

Great Stories of the Bible - 06/12/22

The Garden of Gethsemane

TEXT- Matthew 26:36-46 *Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.*

INTRO – Years ago a hydroelectric dam was to be built across a valley in Maine. The people in the town were to be relocated and the town itself submerged.

During the time between the initial decision and the completion of the dam, the town, which had once been well-kept, fell into disrepair.

Why keep it up now? Explained one resident: "Where there is no faith in the future, there is no work in the present."

Jesus is facing crucifixion. He is betrayed by Judas and abandoned by His disciples. But first he goes with Peter James and John to a place he commonly visited called Gethsemane. Luke says that Jesus "went as he was wont" - that is, accustomed - "to the Mount of Olives."

Here He spent three hours in prayer. Here we see Judas pretending to honor Christ by repeatedly kissing Him, and Peter failing Christ by sleeping when he should have been praying, fighting with a sword when he should have been yielding, and fleeing when he boasted he would die for the Lord.

Gethsemane - This word is made up either of two Hebrew words, signifying "valley of fatness" - that is, a fertile valley; or of two words, signifying "an olive-press," given to it, probably, because the place was filled with olives.

I. The Sorrow He Faced

Even unto death - This denotes extreme sorrow and agony.

The sufferings of death are the greatest of which we have any knowledge; they are the most feared and dreaded by man.

"The cup" (Mat_26:39) was the price Christ would pay by being made sin on the cross. His holy nature revolted at the prospect of being made sin, yet His holy will was one with the Father and He willingly laid down His life.

- **He needed strengthening**

Luke 22:43 *And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.*

- **He was sorrowful – An extreme emotion -It was a heavy burden**

Matthew 26:37 *And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.*

- **He was in agony**

Luke 22:44 *And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat*

was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

- **He gained victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil.**

II. The Prayer He Prayed

Matthew 26:39 *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

He prayed 22 words for an hour

He must have prayed and remained silent most of the time.

- **He prayed the same prayer for an hour three concurrent times.**

He was teaching His disciples the importance of prayer in times of trial.

James 5:16-18 *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.*

- Through the night - Jesus prayed all night. **Luke 6:12**
- Daniel prayed **morning, noon, and night.**
- Daily for basic needs. **Matthew 6:11**
- Prior to major **decisions** and events.
- **Jesus prayed prior to every major event in His life.**

Luke 3:21 *Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,*

- **He prayed at His baptism - A major event in His life.**
- **He prayed all night before selecting the twelve.** **Luke 6:12, 13**
- **He prayed before He was transfigured.** **Luke 9:29**
- **He prayed before raising Lazarus.** **John 11:41, 42**
- **He prayed in the garden before His crucifixion.** **Luke 23:34**
- **He prayed during the crucifixion.** **Luke 23:34**

III. The Lesson He Taught

Peter, a fisherman, tries to be a soldier and win spiritual victories with a carnal weapon! We need to remind ourselves that Christ does not need to be defended. We fight Satan, not flesh and blood (Eph 6:10-18); the weapons we use are spiritual, not fleshly (Heb 4:12). Moses made this same mistake and had to spend forty years learning to let God fight his battles.

- **We must be watchful**

Matthew 26:38 *Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.*

- **We can be vulnerable to temptation without prayer.**

Luke 22:45-46 *And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his*

disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

- **Earnest prayer is necessary in times of agony.**

Matthew 26:37-38 . . . and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death:

(Jesus experienced extreme emotion)

vs. 39 . . . not as I will, but as thou wilt.

vs. 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

- **Because He experienced a battle of surrendering His will to the will of God. His will then controlled His mind and emotions. Then His body was able to obey the will of the Father**
- **We must recognize that surrendering to the will of God is a struggle!**

CONCL- Are we continuing in prayer or are we asleep?

Colonel Davenport, the Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives on May 19th, 1780 the sky of Hartford darkened ominously, and some of the representatives, glancing out the windows, feared the end was at hand.

Quelling a clamor for immediate adjournment, Davenport rose and said,

"The Day of Judgment is either approaching or it is not. If it is not, there is no cause for adjournment. If it is, I choose to be found doing my duty.

Therefore, I wish that candles be brought." Rather than fearing what is to come, we are to be faithful till Christ returns. Instead of fearing the dark, we're to be lights as we watch and wait.