

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus in Gethsemane

Matthew 26:1-56

Opening

Gathering: What would you do if you knew that you were soon to be arrested and executed for something you had not done?

Today's Focus: Jesus chose to be obedient to the Father's calling, even unto a pain-filled death.

Key Verses: *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

Do you not think I cannot call on My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way? Matthew 26:53-54

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Jesus' Last Day Approaches (*Matthew 21*)

How did Jesus begin His last week in Jerusalem?

Matthew 21:1, 6-11

How did the Jewish leaders react to Jesus' wise teachings in the temple?

Matthew 21: 23, 45-46

Were all of the Jewish leaders upset with Jesus?

John 12:42

What was the real reason they wouldn't stand up for Jesus?

John 12:43

Traps for Jesus (*Matthew 22*)

How did the Jewish leaders plan to arrest Jesus despite His popularity as a prophet?

Matthew 22:15

What are some examples of traps set by the Jewish leaders?

Matthew 22:16-17 (16-22)

Matthew 22:23, 28 (23-33)

Matthew 22:34-36 (34-40)

How did Jesus put an end to their fruitless efforts?

Matthew 22:41-46

Plans of the Jewish Leaders (*Matthew 26:1-5*)

How did the Jewish leaders' plans for Jesus change after being unable to trap Him?

Matthew 26:3-4

Why didn't they carry out their plan immediately?

Matthew 26:5

Did Jesus know what was going to happen and when?

Matthew 26:1-2

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Unexpected Help (*Matthew 26:6-16*)

How did the leaders get some unexpected help?

Matthew 26:14-16

Iscairiot - Man of Kerioth

What apparently influenced Judas' financial decision to betray Jesus?

John 12:4-8 (Matthew 26:6-13)

What was significant about the price Judas was paid for giving Jesus to be killed?

Exodus 21:32

Judas Uncovered (*Matthew 26:20-25; John 13:23-30*)

Did Jesus know what Judas was planning to do?

Matthew 26:20-21

Did they begin to accuse each other or guess that it might be Judas?

Matthew 26:22

How did Jesus identify the betrayer?

John 13:23-26

During Passover ritual, master of feast would take a flat cake of unleavened bread

After adding pieces of lamb and bitter herbs, he'd roll it and dip it onto a bitter sauce

Beginning with the most honored guest, he'd repeat until he gave one to everyone

The lamb anticipated God's Lamb that would bring salvation to sinners

By accepting the bread a guest acknowledged his sin and welcomed God's forgiveness

Did Judas accept Jesus' forgiveness when it was offered?

John 13:27-30

What comment did Jesus have about the one who would betray Him?

Matthew 26:23-24

Loyalty of the Other Eleven (*Matthew 26:31-35*)

Could the others be proud of their loyalty now that they knew they wouldn't betray Jesus?

Matthew 26:31-32

Who was overly self-confident in the faith he had built up himself?

Matthew 26:33-34

How strong did Peter say his faith and loyalty was?

Matthew 26:35

What was wrong about the disciples boasting of their strong faith?

Ephesians 2:8

Garden Terrors (*Matthew 26:36-39*)

After sharing His Last Supper with His disciples, where did Jesus take them and why?

Matthew 26:30, 36

How did Jesus feel about His impending suffering and the desertion of His disciples?

Matthew 26:37-38

How were Jesus' feelings similar to those of His ancestor King David?

Psalms 55:1-5

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A Man of Sorrows (*Isaiah 53*)

How else was Jesus like David in looking for relief from His sorrow?

Matthew 26:39

What was the cause of His suffering?

Isaiah 53:3-5

How deeply troubled was Jesus?

Luke 22:44

Not My Will, But Yours (*Matthew 26:42, 44*)

For what did Jesus pray?

Matthew 26:42, 44

Knowing that God's plan included this suffering and death, why did Jesus bother asking for an option?

Mark 14:36

Would it be the Father's will to take this cup from Jesus?

Isaiah 53:10-11

How did the Father help Jesus through this time?

Luke 22:43

Did Jesus have a choice of whether to accept His cup or not?

John 10:17-18

What did Jesus' prayer show about Him?

Psalms 40:8

How does this relate to our own lives?

Philippians 2:5-8

How was Jesus' submission and obedience critical for us?

Hebrews 5:7-9

The Faithful and Vigilant Disciples (*Matthew 26:40-46*)

Did the disciples understand the grief that Jesus was experiencing and its cause?

Matthew 26:40, 43

How did Jesus use their lack of vigilance to warn them of upcoming temptations?

Matthew 26:41

What temptation was Jesus warning His disciples about?

Isaiah 53:6

What excuse did the disciples have for not keeping watch and praying?

Mark 14:40

Did the disciples remain vigilant after Jesus' second warning?

Matthew 26:45-46

Torches, Swords and Clubs (*Matthew 26:47*)

How long did they have to wait for Judas after Jesus predicted the coming of His betrayer?

Matthew 26:47

What was significant about Judas arriving with *a large crowd sent from the chief priests and elders*?

Matthew 26:19-20

Did the chief priests and elders send their servants while they stayed with their families?

John 18:3

Note: Passover is during full moon, Torches needed only to find Jesus if he ran and hid

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Betrayed with a Kiss (*Matthew 26:48-50*)

How did Judas know where to find Jesus?

John 18:2

Without photographs, how would the "temple police" know which man to arrest?

Matthew 26:48-49

Did Jesus know what Judas was doing?

Luke 22:47-48 (*Matthew 26:50*)

How much resistance did Jesus offer to those trying to arrest Him?

John 18:4-9

What other prophesy did Jesus' response fulfill?

Isaiah 53:7

I'll Save You (*Matthew 26:51-56*)

Who impetuously seized the opportunity to show Jesus his strong support?

John 18:10

Note: Only John mentions it was Peter.

Other gospels were written while Peter was alive.

Why did Peter have the sword?

Luke 22:35-38

Was Peter trying to warn the crowd by just cutting off an ear?

Luke 22:49-50

How did Jesus thank Peter for defending Him?

Matthew 26:52-54

What about the poor servant with the missing ear?

Luke 22:51

What did Jesus have to say to those arresting Him?

Matthew 26:55-56a

What prophesy of Jesus was fulfilled at the end of this story?

Matthew 26:56b

How anxious were the disciples to desert Jesus?

Mark 14:50-52

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have I been in deep distress? Did I turn to God as Jesus did?
(*Matthew 26:36-39; Deut. 4:7; 2 Samuel 12:15-23; Psalm 4:1; Philippians 4:6-7; James 5:13-18*)
2. When and how have I helped a friend through a difficult time?
(*Matthew 26:38; Ruth 1:8-17; 1 Samuel 20:1-4, 27-33, 41-42; Job 2:11-13; Proverbs 17:17; 18:24; 27:10; James 5:19-20*)
3. Can Jesus count on me to watch and pray or will I lose interest and sleep like the disciples?
(*Matthew 26:40-45; Exodus 17:8-13; Hebrews 10:36-39; James 1:12; 5:7-11; Revelation 2:2-3*)
4. When and how have I betrayed, denied or deserted Jesus?
(*Matthew 26:47-50, 56b, 69-75; Luke 12:8-9; Galatians 1:6-9; 2 Timothy 4:14-15; Revelation 2:2-5*)
5. When have I started to take matters in my own hands when God had a better plan?
(*Matthew 26:51-54; 1 Samuel 10:1, 8; 13:7-14; 15:1-3, 7-26; Luke 12:35-48; Acts 16:6-10*)