

Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 8:01 PM

Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study

Last nite's text, John 18:1-19:16, and all three synoptic gospels, record the account of Jesus's betrayal, arrest, and trials before both Jewish and Roman authorities. But it's only when we study all four accounts that we get the full story of what occurred on that fateful nite of His betrayal--and of what was to follow!

All accounts begin with Jesus entering into the garden of Gethsemane with His disciples, with only the synoptic gospels recording Jesus's prayer to His Father, asking "if it is possible to let this cup pass from Him, but yet not My will but Thine be done"! Luke (that would be Dr. Luke) is the only writer to note how the fervency of Jesus's prayer led to His sweat becoming "like drops of blood."

All gospel accounts show Jesus fully aware of, and in complete control over, the events that would transpire. John notes how He actually went out to meet the large band of Roman soldiers and "officers from the chief priests and Pharisees," with the question of who they were looking for--and, when they answered "Jesus the Nazarene," He said: "I am He!" All of which caused them to "draw back and fall to the ground!" Then, according to Luke, He confronted Judas with the question of whether he was "betraying the Son of Man with a kiss." And Matthew records how Jesus addressed him as "friend"--and then instructed him to "do what he came for!" When Peter drew his sword and cut off the right ear of Malchus, the High Priest's slave, Luke (that would be Dr. Luke) writes that Jesus "touched the ear and healed it!" John writes that He instructed Peter to put away his sword and asked, rhetorically, why He should not "drink the cup which the Father had given Him!" Matthew notes Jesus's words that He could have "appealed to His Father...and called on twelve legions of angels...but how then could the Scriptures have been fulfilled?"

Only John records how Jesus, after He was arrested and bound, was first led to appear before Annas, the former High Priest and father-in-law of the then current High Priest, Caiaphas. Matthew, Mark, and Luke provide more details of the later trial before Caiaphas! Matthew notes how "the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus..." But their only real case was made, to their way of thinking, when, in response to their question, Jesus said "yes, He was the Son of God!"--to which they cried out: "Blasphemy!"

And yet unable to put Jesus to death on their own--because of the "people," Matthew writes that they "delivered Him to Pilate, the governor"--bringing all kinds of accusations, none of which were convincing to Pilate! The interactions recorded in the gospel accounts between Jesus and Pilate are revealing! They all point to a Roman leader desperately torn between his own best judgment and the need to placate the Jews! Matthew records how his wife "suffered greatly in a dream because of Jesus" and how she pleaded with Pilate "to have nothing to do with this righteous man." John writes that he was "even more afraid" when he heard that Jesus "made Himself out to be the Son of God." Luke records that when he learned that Jesus was a

"Galilean," he tried to pass the buck to Herod, who "wanted to see Jesus for a long time." When that didn't work, he had Jesus "flogged!" And when that didn't work, he asked the Jews to decide between releasing Jesus or Barabbas!

We can almost feel Pilate's pain as he cries out: "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" (recorded in both Matthew and Mark)--and then his perhaps cynical but nonetheless crucial question to Jesus: "What is truth?" Both questions are just as crucial and applicable today as they were then!

Well we know the eventual outcome! After announcing that he "found no guilt" in Jesus," and "washes his hands in front of the crowd," and claims to be innocent of "this man's blood," Matthew writes that he released Barabbas and, after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified!" Wow!

Of course it was during this time as well that Peter was caught up in his "denial" of "being associated" with Jesus--and this is an issue in all four gospels. Interestingly, only John identifies one of Peter's accusers as being a "relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off"! Luke writes that Peter "went out and wept bitterly"--but it was John who would later witness and record for all posterity how Peter, unlike Judas, would repent and be reconciled with Jesus after His resurrection! And we have to go to Acts to learn of Peter's transformation and leadership in the early church, after Pentecost. And so, Peter's example offers hope for all of us! Which is only one of the many lesson applications we can take from this study!

Well, on to Lesson #32! We're on the home stretch in our study of John! Hang in there, men!

May God bless your week!

Lowell