

“TO A PLACE CALLED GETHSEMANE”

By Keith Greer

“Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, ‘Sit here while I go and pray over there.’” {Matthew 26:36} Yes, the hour for which He came to earth was approaching. What did this garden called Gethsemane mean to our Lord? On this evening, it was a place of:

Great Heaviness. *“And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.” {Matthew 26:37}* This statement clearly shows Christ’s humanity. He was completely aware of the things He had to do to fulfill prophecy concerning himself. {Isaiah 53:1-6} He was about to suffer for something of which He was not guilty. {2 Corinthians 5:21}

Intense Suffering. *“Then He said to them, ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.’” {Matthew 26:38}* No man before or since has suffered more. Listen to Luke’s account of this time: *“And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” {Luke 22:44}* He suffered but did not revile in return. {1 Peter 2:21}

Agonizing Prayer. *“He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, ‘O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will...’ Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, ‘O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done...’ So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.” {Matthew 26:39,42,44}* Jesus understood what the cross – with all its pain – meant; He would be alone facing His greatest trial. *“Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.” {Hebrews 5:7,8}*

Complete Resignation. *“...O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.” {Matthew 26:39}* Jesus knew the reason He came to this earth – to die for man’s sins and provide the remedy for his problem. *“But made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” {Philippians 2:7,8}*

Special Succor. *“Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.” {Luke 22:43}* His Father sent help to comfort and strengthen Him for the things He was about to accomplish. He was never really alone, for His Father was looking down from heaven and knowing that this greatest of trials would soon end. Could there have been another way? Sadly, Christ’s death was an absolute necessity if men were to be freed from sin’s bondage.

Heartless Betrayal. *“Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand. 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." {Matthew 26:46-49} Judas, one of the twelve He had trusted and chosen to be His disciples. For three years He taught them, explained divine things to them, and showed them many miracles. His great love for them was always evident as He went about preparing them for their great work. Judas' greedy heart led him to betray his Master. Even though He knew this truth when He chose Judas, Jesus never loved Him any others. See *Psalm 41:9*.

Thanks be to God, and His Son, for His willingness to go to the cross to give us redemption! ***