

75. Jesus Was Betrayed by Judas

In our last topic, we saw that Jesus wanted to help the disciples learn to depend on Him for strength instead of trying to serve the Lord in their own strength. At the same time, we have seen that it was also important for them to remember that Jesus is able to supply their needs as they serve Him. Today, we are going to see that one of the disciples never did learn either of these lessons.

We go on to see that Jesus demonstrated the importance of prayer, especially in times of testing. Luke 22:39-40 says, “Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. When He came to the place, He said to them, ‘Pray that you may not enter into temptation.’” In our lives, we experience times when we have to deal with temptation. That is due to the fact that temptation comes from three different sources. 1 John 2:16 says, “For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.” Jesus knew that both the disciples and all Christians will deal with temptation. As a result, He illustrated two ways to avoid entering into temptation – one at the beginning of His ministry and the second in this passage. In Luke 4:1-13, we see that each time that Jesus was tempted, He answered the temptation with the Word of God and experienced victory over the temptations of Satan.

Here, we see that Jesus took the disciples with Him to the garden on the Mount of Olives where He normally went for prayer when He spent time in the city of Jerusalem. The word translated “enter” means *to come into or to take possession of*. Jesus realized that the disciples would soon have temptation take possession of their thoughts and hearts. As a result, Jesus told them how to avoid yielding to temptation. Jesus said that the way to avoid letting temptation take possession of them was to pray. Jesus had warned Peter and the other disciples that Satan had asked for Peter so that he could sift him as wheat.

Jesus gave an example by His own prayer of the kind of prayer that will give us victory over temptation. Luke 22:42 says, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.” Here, we see that the way to have victory over temptation is to pray for the will of God rather than praying for our own desires. 1 John 5:14-15 says, “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.” When we pray for the will of God, we can know that God will both hear us and also answer our prayer according to His will. As a result, we will have victory over temptation.

We see that Jesus moved a short distance from the disciples before He began His prayer to the Father. Luke 22:41-46 says, “And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, ‘Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.’ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. Then He said to them, ‘Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.’”

We see how the Father answered Jesus when Jesus prayed for the will of the Father to be done. We see that the Father sent an angel from heaven to strengthen Him. The word translated “strengthen” means *to make strong*. The only other place this word is used in the New Testament is Acts 9:19 where we read, “So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.” In Acts, we see that Saul was given physical strength. Here, in our passage, we see that the Father sent an angel to give Jesus spiritual strength. The same is true in our own lives. When we pray for the will of God to be done, the Lord will give us the spiritual strength that is needed to carry out His will.

Jesus was experiencing great agony in the garden that night. First, He knew that He would soon bear our sins on the cross. 1 Peter 2:24 says, “Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.” Second, and much more difficult for Jesus, was the fact that He knew that He would be separated from the Father during the time that He bore our sins. Mark 15:33-34 says, “Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?’ which is translated, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’” This is the only time that the Father and Son ever experienced or will experience separation.

Because of this coming separation, we see that Jesus was in great agony. We see that the way Jesus responded to this great agony was by praying more earnestly. Again, we have an example for our own lives. We also see that the sweat of Jesus became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. This was not sweat from hot weather because John 18:18 said just a short time later, “Now the servants and officers who had made a fire of coals stood there, for it was cold, and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself.” Here, we see that it was quite cold. Hematidrosis is a condition where the small blood vessels break causing blood to mix with sweat. This can happen when a person is experiencing very severe mental or physical suffering. Here, we see that blood mixed with sweat was coming from the skin of Jesus in such large amounts that there were great drops of blood falling to the ground. Jesus prayed earnestly in this great agony and the Father sent an angel to strengthen Him.

After praying, Jesus returned to the disciples. There He found them sleeping. We see that they were sleeping because of their great sorrow. They did not fully understand, but they knew that something very difficult was going to happen that night. Here, we see a great contrast. Jesus prepared for His suffering by praying. The disciples did not prepare but slept instead. We will see that they were not prepared when testing came. A short time later, they forsook Jesus and fled. That is why Jesus told them here, “Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.” The word translated “enter into” means *to come into a house or a city*. The disciples were going to come into a time of great temptation because they failed to pray and they would fail that night.

At that very moment, Judas was leading a large group of people to the garden so that he could betray Jesus to them. Luke 22:47-53 says, “And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude;

and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. But Jesus said to him, ‘Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?’ When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, ‘Lord, shall we strike with the sword?’ And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, ‘Permit even this.’ And He touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, ‘Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.’” Here, we see that Judas chose to use a kiss, which normally speaks of love, as the way to betray Jesus.

The disciples suddenly realized what was going to happen. Peter immediately took action. John 18:10 says, “Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.” Since Luke was a doctor, he mentioned that it was the right ear that Peter cut off. Peter was standing next to Christ and was ready to take on a whole army of men. Later that night, he would be sitting around a fire with some of these men and deny that he even knew Jesus. That is why Jesus told the disciples to pray that they would not enter into temptation.

However, we also see that Jesus protected Peter. There were many witnesses there that night who could testify that Peter was guilty of attempted murder. However, Jesus touched the ear of Malchus and healed the ear. Jesus healed people completely so there was no evidence that the ear of Malchus had been cut off. As a result, there was no evidence that anyone could use to convict Peter of attempted murder. At the same time, we do not read that any of those who came to arrest Jesus believed in Jesus that night, even though they saw Jesus perform this miracle. That group included the chief priests, the Levites who kept guard in and around the temple and the Sanhedrin (elders). As a result, this group is called a great multitude in Matthew 26:47 and Mark 14:43.

After healing the ear of the servant, Jesus then asked the entire group that had come to arrest Him a question and also made a statement, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.” Jesus forced the chief priests, the captains of the temple and the elders to think about what they were doing by His question. They had to recognize that they were treating Him like a robber. Jesus actually confronted them by reminding them that they had not tried to seize Him in the temple when he was in the temple each day. However, the most powerful statement about their actions was when He told them that they had chosen to arrest Him under the cover of darkness. This was really evidence of the fact that they knew exactly what they were doing and knew that what they were doing was totally wrong. We want to help our physical and spiritual children realize that when people are doing what they know is evil, they want to use the darkness to hide their sinful deeds.