

Jesus Was Betrayed and Arrested

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to pray and watch so that they do not enter into temptation and stumble. In this topic, we will see that Jesus was betrayed by Judas and arrested by a large group of men that had been sent by the chief priests.

Jesus loved all of His disciples, including Judas. At the very moment of betrayal, we see that Jesus showed His love for Judas. Matthew 26:47-50 says, “And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, ‘Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him.’ Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, ‘Greetings, Rabbi!’ and kissed Him. But Jesus said to him, ‘Friend, why have you come?’ Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.” Jesus was still speaking when Judas arrived with a large group of men to arrest Jesus. We see that there was a very large group of men and they were armed with swords and clubs which shows that they were expecting Jesus and His disciples to fight against them. This large group of men had been sent by the chief priests and elders.

Judas had told this large group of men how he would betray Jesus to them since it was dark and they would not be able to recognize Jesus. Judas said that He would give Jesus a kiss to betray Him to this mob and that they were to seize the One who he kissed. Psalm 55:13-14 says, “But *it was you, a man my equal, My companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in the throng.*” Here, we see Judas fulfilled an Old Testament prophecy made by David about the fact that it would be one of the close companions of Jesus who would betray Him. That is exactly what Judas did that night as he led this group of men right to Jesus.

We also see how Judas betrayed Jesus. He walked up to Jesus and said, “Greetings Rabbi,” and then kissed Jesus. The word translated “greetings” means *to rejoice or be glad*. This word is used in Matthew 5:12, where we read, “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Even the words Judas used showed his lack of respect for Jesus. In contrast, Jesus continued to show His love for Judas. Even though Jesus had just received the kiss of betrayal, Jesus said, “Friend, why have you come?” The word translated “friend” means *a partner or companion*. This word is used four times in the New Testament and all are in Matthew. Matthew 22:12 says, “So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless.” In this case, Jesus used the word in the parable of the wedding feast about a man who was depending on his own efforts, instead of the righteousness of Jesus, for eternal life. Those who are spiritually dead in their trespasses and sins have never understood the love of Christ or come to Him in repentance and faith. Without spiritual life, their focus is on this world, instead of eternal values. That was very true in the life of Judas.

We go on to read, in Matthew 26:51-54, “And suddenly, one of those *who were* with Jesus stretched out *his* hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. But Jesus said to him, ‘Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?’” Later, Luke wrote about this event and said, in Luke 22:50-51, “And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, ‘Permit even this.’ And He touched his ear and healed him.” Here, we see that Jesus healed the ear that had been cut off. Many years later, after all of the other disciples were dead, John also wrote about this event. John 18:10 says, “Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.” Here, we see that the disciple who cut off the ear of Malchus was Peter. Peter could have been charged with attempted murder except for one thing, Jesus touched the ear and healed Malchus. As a result, there was no evidence and Peter could not be charged with attempted murder.

Then, Jesus spoke to Peter and told him to put away his sword. Jesus said that all those who depend on the sword will die by the sword. This is an important lesson for all true Christians to understand and apply in their lives. Jesus said, in Matthew 5:44, “‘But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.’” Here, we see that true Christians are told to respond to the evil actions of others by doing four things: love, bless, do good and pray for those who mistreat and persecute you. That is exactly what Jesus did to Judas. Jesus treated Judas with love and respect, even though Judas had betrayed Him to gain money for himself.

Jesus also explained to Peter that He could be protected if that was what He had chosen to do. He said that He could pray to the Father and the Father would immediately provide Him with twelve legions of angels to protect Him. At that time, a Roman legion normally had about six thousand soldiers. As a result, Jesus said that the Father could provide Him with 72,000 angels if that was what He had chosen. In the time of Hezekiah, 2 Kings 19:35 says, “And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when *people* arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead.” At the time of the Exodus of Israel from Egypt, the Lord killed the oldest child in every Egyptian home in one night. As a result, Jesus did not need His disciples to fight.

Then, Jesus taught Peter and the other disciples one final lesson before He was taken away by the large group of men that had been sent by the chief priests and elders. Jesus said, “How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?” In his very first sermon, on the day the church began, Peter said, in Acts 2:23-24, “‘Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.’” Later, as the disciples prayed, in Acts 4:27-28, they said, “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.” Psalm 2:6-8 explained that this was God’s plan and purpose when those

verses said, “Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD has said to Me, “You *are* My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give *You* the nations *for* Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.”” We see that Peter and the disciples had learned what Jesus said.

Then, Jesus turned and spoke to the men who had come to arrest Him. Matthew 26:55-56 says, “In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, ‘Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.’ Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.” Here, we see that Jesus spoke directly to the crowd that had come to arrest Him. He asked why they were treating Him like a robber. When people are trying to capture a robber, they usually take weapons with them to protect themselves and to capture the robber. That was exactly the way this great multitude came to arrest Jesus.

Then, Jesus gave a gentle rebuke to the multitude by reminding them that they had been given the opportunity to arrest Him any day they would have wanted to do so. Jesus reminded them that He sat daily with them in the temple. They did not seize Jesus in the temple because Mark 12:12 says, “And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away.” Then, Luke 22:4-6 adds, “So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.” Here, we see that the religious leaders were controlled by fear. They wanted to destroy Jesus, but because of their fear, they wanted to do it without the rest of the people finding out until Jesus was on the cross.

Jesus then explained, “All this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Psalm 2:1-3 says, “Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*, “Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.”” In these verses, we see that it was prophesied, in the book of Psalms, that the religious rulers would plot together to destroy Jesus. At the same time, this was also the plan of God. We saw in Acts 2:23-24 that it was “the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God”. The religious leaders only planned to destroy Jesus. They did not realize they would also fulfill the plan of God.

We see that when the disciples saw that Jesus was being arrested, they all forsook Jesus and fled for their own lives. This also fulfilled Scripture. Zechariah 13:7b says, “Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.” That was exactly what happened that night. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that God fulfilled His plan, even using the rebellious who only wanted to destroy Jesus. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.