

The Arrest of Jesus

Setting: John 14-17, often referred to as the “Upper Room/Farewell Discourse” taught us Jesus’ teaching during the Last Supper. During that time we got an in depth look at Christ as the servant king as he washed the disciples feet (John 13), the announcement of a betrayal and denial that would happen soon, the importance of loving one another, the promise of the holy spirit, and Christ as the true vine and the only way to Heaven. Chapter 17 we looked for several weeks at the High Priestly Prayer where we see the savior’s prayer to the Father to **“glorify the Son, so the son may glorify you”**, and then he goes on to talk to God about us! (All the Father has given him).

A few weeks ago, we began studying in Chapter 18 about the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, Jesus’ “I am” statement in v. 6 (and flooded throughout John’s Gospel) and understanding the 2 kingdoms that we know are a reality (Christ’s kingdom, and the kingdom of this world) and how believers respond to living as people of God’s kingdom.

Tonight, we will dive further into what Jesus said was his “hour that had come” and look at the actual arrest of Jesus before his crucifixion.

John 18 – Lets read V12 through the end of the chapter for some context.

V12-14 *The Willingness of Christ*

After Peter played the butcher to one of the high priest’s guard’s ears in the previous verses (his ear was restored, we know from reading in another gospel) and Jesus scolds Peter to remind him that his time had come and he was doing the will of the Father who sent him, the soldiers and captain arrest and bind Jesus and bring him to Annas and Caiaphas.

- Just reading that statement that the *“arrested and bound him”* seems odd to read with a correct understanding of who Jesus is.
 - We read earlier in v. 5 when Judas originally came with the soldiers and officers to Jesus, the great power of Christ is displayed when he announces “I am he” when they told him they came seeking Jesus of Nazareth and the soldiers fall on the ground.

- We read in **John 12** how by calling Lazarus' name he came out of the tomb after being dead and bound.
- We know from **Matthew 28** that Jesus says that he has all power/authority in heaven and on earth, how could this ragtag group of regular men arrest and bind Jesus the very Son of God?
 - Our tendency would probably be more like Peter in the previous verses, but we are reminded by Jesus that this is the cup that the Father has given him to drink. But what does that mean? Is he being forced to do it? Did God have to beg Jesus to do this? No, as we know he did so willingly. Was Jesus taken by surprise at his arrest? No, he marched on to his arrest because he knew it would happen, and it was time for it to take place.
 - **John 10:18** Jesus tells us of his life **“No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”**
- From their perspective Jesus was dangerous to the Jews because they believed him to be a blasphemer, and people believed on him based on the things he said and was doing. If he had the power to raise the dead, heal the blind and sick, feed 5000 ppl with five loaves and two fish, walk on water, and claim to have the words to eternal life, clearly there was something going on with this man. Although Christ does have the power to break the “bonds” he was in, we know as Isaiah 53 beautifully paints the picture, that he is the suffering servant.
 - **Isaiah 53:7** **“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.**
- Christ comes before Annas first. But why?

- Annas was not the current high priest but definitely a man of power. He was actually the high priest from a.d. 6 – a.d. 15. Although Caiaphas was the current high priest and was his son-in-law, it was Annas that put Caiaphas in his position so you can imagine the power he had from the perspective of hierarchy.
- Annas was basically the high priest at that time without the title. The Romans had removed Annas from office in AD 15, but the Jews still regarded him as the high priest until death, which would explain why Jesus was brought to him first. His 5 sons and his son-in-law Caiaphas served as high priest during the first century.
- **V14** *“It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.”*
 - **John 11:49-53** – says *“Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish. He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one.”*
 - Many of the Jews back in John 11 that saw Jesus raise Lazarus believed in him. As usual as soon as the Jewish rulers caught wind of it they wanted to snuff out any talk of Christ and his miracles for fear of what may happen from this. They said, *“If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation”*. In the words of spoiled little child “If this keeps happening the Romans are going to take our stuff”. The fear was that all that they held dear would be taken away by the Romans on account of this man. Ironically the fact that they believe anything belongs to them is pretty funny. The land, the temple, the nation, all things belong to the Lord. I thought of the scripture in **Psalm 2** *“Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot*

in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us. "He who sits in the heavens laughs the Lord holds them in derision."

- *Calvin said this about these Pharisees "If they had not been exceedingly stupid and brutish, they would at least have been impressed with some reverence for Christ, after so striking a demonstration of his Divine power. They now assemble deliberately and intentionally to bury the glory of God, at the sight of which they are constrained to be astonished".*
- Nevertheless, we see this prophecy by Caiaphas foretold in John 11 coming to pass in the latter chapters of John's Gospel.
 - Caiaphas' prophecy is just proof that reminds me of that **Gen 50:20** **"As for you, you meant it for evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today."**
 - We cant imagine that Caiaphas had good intentions, but we also can't say that God does not take situations and actions from those with hardened hearts and use it for *good*, as he did with the story of Joseph and his brothers.
- **But what makes Caiaphas' prophecy so good?**
 - It's ironic really...Caiaphas was basically saying, its better that this man dies than all of us die.
 - Matthew Henry's commentary says, "We have reason to think that they strongly suspected him (Jesus) to indeed be the Messiah; but his doctrine was so contrary to their darling traditions and secular interest, and his design did so thwart their notions of the Messiah's kingdom, that they resolve, be he who he will, he must be put to death."

- It is better of “*expedient*” (or to your advantage) that **one man** should die for the people. What is the significance of the idea of one man dying for the people? John expounded on Caiaphas’ prophecy a little further in saying “***He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one***”.
 - D.A. Carson said in reference to this “*Caiaphas was speaking of substitutionary sacrifice. He just got the directions all wrong. He thought of a sacrifice in which one man would take the place of the nation in the physical arena to stave off a political coup. But as often in John’s Gospel, sometimes people speak better than they know.*”

- **Let’s take a minute to talk about Substitutionary Atonement**
 - Although this prophecy is great to us post resurrection, at the time in Caiaphas’ mind it was logical to give up this man Jesus in place of the people. John through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit prompts us to look a little deeper into this prophecy. What do we see from John’s further explanation of this prophecy?
 - **Jesus died in the place of his people**
 - This is very clearly and beautifully put when we read about the birth of Jesus in **Matthew 1:21**, the Angel of the Lord spoke to Joseph as he was considering divorcing Mary and said to him “**Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.**”
 - Not only the Jewish people, but for the scattered children of God. This is a clear picture of The Church.

- **Isaiah 53:6** “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”
- **Gal 3:1** “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”
 - *A few more scriptures that confirm substitutionary atonement (2 Cor 5:21, 1 Jh 2:2, 1 Pet 3:18, Rom 5:8, Ex 12:1-51, Gen 22:1-24)
- Jesus was not stepping into his death to alleviate the fear of the romans for the Jews. He was willingly stepping into this death he was called to, to take away the wrath of God from guilty sinners - (like the Pharisees, Sadducees, Romans, and yes just like us.

In Closing:

As we study about Peter next Wednesday we will learn of his unwillingness and his disobedience, tonight we got a look into Jesus’ willingness and his obedience to the Father.

Just as the Jewish rulers were in fear of the wrath of roman empire coming in and taking what they thought was theirs, we ALL were under the wrath of God, and without Jesus taking our place and absorbing the wrath we deserve because we are all law breakers, there could be no salvation! Although from a different perspective, we can say along with Caiaphas “it is better for one man to die for the people then us all perish.”