated by Satan to fulfill his plan for Jesus to be the sacrifice for the sins of the world.

Let's **review** this lesson—

1. What did Judas do in the dark to identify Jesus as the one to be arrested?
A. [Pause] If you answered that Judas betrayed Jesus by kissing him on the cheek, you are correct.
2. What was the response of most of the disciples when Jesus was arrested?
A. [Pause] If you answered that they turned and fled, you answered correctly.
3. What did Jesus say about his arrest and the plan of God?
A. [Pause] If you answered, "Jesus said, 'The Scriptures must be fulfilled that say it will happen in this way,'" you are right.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to learn the story so you can tell it from memory. After you tell it to someone, ask them this question, "What do you think Jesus was focused on as

he experienced arrest by the religious leaders?” He was thinking of the plan of God that was being fulfilled. He was excited and rejoiced because he loved us all.