

## Lecture 28 – Contemplating the Cross: Gethsemane; Arrest & Trial of Jesus

*Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” Matthew 26:39 (NIV)*

### Key Terms

Garden, cup, betrayal, trial, denial

### Objectives

- \*To analyze the parallels between the “two gardens” of Scripture
- \*To explain the significance of the “cup”
- \*To list the events leading up to and including Jesus’ arrest and “trial”

### Lead Questions

\*As He prays in the garden, Jesus clearly knows what to expect in His impending arrest and trial (even if the disciples don’t understand). Even so, He asks God to let the cup depart from His lips? What lessons can be learned from this? Perhaps more importantly, in what ways is this passage misapplied?

### Contemplating the Cross: Gethsemane

#### A. Contexts

1. The two Bible gardens: In one, the first Adam fails a test. In other, second Adam passes.
2. Jesus predicts all will fall away (Matt. 26:30-31). Jesus will face final hour alone.

#### B. Questions: Why such agony? Did Socrates or the Christian martyrs surpass Him in courage?

1. So “difficult,” critics say it surely happened (criterion of embarrassment).
2. Jesus died as a ransom for many (Matt. 20:25-28, cf. Isaiah 53).
3. He uses cup metaphor in OT suggesting the wrath or punishment of God (Ps. 11:6, 75:8, Isa. 51:17-23, Jer. 25:15-18, Rev. 17:3-6, 18:3-6).
4. Cup image explains Jesus’ fear. On the cross, God made Him who knew no sin to be sin. He bore the punishment of sin and was even identified with sin. Cf. “My God, my God...”

#### C. The prayers at Gethsemane

1. Phase 1: Facing cup, unburdening self and asking for relief.
2. Phase 2: Accepting the cup, “Thy will be done,” part of His perfect obedience (26:38-42)
3. Phase 3: Asking help from friends, receiving help from an angel (Luke).

#### D. Disciples insensitive and unprepared

*In the garden of Gethsemane, the disciples failed to stay awake with their master. In what way is Jesus’ response to them applicable to you when you fail the Lord?*

### Arrest and Trial of Jesus

#### I. Introduction: How Shall We View the Trial of Jesus?

##### A. How could it happen?

1. Jewish leaders believed He should die.
2. Crowds never really understood.
3. Disciples can fall away because they never accepted His viewpoint.
4. The Father decreed it.

#### II. Arrest

##### A. Warrant for arrest, John 11:47-57

1. Sanhedrin convenes; selfish and altruistic thoughts blend (11:48).
2. “Better for one to die.” Caiaphas unwittingly plays prophetic role as high priest. He means Jesus should be a scapegoat; John intends full Christian meaning.

3. Decision reached, matter resolved in principle - εβουλευσαντο (*ebouleusanto*, “they decided/deliberated”) that day.
- B. Judas’ betrayal supplies mechanism for seizing Jesus quietly  
Jesus roused sleepy disciples. They offer pointless resistance and flee.
- C. Jesus in control throughout the situation. John 18:1 ff.
1. When Jesus says “I am he” soldiers draw back, fall down! εγω ειμι (*ego eimi*, “I am”) echoes 8:58, Exo. 3. Then He rouses them.
  2. Presenting Himself for arrest, He commands officials to let disciples go (26:52-56).

| Event                        | Matthew     | Mark      | Luke       | John        |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Jesus to high priest’s house | 26:25       | 14:53     | 22:54      | 18:12-14    |
| Peter to courtyd             | 26:58       | 14:54     | 22:55      | 18:15       |
| P’s denials begin            | 26:69-71    | 14:66-68  | 22:56-58   | 18:16-18    |
| Qs by Annas                  |             |           |            | 18:19-23    |
| Trial by Caiaphas            | 26:59-66    | 14:55-64  | (22:66-71) |             |
| P’s final denial             | 26:71-75    | 14:69-72  | 22:59-62   | 18:24       |
| Abuse, mockery               | 26:67-68    | 14:65     | 22:63-65   | 18:25-27    |
| Sanhedrin trial              | 27:1        | 15:1a     | 22:66-71   |             |
| To Pilate                    | 27:2, 11-26 | 15:1-15   | 23:1-6     |             |
| Herod Antipas                |             |           | 23:7-11    | 18:28-19:16 |
| Pilate again                 | (27:11-26)  | (15:1-15) | 23:12-25   | 18:28-19:16 |

#### D. Phases of trial

Evangelists have their own sources and special interests, as varying accounts show.

#### III. Trial by Jews

A. Capital offense needed - according to Jewish and Roman law. Nothing less will suffice.

B. Interrogation by Annas

C. “Trial” before Caiaphas (a high priest)

False witnesses

1. Night and illegality: Jews probably tried to stay just inside technical legality.
2. Direct question, “Are you the Christ, the Son of God?” (26:63).
3. “You have said it,” means “Yes, but not the sort of Messiah you might think” (26:64).
4. Blasphemy and sedition!
5. Sanhedrin concluded or ratified decision in morning, led Jesus to Pilate on capital offense.

#### III. Peter’s Denials, cf. Matt. 10:23

A. Caught off guard, Peter is reduced to vehement denials, “I don’t know the man.”

B. The tragedy of Peter’s denials

1. While “Jesus is standing before his questioners and denying nothing, Peter cowers...and denies everything” (Brown 2:842) *The Death of Messiah*, Raymond Brown.
2. Peter’s failure shows how far human resolve can go. Skipping stones.
3. Abandoned: Jesus suffered every sorrow, and suffered the worst alone.

4. Restoration: If there is hope for Peter, there is hope for all of us.

C. Are we like Peter? Peter's denials as entry point into the story

#### IV. "Trial" Before Pilate

A. The charges and Pilate's investigation:

1. Jews recast charges in political terms, to get Pilate's attention, the execution (Luke 23:2).
2. Pilate probes, "Are you the king of the Jews?" - Jesus, *συ λεγει* (*su legei*, "so you say") stresses that Pilate says it. Not a denial, but not a full affirmation.
3. John 18:28-38, "My kingdom is not of this world."
4. Jesus fell silent (Matt. 27), Pilate, "I find no cause for a charge." (Luke 23:4, John 18:38)

B. Pilate's disposition of the case (optional: Matt. 27:15-40)

1. Pilate believed Jesus was innocent, but he strove to evade decision through compromises.
  - a. He sent Jesus to Herod Antipas (Luke 23:5-7).
  - b. He tried to release Him as if guilty, but crowds requested Barabbas.
  - c. He hopes a beating will placate crowds (John 19:1-5).
2. Half-hearted attempts at rescue attempt inhibited by his fears.
3. Question: How could "Hosanna" become "Crucify him!" Three reasons
4. Pilate's resolution: a punitive scourging, mockery, death sentence