

## I. John 18:1-11 – Treachery in the Garden

### A. John 18:1-3 – Judas and the mob

1. John 18:1 – *When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden, in which He entered with His disciples.* After Jesus finished the lengthy prayer of John 17, He and the disciples continued their **journey** through the Kidron valley, arriving at the Garden of Gethsemane.
  - a. The most likely **route** from the Upper Room to the garden was along the southern side of the Temple Mount through the Kidron valley.
  - b. To get to the wooded Garden of Gethsemane, they would have **crossed** the little Kidron brook. This confirms that what we read in John 15-17 transpired after leaving the Upper Room and before reaching the garden. This shows that Jesus did not need brick and mortar to teach a class. Matthew 26:36
2. John 18:2 – *Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with His disciples.* Judas may have gone to the Upper Room, and finding them **absent**, assumed they were in the Garden of Gethsemane, a usual refuge for Jesus and His men. Due to Jesus' popularity, a remote place was chosen to arrest Him. Luke 22:39
3. John 18:3 – *Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.* A Roman cohort consisted of between 380 to 800 men. As many as 1000 people may have come to arrest Jesus; most with **weapons** in hand. Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:40-46
  - a. Judas Iscariot led the cohort of Roman soldiers, along with the temple police, to the arrest site. He knew where Jesus and His followers would likely camp. Judas was needed to positively **identify** Jesus, not to find the garden.
  - b. What **treachery** to lead an entire army to attack a small band of resting men. Judas had traveled, eaten, slept and talked day after day with these men but now He intended to double-cross them. The soldiers certainly did not approach stealthily; they openly arrived with lanterns and weapons.
  - c. Judas was not a violent traitor. His sin was everyday greed. **Greed** led Him to be used by Satan to fulfill despotic goals. Remember this, He was in the presence of Jesus Christ day after day, under the greatest teacher of all for so many years, yet he remained hardened to truth. What about you and your relationship to the truth? 1 Timothy 6:9-10

### B. John 18:4-11 – An inverted arrest

1. John 18:4 – *So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, "Whom do you seek?"* Jesus was not taken by **surprise**. He calmly approached the armed men with a question. Nothing ever took Him by surprise. Jesus knew exactly what was coming. He is God.
  - a. Instead of fading away into the darkness, Jesus went directly to the officers who were leading the battalion and **asked** them upfront, "Whom do you seek?" Jesus would powerfully defuse an extremely volatile situation.
  - b. "Whom do you seek?" These were not the words of a victim. Jesus calmly set the parameters of His own arrest. He was in **control**. No one took His life. He laid it down. Matthew 26:53-56; John 2:19, 10:18, 19:11
2. John 18:5 – *They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "I am He." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them.* When Jesus asked them **who** they were seeking, they plainly answered, "Jesus of Nazareth."
  - a. This verse says that Judas the betrayer *was standing with them*. What an appropriate description for Judas, who had firmly taken His **stand** with the enemy.
  - b. Jesus stated He was the man they were looking for by using an "**I Am**" statement. Jesus often used "I am," to equate Himself with Yahweh, God's Old Testament covenant name. As we will see, the effect of this powerful declaration on the crowd showed who exactly was in control in this armed confrontation.
3. John 18:6 – *So when He said to them, "I am [He]," they drew back and fell to the ground.* For a brief moment, the very **power** of God exploded forth, forcing the entire group backwards and to the ground. Jesus' voice created the world (Heb 11:3) and His voice will judge it (Heb 12:26). Surely this exhibition of power served as an invitation to believe, or at least to fear.
  - a. When Jesus answered, "*I am EGO EIMI,*" He released a blast of His divinity that sent them all **sprawling**. What went through their heads as they gained their composure, picked themselves up off the ground, and took their places once again?

# The Gospel of John

- b. These were not only temple police, but also a **cohort** of Rome's warriors. These soldiers were trained not to stumble, especially in confrontational situations, but Jesus' spoken word knocked them right off their feet. This event had to have thrown them off mentally as much as it did physically.
4. John 18:7 – *Therefore He again asked them, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene."* Even an undeniable manifestation of Jesus' **deity**, did not stop their evil plans.
- a. Obviously, their fall put them into confusion, so Jesus restated His question. This would have solidified in their minds **who** exactly they were looking for.
- b. In this way, Jesus **safeguarded** His disciples in a very tense moment. Being Himself God, He was in control of the situation. For a second time, they answered, "Jesus the Nazarene."
5. John 18:8 – *Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; so, if you seek Me, let these go their way."* Jesus willingly surrendered to them with one **stipulation**: they had to let His men go free. He lovingly sought to protect His beloved disciples.
- a. What an amazing portrayal of divine power and **wisdom**. Without a weapon in hand, Jesus totally disorientated this detachment and imposed full control over their plans.
- b. No ordinary man could accomplish such a feat, but Jesus was not ordinary. John was **right** on when he recorded, "Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end (Jn. 13:1)."
6. John 18:9 – ... *to fulfill the word which He spoke, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one."* The fact that Christ's words were fulfilled **exactly**, as promised testifies again to His divine authority and to the authority of the Bible.
- a. This verse reminds us of the statement Jesus made earlier in prayer. In John 17:12 Jesus prayed, "*While I was with them, I was **keeping** them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.*"
- b. While He was still able to protect His disciples, He did so. Soon He would die, and God the Father would take on this job temporarily. Do you doubt Christ's protection and care for you? If so, you need a fresh vision of Christ's love. Jesus has **never** lost even one person who has come to Him in faith. John 10:28-30, 2 Timothy 1:12
7. John 18:10 – *Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus .* Peter's zeal to protect Jesus prompted his **impulsive** action. The problem was, Peter was a fisherman not a warrior.
- a. In that tense moment brimming with adrenalin and soldiers ready to spring into action, it is hard to imagine how Peter's attack did not bring on an immediate free-for-all. Jesus' **presence** is the only explanation for the serenity that prevailed.
- b. Peter was being Peter. He was fulfilling his earlier well-intentioned but impetuous promise to fight and even die for Jesus. He may have thought at that moment He could **defy** Jesus' earlier predictions of denial and failure. Mark 14:29-31
- c. Of course, Peter attacked a **slave**, not a soldier. As a result, that slave got his name in the Bible. Interestingly, Peter not only avoided the Roman soldiers, he also bypassed the temple police. He was probably not as brave as he claimed to be.
8. John 18:11 – *So Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"* Without Jesus, Peter would have likely caused a bloodbath. Jesus' rebuke to Peter centered on the necessity of Christ to go to the **cross**. Without that work, we'd all be doomed forever.
- a. Jesus told Peter to put away his sword. He reminded him that He had a bitter drink held out to Him by the Father that He must drink. Jesus was not going to circumvent the Father's **plan**.
- b. Jesus asked Peter if he thought He should drink the cup? Once before Peter had encouraged Jesus to **avoid** the cross. Back then he got a searing rebuke. Jesus said, "Get behind me Satan." Often the things we think are important are totally unimportant and maybe even very much against what God wants us to do. Isaiah 55:8-9, Jeremiah 17:9