

Matthew 26:47-56 The Arrest of Jesus

Introduction: In Gethsemane Jesus prayed to the Father that if there was any way possible for man to be saved other than the cross then let Him be spared the cross. But knowing that there was no other way, He submitted Himself to the cross and to the Father's will. When the arresting party came he awoke His disciples and informed them.

I. The arrival of Judas and the arresting party, verse 47.

- A. Jesus was still speaking to the disciples when the arresting party arrived.
- B. The arresting party was a large crowd of hostile people.
 - 1. These people were not from the masses of common people with whom Jesus was popular, but from the chief priests and elders who were enemies to Jesus.
 - 2. Most of them were Levites who worked in the temple.
(They served as temple guards and numerous other duties.)
 - 3. There may have been a few priests and servants to the priests.
 - 4. There were probably some Roman soldiers among them from the garrison stationed next to the temple grounds.
- C. The crowd was armed.
(The soldiers and guards had swords and the others had whatever they could use for clubs.)
- D. The group was led by one who had been "one of the twelve."
- E. The very fact that they came to arrest Him on the day of the Passover shows a change of plans on the part of the chief priests and elders, verse 5.
(No doubt it was Judas who persuaded them to change their plans.)

II. The betrayal with a kiss, verses 48-49.

- A. He had given them a sign; the one whom we would kiss was Jesus, verse 48.
 - 1. The majority of those who came to arrest Jesus had not personally seen Him.
 - 2. The few who had seen Him did not know Him well enough to identify Him at night by torch light.
- B. Judas greeted Jesus with friendly words, verse 49.
(There was not a hint that trouble was brewing or that danger was at hand.) Rabbi – teacher.
- C. Thus they waited for a positive identification by a kiss from Judas.
(They did not wish to make a mistake and bring back the wrong man.)
- D. Perhaps one reason Judas chose to use a kiss is that in the event the plan should fail, he would still appear as a friend and follower of Jesus.
(Another was that he did not wish to alert Jesus and the disciples to trouble.)
- E. Note that Judas instructed that they hold Jesus fast, verse 48.
 - 1. He was fearful that Jesus might somehow escape.
 - 2. He still did not understand that if Jesus wanted to escape there was no way they could hold Him.

III. The words of Jesus to Judas, verse 50a.

- A. Jesus addressed Judas as "friend."
 - 1. But this Greek word does not carry the idea of closeness.
 - 2. In modern terminology it would mean "fellow" or "acquaintance."
- B. In essence He was saying, "Don't play the hypocrite. Whatever you have come to do, do it."

IV. The arrest, verse 50b.

- A. John tells that Jesus inquired whom the crowd sought.
 - 1. The replied, "Jesus of Nazareth" and he said, "I am he."
 - 2. They all then fell backward to the ground.
- B. They got up and grabbed Jesus.

V. Peter's brave defense, verse 51.

- A. Luke said that two of the apostles had swords. (Under their robes.)
- B. Matthew said that one of them drew his sword and cut off the ear of a servant to the high priest.
- C. John tells us that man was Peter.
 - 1. He didn't intend to cut off his ear; he intended to cut off his head.
(And the next and the next and the next.)
 - 2. He just could not stand by and do nothing.
 - 3. He intended to take on the whole crowd and to die if necessary.
 - 4. I love that man; don't you?

VI. The intervention of Jesus, verses 52-54.

- A. Jesus rebuked Peter and issued a warning to him, verse 52.
- B. He put the ear back on and healed it.
- C. In doing so He demonstrated a love for that man.
- D. He also demonstrated a love for the apostle Peter.
 - 1. If Jesus had not intervened the soldiers would have cut Peter down.
 - 2. They would not have let him interfere in an arrest.
 - 3. Jesus saved Peter's life.
- E. He then proceeded to teach the apostle Peter, verse 53.
 - 1. If He had wanted a defense He could have had a better defense than Peter could provide.
(About 72,000 warrior angels.)
 - 2. He did not want to be defended; what He wanted to do was to fulfill the promises of the Scripture, verse 54.

VII. Jesus rebuke of the multitude, verse 55.

- A. They came after Him as though He were a criminal. (With swords and clubs.)
- B. He had been with them daily in the temple and there had been no attempt to take Him.
- C. All of this whole event was in keeping with Old Testament Scripture, verse 56a.

VIII. Jesus forsaken by all, verse 56b.

- A. His disciples fled.
 - 1. They all fled.
 - 2. Don't blame them; we would have done the same.
- B. Who was left to face the angry mob alone? – Jesus.
- C. They held Jesus fast as Judas had instructed.
- D. But there was no need.
 - 1. He would not try to escape.
 - 2. It was the Father's will that He die for us that we might be saved and He had committed Himself to do the Father's will.

Conclusion: I love that man. Don't you? He is the God-man; the Son of the living God. He went willingly to the cross to die for us. I have trusted Him with my soul. I love Him. I am committed to serve Him until I die. Will you trust Him? Will you serve Him?

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