

Gethsemane and the Trials of Jesus.

Some Context Notes

1. The Kidron Valley
 - a. The water from its Pool of Gihon was brought by aqueduct inside the walls of Jerusalem to feed the pools of Siloam.
 - b. BCE history
 - i. 2 Samuel 15:23 – David escapes across the Kidron from Absalom.
 - ii. 1 Kings 2:37 - Solomon warns Shimei not to cross the Kidron
 - iii. 1 Kings 15:13, 2 Kings 23:4, 2 Chronicles 29:16 – Asa, Josiah and Hezekiah burn idols at its brook.
 - iv. 2 Chronicles 32:4 - Hezekiah stops it to deny the attacking Syrians a water source.
 - v. Nehemiah 2:15 – Went up it to survey the walls and their need for repair.
 - vi. Jeremiah 31:38-40 mentions it in prophesy describing the permanent rebuilding of Jerusalem.
2. Nazarene/Nazareth
 - a. The word is considered to be derived from Hebrew *netser* (root) used in Isaiah 11:1 where the Messiah is described being a shoot out of the roots of Jesse.
 - b. In my study of the times the term could be used in a friendly way or as a term of scorn.
 - c. Jesus applied it to Himself – it would make sense to me that when Jesus used the term it had multiple meanings.
3. Squad or Cohort: The word *speiran* usually refers to a Roman force of 600 men (one tenth of a legion). Translators generally believe it was a smaller group of the larger body. For instance if a group came from Legio XIV Gemina they would be called by that name.
4. Sleeping when stressed. People who become immensely fatigued in response to stress are using up all the glucose in their brain that they otherwise need to maintain energy. You can also want to read the Mayo Clinic 30/07/20 article on Emotional Exhaustion during Stress.
5. The name Judas means *the praised one*. There are two men named Judas in this story. I think the uses of irony and hope were in John 14:22 and John 18:5
6. Annas was appointed High Priest by Quirinius governor of Syria. He was deposed CE 15 by Valerius Gratus governor of Judea. He was the father-in-

law of Caiaphas. He seems to have had higher status; perhaps as family head.

Some Vocabulary Words

1. Gethsemane – probably from the Aramaic for oil-press.
2. Distressed – (ekthambeo): to be overwhelmed, alarmed.
3. Hematohhidrosis – Blood sweating that can occur in individuals suffering from extreme levels of stress. Around the sweat glands there are multiple blood vessels in a net-like form which constrict under the pressure of great emotional stress.
4. Annas: The name means merciful and gracious....oy!

Questions

1. What are the ways Jesus' prayer in John 17:20 was meant to prepare the disciples for the next 24 hours?
2. Are there ways remembering the histories of the Kidron Valley might have prepared the disciples for their immediate future?
3. Why do you think Jesus took only James, Peter and John with him to the inner garden?
4. Why do you think John left out the Gethsemane experience in his gospel?
5. Matthew 26:41 and Luke 22:40 – From what temptation do you think Jesus was asking them to address here? What would have been the miracle and the benefit of those three staying awake?
6. Luke 22: 43, 44 For what do you think the angel strengthened Jesus? Are there lessons for us here?
7. John (in 18:24) wrote Jesus "knew everything that was going to happen to Him". No other gospel authors mentioned this. Why do you think John wrote this?
8. Why do you think John wrote about Simon Peter and the ear lopping? Why do you think Peter attacked the slave?
9. What lessons did Jesus give to Peter with the ear healing?
10. What's your sense of how Peter ended up with those three denials?
11. Do you think there is a larger lesson in both the Romans and the Jews participating in the journey to the cross?
12. Do you have a sense of Pilate's motives as he interacted with Jesus?
13. What is your take-a-way with these texts of the journey to the cross? Are there ways they give you resolve – or fear?

14. What did you see more deeply about Jesus?
15. What did you learn about disciples who are portrayed in these texts?
16. Which disciple do you think you would have been?
17. How would Jesus have responded to you?

I have no idea where you will be or when you will be when this lesson arrives.
Wherever you are and whatever you are doing, I wish for you unexpected blessings.
Remember you are valuable and valued.

Catherine