

There was a garden

John 18:1-11

When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden, in which He entered with His disciples. 2 Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with His disciples. 3 Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4 So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" 5 They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "I am He." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. 6 So when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 Therefore He again asked them, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene." 8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; so if you seek Me, let these go their way," 9 to fulfill the word which He spoke, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one." 10 Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus. 11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"

The last great section of the gospel of John starts in John 18.

/This gospel is a story of unbelief and belief.\

Jesus presented Himself as the Son of God. How did people respond to Him?

Most rejected Him in unbelief.

A few embraced Him in belief.

John 1:11-14

He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

/The powerful in Israel rejected Him.

But His disciples came to believe that He was the Son of God.\

Two opposite responses to the person and message of Christ. Each one grows in intensity as the gospel proceeds. A pivotal event: the raising of Lazarus.

John 11:41-53

41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 "I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." 44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

/Many came to believe in Christ as a result of this miracle.\

45 Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him. 46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.

/His enemies resolved to have Him put to death.

47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. 48 "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." 49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, 50 nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish." 51 Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, 52 and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. 53 So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.

/All of this reaches its climax in chapters 18 -20.\

/Chapters 18-20 record the events of Christ's arrest, trials, crucifixion, burial and resurrection (and its aftermath).\

/Chapters 18 and 19 document the hour and power of darkness that arose from the pit of unbelief.\

These record the events of Christ's arrest, trials, crucifixion, and burial.

Here's how they proceed:

/The arrest of Jesus (18:1-11)

The religious trial and Peter's denials (18:12-27)

The civil trial (18:28-19:16) [when civil and religious authorities team up (conspire), there is no end to the evil they are capable of producing]

The Crucifixion (19:17-30)

The burial (19:31-42)\

/Chapter 20 provides the confirmation of belief: the resurrection of Christ. \

It begins at the empty tomb and proceeds to describe Jesus' appearances to his disciples.

/In this gospel, John portrays Jesus as being in control of all circumstances. This goes hand in hand with his purpose: that people may believe that Jesus is the Son of God.\

John 20:30-31

30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

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This carries through the events of chapters 18 and 19. They are most cruel for Jesus, but John doesn't portray Him as a victim. Instead, He is the victor.

/Jesus was in complete control of the events of His arrest, trial, and crucifixion. \

He initiated the events in the garden that led to His arrest. They were not able to lay a hand on Him until He consented to it. Even in death, He was in complete command. No one took His life from Him. He gave it up voluntarily.

John 10:17-18

"For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. 18 "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

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John describes how Jesus fulfilled these words:

John 19:30

30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

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We begin now in chapter 18 verse 1.

John 18:1

When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden, in which He entered with His disciples.

Let's set the stage.

/map of Jerusalem in the time of Jesus\

We examined this map once before. At the end of chapter 14, Jesus said to His disciples: "Let us go from here". "Here" was the Upper Room.

They left the Upper Room and headed east, toward Mount of Olives.

As chapter 18 begins, they are standing on the ravine of the Kidron Valley.

They are going forth to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Jesus relentlessly pushed ahead, knowing the suffering – the cup - that awaited Him.

This map is disarming in its directness. See the path of Jesus that leads from Gethsemane to Golgotha -Calvary. There are stops along the way.

The house of Annas. John's is the only gospel in which this appears.

The house of Caiaphas. Herod's palace. (John's narrative skips this stop.)

The Hasmonean palace. Pilate's winter residence.

Then those awful steps through the old city: The Via Dolorosa. The path of sorrow and suffering.

Finally reaching the hill where Christ would be crucified: Calvary.

John 18:1

When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden, in which He entered with His disciples.

/The garden in which they entered was the garden of Gethsemane.\ John does not include the name; it appears in the gospel of Matthew,

Matt 26:36

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

Matthew then narrates the events that occurred in the garden up to the point of Jesus' arrest, events that John skips.

/Luke's gospel states that Jesus and His disciples went out to the Mount of Olives.\

Luke 22:39

39 And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him.

/The garden of Gethsemane, therefore, was located on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives, across the Kidron from Jerusalem\. /See map\

/The name Gethsemane means "oil press".\

The word gethsemane is derived from two Hebrew words: gat, which means "a place for pressing oil (or wine)" and shemanim, which means "oils."

During Jesus' time, heavy stone slabs were lowered onto olives that had already been crushed in an olive crusher. Gradually, the slabs weight squeezed the olive oil out of the pulp, and the oil ran into a pit. There the oil was collected in clay jars.

Olive Crusher /pic

The olive crusher was the stone basin used to crush olives into pulp. A donkey pushed on a horizontal beam, which in turn rolled a millstone that crushed ripe olives (placed in a large, round basin) into a pulp. An olive crusher was often placed in a cave, where the moderate temperature improved the efficiency of the oil production.

The image of the Gethsemane on the slope of the Mount of Olives where Jesus went the night before his crucifixion provides a vivid picture of Jesus' suffering. The weight of the sins of the world pressed down upon him like a heavy slab of rock pressed down on olives in their baskets.

/Jesus would be under extreme pressure in the Garden of Gethsemane. So much so that His sweat was as drops of blood. \

His sweat, "like drops of blood falling from to the ground" (Luke 22:44), flowed from him like olive oil as it was squeezed out and flowed into the pit of an olive press.

/Then, at Calvary, He was crushed for our iniquities.\

Isa 53:5

But He was pierced through for our transgressions,

He was crushed for our iniquities;

The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,

And by His scourging we are healed.

/The blood of Christ washed our sins away. He died so that we could live.\