**Father Take This Cup**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Mark 14:31-46**

**Wednesday Evening**

**September 4, 2019**

**32 Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray."**

Saints, after eating the meal, the disciples left Jerusalem and went out to Gethsemane (see John 18:1-2). The garden was in the Kidron Valley just outside the eastern wall of Jerusalem and just below the Mount of Olives. Jesus told eight of the disciples to sit down while he went farther in to pray.

**John 18:1-2**

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. 2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples.

Photos>

Plenty of drama surrounds Mark’s terse account. The elders of Jerusalem were plotting to kill Jesus and had already issued a warrant for his arrest. Jesus left Jerusalem under cover of darkness in order to pray. The disciples must also have been physically and emotionally exhausted from trying to comprehend what would transpire. Instead of watching, they gave in to their exhaustion and fell asleep.

**33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. 34 Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch."**

Saints, Jesus took three disciples, his inner circle, farther into the garden with him. To these closest friends, Jesus revealed his inner turmoil over the event he was about to face. The divine course was set, but Jesus, in his human nature, still struggled.

**Hebrews 5:7-9**

7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, 8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him…

Jesus’ coming death was no surprise; he knew about it and had even told the disciples about it so they would be prepared. Jesus knew what his death would accomplish. As the time of this event neared, it became even more horrifying. Jesus naturally recoiled from the prospect.

Jesus asked Peter, James, and John (14:33) to stay and watch with him. Jesus knew Judas would soon arrive, and Jesus wanted to devote himself to prayer until that time came.

**35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.**

Saints, Jesus went still farther into the garden to be alone with God. His agony was such that he threw himself on the ground before God in deep spiritual anguish, praying that if possible the awful hour awaiting him might pass him by—that his mission might be accomplished some other way.

**Isaiah 53:3-5**

3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;

He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

Hour figuratively refers to the entire event Jesus was facing. The “hour” and the “cup” were used synonymously. Yet Jesus humbly submitted to the Father’s will. Luke tells us that Jesus’ sweat resembled drops of blood. Jesus was in terrible agony, but he did not give up or give in. He went ahead with the mission for which he had come.

**Isaiah 53:10-11**

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. 11 He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.

**36 And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."**

Saints, Abba was Aramaic for “father” and implied familiarity and closeness. Only Jesus could have used the word Abba in a prayer to God, because Jesus had a special Father-Son relationship with him.

Jesus’ using it showed his surrender to and faith in the Father’s will. Children addressed their fathers as Abba, but the term was far too familiar for adult Jews to use in speaking to God. Paul used the term in Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6, showing that the early church picked up the term from this prayer of Jesus.

**Romans 8:15-17**

15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

**Galatians 4:6-7**

6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

The words, everything is possible for you, indicate God’s omnipotence. He could accomplish anything. Jesus was affirming God’s sovereign control over the coming suffering.

With the words, take this cup of suffering away from me, Jesus was referring to the agony, the separation from God, and the death he would have to endure in order to atone for the sins of the world.

Jesus, as God’s Son, recoiled from sin, yet part of his task would be to take the sins of the whole world upon himself. This was a cup he truly hated to drink.

The physical suffering would be horrible enough, but what God’s Son feared most was the cup of spiritual suffering—taking on sin and being separated from God (Hebrews 5:7-9). Yet Jesus reaffirmed his desire to do what God wanted by saying, “Yet I want your will, not mine.”

**Hebrews 5:7-9**

7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, 8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him…

God did not take away the “cup,” for to judge the sins of the world was his will. Yet he did take away Jesus’ extreme fear and agitation. Jesus moved serenely through the next several hours, at peace with God, knowing that he was doing God’s will.

**37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? 38 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak."**

Saints, Jesus got up from his prayer to return to the three disciples. He had told them to stay and keep watch (14:34), but instead of showing support for Jesus by remaining awake with him and praying themselves for strength in the coming hours, they had fallen asleep. The hour was very late, perhaps after midnight.

Jesus spoke to Peter, calling him Simon, his name before he had met Jesus. Apparently Peter’s recent boasting (14:31), present sleepiness, and coming denial rendered him less than Peter, the “rock”.

**John 1:42**

“And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).”

Peter had said he would never leave Jesus; yet when Jesus needed prayer and support, Peter had fallen asleep. Thus, Jesus rebuked him for his failure to keep watch for even one hour. Only Mark mentions the Lord’s words to Peter. Perhaps Peter wanted Mark to tell this part of the story.

Jesus told the disciples that this was the time to keep alert and pray, for soon difficult temptation would come. Jesus wanted them to pray that their faith would not collapse. The word temptation can mean testing or trial.

Jesus wanted his disciples to pray for strength to go through the coming ordeal. The disciples were about to see Jesus die. Would they still think he was the Messiah? The disciples’ strongest temptation would undoubtedly be to think they had been deceived.

Their spirit might be willing, but their body would be weak. Their inner desires and intentions would be, as they had previously boasted, to never deny Jesus and to die with him. Yet with all their human inadequacies, fears, and failures, the disciples would have difficulty carrying out those good intentions.

**39 Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. 40 And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him.**

Saints, Jesus left the three disciples and went back to his previous pleadings with the Father (14:35-36). When he returned to them, they were asleep again. Despite his warning they just couldn’t keep their eyes open. Apparently Jesus again awakened them, and in their embarrassment, they didn’t know what to say.

**41 Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise up, let us go. See, My betrayer is at hand."**

Saints, Peter did not think it possible for him to actually deny any relationship with Jesus. Perhaps he was worried that he was the betrayer Jesus had mentioned during their meal (14:18). Not only Peter, but all the disciples declared that they would never deny Jesus. A few hours later, however, they all scattered.

**43 And immediately, while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.**

Saints, Jesus took three disciples, his inner circle, farther into the garden with him. To these closest friends, Jesus revealed his inner turmoil over the event he was about to face. The divine course was set, but Jesus, in his human nature, still struggled.

**Revelation 13:8**

“All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

**Acts 2:23**

“Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death”

His coming death was no surprise; he knew about it and had even told the disciples about it so they would be prepared. Jesus knew what his death would accomplish. As the time of this event neared, it became even more horrifying. Jesus naturally recoiled from the prospect.

Jesus asked Peter, James, and John (14:33) to stay and watch with him. Jesus knew Judas would soon arrive, and Jesus wanted to devote himself to prayer until that time came.

**44 Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; take Him and lead Him away safely."**

Saints, Judas had told the crowd to arrest the man to whom he would give the kiss of greeting. This was not an arrest by Roman soldiers under Roman law, but an arrest by the religious leaders.

Judas pointed Jesus out, not because Jesus was hard to recognize, but because Judas had agreed to be the formal accuser in case a trial was called. A kiss on the cheek or hand was a common form of greeting in the Middle East, so this was not unusual.

**45 And as soon as He had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, "Rabbi, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.**

Judas had expected to find Jesus and the disciples in Gethsemane. He entered the garden followed by the armed band and walked up to Jesus. In a friendly gesture of greeting and affection, Judas called Jesus “Teacher” and then gave him a kiss (on the cheek or on the hand), a sign of respect.

**Psalm 41:9**

“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me”

**Psalm 55:12-14**

12 For it is not an enemy who reproaches me; Then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me; Then I could hide from him. 13 But it was you, a man my equal, My companion and my acquaintance. 14 We took sweet counsel together, And walked to the house of God in the throng.

**Romans 12:14-19**

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**