

149. Jews Arrest and Judge Jesus (Matthew 26:36-75)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, You gave up Your desires, and You suffered for us. Thank You for taking our sin and suffering punishment for us. Now we are free, but You want us to pick up our cross and follow You. When the world hates us because we are Christians, help us to be patient and accept suffering the same as You accepted suffering. Help us always trust that Your death and resurrection makes us truly free. We pray in Your name. Amen.

Matthew 26:36-44. Jesus and the disciples went to a place named Gethsemane. Jesus told His disciples, "Sit here. I am going over there to pray." Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him. Jesus began feeling very troubled. He told the disciples, "I am full of grief, almost to death. Stay here and watch with Me." Jesus walked a little more. He knelt down, His face on the ground. Jesus prayed, "My Father, if possible, please take away this suffering. But not what I want. Do what You want." Jesus came back to the disciples. They were asleep. Jesus asked Peter, "You couldn't watch with Me for one hour? Continue awake and praying. Then you will not sin. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Jesus left a second time and prayed. He said, "My Father, if this suffering is the only way, then let Your will (wants) happen." Jesus came back and the disciples were sleeping again, because they were tired. Jesus left and prayed a third time. He prayed the same as before.

- Jesus knew He will die soon. What did He go away to do before He died?
- Who did Jesus take with Him? Why did Jesus bring them and want them to stay awake? Did they help Jesus?
- One time Jesus came back to the disciples and they were sleeping. Jesus told Peter, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." What does that mean?
- Jesus prayed 3 times. Each time, He said He didn't want to suffer. But what did Jesus say He would do? What can that teach us about how we should pray?

Matthew 26:45-50. Jesus came to the disciples and said, “You are still sleeping? Look, now is the time when the Son of Man gets betrayed to sinful people. Get up! Look, the man who betrays Me is here!” While Jesus was speaking, Judas came near. Judas was one of the 12 disciples. Many people were with Judas, and they had swords and clubs. Judas told them, “The one I kiss is the man. Arrest Him.” Judas went to Jesus and said, “Hello, Teacher!” And Judas kissed Jesus. Jesus said, “Friend, this is why you came. Do it.” Then the people arrested Jesus.

- Who betrayed Jesus? Did Jesus try to stop him? Why not?

Matthew 26:51-56. One of Jesus’ disciples had a sword. He hit the high priest’s servant and cut off his ear. Jesus told his disciple, “Put away your sword! If you use a sword against others, someone will use a sword to kill you. You don’t know, I could ask My Father, and He can give me more than 70,000 angels? But then how will the Bible prophecies happen? It must happen this way.” Jesus asked the crowd of people, “You came out with swords and clubs to arrest Me, like I am a thief? Every day, I sat in the temple and taught. You didn’t arrest Me there. But all this is happening for the Bible prophecies to happen true.” Then all the disciples left Jesus and ran away.

- How did one disciple try to help Jesus? What did Jesus say about that?
- Why did the people arrest Jesus at night? Why not in the temple during the day?

Matthew 26:57-61. The crowd of people led Jesus to Caiaphas. He was the high priest. The Jewish leaders and teachers already were meeting there. Peter followed Jesus from a distance. He went into the courtyard, the area around the building. Peter sat down with the soldier officers to see what will happen to Jesus. The priests and the Jewish council tried and tried to get false witnesses against Jesus. They wanted to kill Jesus. Many people came and tried to talk against Jesus, but they didn’t succeed. Then two men came and said, “Jesus said He can destroy God’s temple and build it again in three days.”

- Who followed Jesus? Why?

- What did the Jewish leaders try to do against Jesus? Was this a fair trial? Did Jesus complain about that?
- Sometimes people say unfair things against us. Sometimes people tell lies about us. What can we do when that happens? What are some different choices?
- Jesus did say, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will build it up.” What was Jesus talking about?

Matthew 26:62-68. The high priest stood up and asked Jesus, “You won’t answer? What are these men saying against You?” But Jesus answered nothing. The high priest said, “By the living God, I command You to tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God.” Jesus said, “You said that yourself. I also tell you, after this you will see the Son of Man sitting at God’s right hand and coming on the clouds in heaven.” The high priest tore his robe. He said, “Jesus spoke against God! We don’t need witnesses! You heard Him yourselves. Decide for yourselves!” They answered, “Jesus deserves to die!” Then they spit in Jesus’ face and hit Him. Other people slapped Him and asked, “Christ, prophesy for us, who hit You?”

- What did the high priest ask Jesus? What did Jesus answer? Who is Jesus?
- What did the Jewish leaders do to Jesus? What did Jesus do back against them?

Matthew 26:69-75. Peter sat outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came to Peter and said, “You were with Jesus from Galilee.” Peter denied it and said, “I don’t know what you are talking about.” Peter went to the gate. Another servant girl saw Peter. She told the other people, “This man was with Jesus from Nazareth.” Peter swore and denied it. He said, “I don’t know the man.” A little later, some other people came and said to Peter, “You were with Jesus. You talk like you are from Galilee.” Peter began cursing and swearing. He said, “I don’t know the man!” Immediately a rooster crowed. Peter remembered that Jesus told him,

“Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” Peter left and wept and mourned.

- Different people came up to Peter. What did they all say? How did Peter answer? Why do you think Peter denied Jesus?
- Earlier, Jesus told Peter, before a rooster crows, he will deny Jesus three times. Did Peter do that? How did Peter feel after that?
- What are some ways we deny Jesus? If we deny Him, what is the right thing for us to do?
- The same as the disciples, we sometimes leave Jesus and deny Him. Will Jesus leave us and deny us?