

## "Whom do you seek?"

### *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?"*

Verses 1-11 give John's narrative of Christ's arrest. He skips details that the other gospel writers include. He is interested in portraying Jesus as in control of events.

*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".\

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 image of 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 bearing 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 "like drops of blood falling to the ground" (Luke 22:44). \

His sweat, 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.*

*John 18:2 Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with His disciples.*

“Judas who was betraying Him.”

He is identified this way so often in the gospels that one could be forgiven for thinking that “who was betraying Him” was his last name: “Judas Iscariot traitor”!

He is introduced as the betrayer in each of the gospels.

*Matt 10:2-4*

*2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.*

*Mark 3:19*

*and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him.*

*Luke 6:16*

*16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.*

*John 6:70-71*

*70 Jesus answered them, "Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?" 71 Now He meant Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.*

He is identified this way five times in John's gospel.

*John 18:2 Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with His disciples.*

Jesus made no attempt to hide from Judas or the soldiers.

/In fact, He went to the one place where Judas would be sure to find Him.\

*John 18:3 Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.*

/Judas was the guide for this hunting party.\

John is the only writer who includes the Roman cohort with the Temple guards. Clearly the chief priests expected fierce resistance from a mob of His followers.

It seems improbable that Pilate sent the complete cohort of 600 soldiers.

/More likely, he sent a detachment of 50-75 soldiers.\

Nevertheless, the disciples were badly outnumbered.

/These fishermen were no match for battle-tested professional soldiers. \

*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.*

He said to them, I am He. I AM.

This was His reply to the soldiers.

/I am. The Greek words are **ego eimi.** \

John features this statement. It appears three times in this passage: verse 5, verse 6, and verse 8.

“I am He” has major significance, both here in chapter 18, and in earlier chapters as well.

It can be understood on two levels.

/On one level, it means “I am” in the ordinary sense.\

There’s a knock on the door. Who’s in there? I am.

/pic\  
/

I am Jesus of Nazareth. He’s simply identifying Himself.

But there is a second way to understand these words.

*John 8:56-59*

*56 "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."*

*57 So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"*



*58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."  
59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.*

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Something far greater is at work here. Someone far greater.

Something that explains why those soldiers were knocked to the ground.

*Ex 3:10-14*

*10 "Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt." 11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" 12 And He said, "Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain."*

*13 Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.'*

*Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you*

/This is the LORD God's self-identification!\

Jesus was identifying Himself as the God of Israel.