

JOHN

Chapter 18

Note from Kathy

We cannot know all of God's plans and purposes. We don't even know what tomorrow holds. We only have today to bring him glory. The key to living a life that reflects our Lord is living a life humbly submitted to the will of God. In the early hours of the morning a friend and I were texting. They were burying her father-in-law that day, and the previous day she received the news that her brother had also passed away. When I told her I was praying for her, she said, "God's strength is incredibly non-restrictive; it is almost surreal when first stepping into it. But the peace confirms, His strength is real for my steps." What a beautiful example of one following the footprints of Jesus!

John 18:2

"Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples."



Observation

1. In the last couple of chapters we read Jesus' prayer for his disciples and for all those who would follow him. In chapter 18 we see Jesus had finished his intercessory prayer and now heads across the Kidron Valley on the east side of Jerusalem. He and his disciples enter a garden there. Read Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; and Luke 22:39-46, which can be found on page 93.

What was the name of this garden?

What did Jesus do while he was there?

What emotions was he experiencing?

What did the disciples do?

Who came and strengthened Jesus while he was in the garden?

2. According to John 18:2, did Judas have a problem leading the way to find and arrest Jesus?
3. When Judas arrived at the garden who had he brought with him?

Mark 14:43-45

“Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders. ⁴⁴Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: ‘The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard. ⁴⁵Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, ‘Rabbi!’ and kissed him.”

Luke 22:47-48

“While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, ⁴⁸but Jesus asked him, ‘Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?’”

John 18:29-32

“So Pilate came out to them and asked, ‘What charges are you bringing against this man?’ ³⁰If he were not a criminal,’ they replied, ‘we would not have handed him over to you.’ ³¹Pilate said, ‘Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.’ ‘But we have no right to execute anyone,’ they objected. ³²This took place to fulfill what Jesus had said about the kind of death he was going to die.”

4. John does not mention the secret signal Judas and the Pharisees had chosen. Read Mark 14:43-45 and Luke 22:47-48. What signal had Judas given the guards?
5. Scripture says Jesus knew all that was going to happen. According to John 18:4-8, what did he do in order to protect his disciples?
6. What was Peter’s spontaneous reaction to Jesus being arrested?
7. Jesus was arrested, bound and brought first to Annas, the previous high priest. Who was actually the high priest at the time?
8. Peter and another disciple (most scholars believe it was John himself) followed Jesus. Peter remained temporarily outside the door. How was this other disciple able to get in?
9. According to John 18:16, how was Peter able to get into the high priest’s courtyard?
10. After reading verses 17-27, do you think Peter may have wished he never had gotten into the courtyard? What events took place that would cause Peter so much personal disappointment and anguish?
11. Jesus answered the questions he was being asked. His truthful answers were misinterpreted. According to verse 22, what did the guard do in response?
12. After Caiaphas had finished questioning him, in the early hours of the morning, where did the high priest send Jesus?
13. Jesus is now being questioned for the third time. Why did the Jewish leaders stop questioning Jesus?
14. When asked why they did not simply judge this criminal themselves what was the response of the Jewish leaders to Pilate? Proof positive of the plan and intent.

John 18:37-39

“You are a king, then,” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”³⁸ “What is truth?” retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, “I find no basis for a charge against him.”³⁹ “But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release ‘the king of the Jews?’”

15. In verses 38, Pilate asked a very interesting question. Was he really interested in the answer?
16. Pilate offers to release what he considers an innocent man. That was the Jewish custom at the time of Passover. The choice was between two men, Jesus and Barabbas. Who did the Jews choose to release?

Application

1. In John 17 Jesus prayed for himself, his disciples and for all believers. John 18 tells us that when Jesus had finished praying, he and his disciples left and went to a garden. Most of us might think we need to get some rest in order to face the events that will soon come to be. Jesus chose once again to pray. When you are overwhelmed by events that lie ahead, what do you do?
2. Judas came with a detachment of soldiers and some Jewish officials. This would be an overwhelming opposition by anyone’s estimation. Can you imagine the scene? In the dark and quiet of the garden sat Jesus praying. In the distance an angry mob with torches, lanterns and weapons coming toward him. Jesus simply awakens his disciples and says to them, “Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

This must have caught the disciples quite off guard, even though Jesus tried to prepare them. Can you imagine the sadness, knowing you were sleeping right up to the moment your master and friend was to be taken? Have you ever experienced something similar? You knew an event was coming but did not think it would happen as soon as it did?

I experienced this the day my mother died. I knew it would be soon, but I did not think it would be that day. How I wish I had been whispering my words of love in her ear one last time. I wish “I love you,” would have been the last thing she heard on earth before Jesus welcomed her home with his, “I love you.”

3. How do you handle regrets over missed opportunities?

The fact that I missed the opportunity that was right before me with my mother, makes me all the more diligent to express my love for others while I can. How will you express your love for others while you can today?

Psalm 46:10

“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

Exodus 14:14

“The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”

4. When Jesus came into Peter’s life he became a changed man. No longer was he simply a fisherman, but now he walked and talked with the creator of all living things. Although Peter was changed by his time with Jesus, he was not a perfect man. He seemed to stumble and often reacted before completely thinking things through. In John 18 we see Jesus being arrested. He had told the disciples that the end was near. What do we see Peter do when the guards come to take Jesus away?

Is this what Jesus wanted Peter to do?

Recall a time when you reacted to a situation, creating yet another problem. And afterwards, you knew in your heart your response wasn’t godly.

Has a situation ever been escalating and instead of standing quietly or perhaps praying, you get right into the heat of the situation? Did it help?

5. Since God is in control, there will be times when it is best to pray, stand back and watch God move. Peter may have meant well, but he actually got in the way of God’s plan. In Psalm 46:10 the Psalmist gives a word of comfort to God’s people and a warning to all other nations. How might remembering this verse help you the next time you are in a difficult situation?
6. Jesus was bound and taken to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas the high priest, for questioning. Then later he was taken to Caiaphas where he endured even more disrespect and abuse. Finally, he was taken to Pilate for a death sentence to be carried out. Pilate questioned him but found nothing to charge him with. Pilate wanted to release Jesus. He offered to release a prisoner, either Jesus or Barrabas. The crowd chose to save Barrabas. Have you ever experienced unreasonable hatred? For no reason at all someone hated you.

How did Jesus respond to these events? Did you respond like Jesus? Did you remember that God has everything under control, and if he allows something to happen it must have a greater purpose?

7. How has God spoken to you through this chapter?

What is your take away after spending time studying John 18?

Chapter 18 Extra Bible Verses

Matthew 26:36-46

³⁶ Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." ³⁹ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." ⁴⁰ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹ "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." ⁴³ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing. ⁴⁵ Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

Mark 14:32-42

³² They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴ "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch." ³⁵ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." ³⁷ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Simon," he said to Peter, "are you asleep? Couldn't you keep watch for one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." ³⁹ Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. ⁴⁰ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him. ⁴¹ Returning the third time, he said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

Luke 22:39-46

³⁹ Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. ⁴⁰ On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." ⁴¹ He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, ⁴² "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." ⁴³ An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. ⁴⁵ When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. ⁴⁶ "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."