

GETHSEMANE - GOLGOTHA - GLORY

Jn. 18:1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

The privacy the Lord Jesus had with His disciples in the upper room has concluded and the public drama towards the cross is about to begin. Let's very simply travel the short distance along the street, and then take the path down and out of the old city. At the bottom, cross the stream which flows through the Kidron valley, and enter the Garden of Gethsemane, at the foot of the Mount of Olives on the eastern side of Jerusalem. Firstly, let's stop at **GETHSEMANE**.

It's dark ... it's very quiet, and there's an air of sombreness ... a thick atmosphere of heaviness. The disciples were weary. Jesus had given them thoughts greater than they were able to comprehend ... and He Himself was entering the darkest hours of His time on earth.

Gethsemane is an Aramaic word which simply means 'an oil press'. It's the place where the heart of Jesus was 'pressed' for as He fell on His knees, He was already struggling with the weight of the burden He was to face. ... We're a few hours from the cross, but they were as dark ominous clouds swarming over Him. He could 'feel the bubbling' of the wrath of His impending condemnation, prophetically described in the words of the psalmist over one thousand years earlier, **Ps. 22:6** I am a ... reproach [*disgrace*] of men, and despised of the people. ⁷ All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head.

This wasn't only a physical suffering which threatened to overwhelm Him, for this was before the nails were driven into Him ... This was before the crown of thorns and the robe of mockery. As He was on His knees in the Garden it wasn't the suffering that threatened to overcome Him ... but it was the thought of being forsaken by His Father. ... The Father and Son had never been apart ... Each step along the way of His journey on earth, His Father had been with Him. From His birth, through His childhood, His teenage years, His young adulthood, and His short ministry ... the Father had always been there ... But now, His strength was starting to be poured out like water (Ps. 22:14), and the cup from which He would drink (Jn. 18:11) would be the bitterest and, - already in the Garden, - the taste was forming on His lips.

Yet, lying asleep ... and not too far away were His disciples who had promised to remain awake with Him, but they were exhausted ... and only Jesus could not sleep! With the struggle going on in His heart, He could see the enemies of Hell gathering, and He could see the wrath of God being prepared to rain down upon Him ... and He was praying earnestly to His Father, **Ps. 22:11** *Be not far from me;*

for trouble is near; for there is none to help ... **19** be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me ... And that is how Gethsemane was the place our Saviour was ‘pressed’ ... even before a single nail pierced His sinless body **Mt. 26:42** O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. From **Gethsemane** we then travel with the Saviour to ...

GOLGOTHA **Jn. 19:17** And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha. In the eternal council room of Heaven, the plan for our salvation was conceived ... a plan which would be **Eph. 1:6** to the praise of the glory of [God’s] grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved ... for in Christ alone, we were guaranteed **7** redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Even before sin appeared on this earth, God had already the plan to pay its ransom through the death of His Son at Calvary. Only through Christ on the cross would the debt of sin be cancelled. ... The debt we owed would God transfer upon His Son.

Like the blood of the lamb on the Old Testament altars, the blood of Jesus had to be shed. In the Old Testament, breaking God’s law, - sin, - required punishment by death, - **Rom. 6:23** the wages of sin is death ... It was *so* serious! And God has always considered sin to be so serious, that it demands death. ... You and I can make excuses for it, but He sees it as ‘black and white’. In the Old Testament, the life of the lamb had to be taken ... and it had to be sacrificed in the morning and another one in the evening. That’s because the sacrifice of the lamb was temporary. *Multitudes* of lambs had to be slaughtered *continuously*, but **Heb. 9:28** Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many. ... When *He* would die, no more offerings were necessary ... and He knew He *had* to die because it was His Father’s will to save lost sinners.

And after He had been arrested in Gethsemane, He was walked back up into the old city to stand trial before the evil men distorting their laws, and gaping at him with their mouths open, **Ps. 22:13** as a ravening and a roaring lion, He then was led along the path leading outside the city, under the supervision of a Roman soldier ... crowds increasingly gathering on either side to watch Him. At one point the heavy wooden beam He was made to gather was too much for Him to bear, and another had to come and carry it for Him. With His head drooped and staring at each step in front of Him, He stumbled with exhaustion. He hadn’t slept the night before. He hadn’t been fed. He had been ‘pulled’ from one place to another. He had been wrongly accused. He had been blamed for crimes He never committed. He had been condemned in the absence of any to defend Him ... and then He had been hurriedly and unceremoniously *rushed* from Pilate’s hall and out into the street which led to Calvary.

When He arrived at the top of the hill, - flanked by the Roman soldiers, - they laid the pieces of wood on the ground, hammered them together, and ordered Him to kneel, - *they ordered the Son of God to kneel!* As they dug out the hole into which they would drop the cross, they then told the Saviour to lie upon the wood. And, - faint and weak, - as He bent down to lie on the cross ... on the ground, the hardness of the wood against His spine shot pain throughout His weary body. Lying there ... with the agony past the limit of unbearable, and the sweat rolling down His face, the soldier grabbed His hand, laid it out flat on the wood, and - without any feeling for the condemned, - ... as hard as he could, he banged the nail into the hand of Jesus. The blood *gushed* out ... Jesus was in agony ... And then the soldier with the hammer in his hand, took another nail and went around to the other side. Again, He straightened out Jesus' hand ... and the Saviour's body would have been so tense, - He was waiting for it! - ... and the soldier drove the nail through His hand and into the wood. ... Then the soldier and a couple of his helpers started to lift Jesus on the cross ... and you can feel the pain He suffered as those rough men, - with no thought whatsoever, - dropped His cross into the hole in the ground! ... The agony shooting through the body of Jesus would have been unbearable! ... And He hung there from nine o'clock in the morning until He died at three o'clock in the afternoon. ... Six hours during which He suffered the human pain and agony of crucifixion ... and for three of those hours, He went beyond the limits of human suffering (Is. 52:14) for, in addition, He endured God's judgment upon Him until the punishment for *our* sins was satisfied. **Is. 53:5** He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement [*punishment*] of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

... From **Gethsemane** to **Golgotha** ... The cross is not the end of the journey, though, for the Saviour rose from the dead. Many days later, from the Mount of Olives, as He spoke with His disciples ... **Acts 1:9** while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. **10** And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; **11** Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. ... Today, He's in ...

GLORY As John the apostle gazed around Heaven, he heard the great hosts of the Heavenly choir singing their song, **Rev. 5:12** *Worthy is the Lamb* ... All attention is upon the Saviour in the Centre of Glory! ... He occupies Heaven's throne but for just over thirty years, He had 'stepped outside' and **Phil. 2:7** took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And after He

had completed what He came here on earth to do, He returned to Glory to take again the place that has always been His, ⁹ God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.

And that is where He is right now. ... And there is coming a day when His Heavenly Glory will descend to this earth ... the earth which He originally created for His pleasure, **Gen. 1:31** God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good ... He never gave up on this world for He *will* see His purposes come to pass here, as it was at creation ... the wolf dwelling with the lamb, the calf and the young lion lying beside each other, and a little child in front leading the way. Isaiah wrote, **Is. 11:9** the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord ...

He has proved Himself to be the promise-keeping God. Some of His promises have already been fulfilled, and some of them are yet to be fulfilled. ... He promised He would send Jesus ... and He did. He promised intricate details in the life of Jesus ... and they happened. It is amazing how accurate God's Word is ... Among many of its prophecies, He prophesied Gethsemane in the Old Testament, and Golgotha too. ... And just as they happened as He foretold, we can also be confident in what He promises about Glory.

From **Gethsemane** to **Golgotha** to **Glory** ... God is still in control, - imagine if He wasn't?! This world is in a bad state, in so many ways ... What if there was no God with no plan to recover it? ... We would have no hope, for as the psalmist says twice, **vain is the help of man (Ps. 60:11; 108:12)**. With all his best efforts and best will, we cannot do a thing to stop the downward spiral ... Some of man's efforts have to be commended, but he's not able to stop, - for example, - what's happening in the oceans, or the fighting and twisting among the nations ... But here is what the psalmist says, **Ps. 60:12** **Through God we shall do valiantly** ...

God's people don't *give up* ... they *look up*. When Jesus was on His knees in the garden of Gethsemane, *He looked up*. When He was on the cross, *He looked up*. ... The answer to the world's problems is nothing the world can cure, - there is no point trusting in the world. The answer to the world's problems is in the hands of God Who sent His Son into this world, to come down from Jerusalem into Gethsemane, and from Gethsemane to Golgotha ... and after all His work there was completed, He returned to Glory. And some day He's coming back

To God be the glory, great things He hath done;
 So loved He the world that He gave us His Son
 ... But purer, and higher, and greater will be,
 Our wonder, our rapture, when Jesus we see.