

## Lesson 52

**Time – 4/2/30 to 4/3/30 AD, 14 Nisan  
From late Tuesday Evening to Early Wednesday Morning  
At the Garden of Gethsemane**

### **The Prayer at Gethsemane**

To put this scene in the proper context we must remember what it was like outside of Jerusalem at Passover. During Passovers in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD, at least a million pilgrims came to Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> There wasn't room inside the city, which usually had a population of only 80,000. As a result, the vast majority of the pilgrims had to camp outside of the city. The preferred spot was among the groves of olive trees on the Mt. of Olives which was the closest to the Temple and was within “a Sabbath Day's walk” according to Acts 1:12. The Garden of Gethsemane was on the Mount of Olives.



### ***Olive Trees on the Mt. of Olives Today***

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<sup>1</sup> According to Josephus, the Jewish High Priest calculated that two and a half million pilgrims attended Passover in 65 AD.

Also, remember that many of the people camped there that night were the same people who had welcomed Jesus into the city with loud acclaim as He came into Jerusalem on the road that wound around the southern and western base of the Mt. of Olives. That had been on Palm Sunday just three days before.

This lesson begins with the arrival of Jesus at the Garden, but first we will revisit the last verse we studied last week. Jesus had just finished His prayer to the Father for His disciples in the upper room. He had also finished His discourse warning the disciples of what was to come during the next 18 hours. As we have seen that discourse and that prayer, which is recorded in John 14 through 17, isn't recorded in Matthew, Mark, or Luke.

John 18:1 “When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley.<sup>2</sup> On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it.”

Here, in the Garden, the accounts of the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) rejoined the timeline in John.

**Matthew 26:36 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.”**

**Mark 14:32 They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.”**

**Luke 22:39-40 Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”**

The name Gethsemane means “oil press.” Gethsemane was evidently a walled off area or garden which contained an olive press. It may have even had a building. This makes sense. This was the Mount of Olives, and this press was probably one of several on the Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives was covered with olive groves, and the presses were used to squeeze the oil out of the olives at harvest time.

Olive oil had two purposes under the Mosaic Law. First, it was to provide the fuel for the lamps in the Tabernacle and later the Temple (Exodus 27:20). Second it was to be the major ingredient of the sacred anointing oil (Exodus 30:23-25). Certainly, it is easy to see analogies of the name Gethsemane to what would happen here. The weight and pressure of what Jesus knew was looming brought so much pressure on Him that His sweat poured out of him like blood (Luke 22:44). What He would undergo proved His Holiness and shed light to the world.

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<sup>2</sup> *The Kidron Valley separated the Temple Mount from the Mt. of Olives.*

The Garden was probably not available to the general pilgrims. It must have been reserved for Jesus and His disciples by the owner. I have often thought it was likely that Lazarus of nearby Bethany was the owner. We know that he was wealthy and important.

After the eleven disciples reached the Garden, Jesus gave this, the first of several warnings advising them to approach the Father in prayer so that they wouldn't fall into temptation.<sup>3</sup> He gave this first warning to all eleven.

**Matthew 26:37-38** **He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee (*James and John*) along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, “My soul is ~~overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death~~ *encompassed with sorrow until death*. Stay here and keep watch with me.”**

**Mark 14:33-34** **He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. “My soul is ~~overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death~~ *encompassed with sorrow until death*,” he said to them. “Stay here and keep watch.”**

Then Jesus took Peter, James, and John a little farther aside with Him. Only Matthew and Mark mention the special participation and subsequent failure of Peter, James, and John in watching with Jesus. John was one of the three, but he modestly never mentioned his part as one of the special three. He skipped over this part.

In both the Matthew and Mark passages I have substituted a better and more literal Greek translation for the NIV translation. It is “My soul is encompassed with sorrow until death.” The word ἕως {he'-ōs} which the NIV translated “to the point of” should be translated - as Thayer's Lexicon puts it “as a conjunction signifying the temporal terminus.” In other words, not “unto” death, but “until death.” The translation given in the NIV is “unto” which signifies “means of.” Jesus' sorrow wasn't going to be the “means of” Jesus' death, but it would accompany Him “until” His death was finished.

**Matthew 26:39a** **Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed,**

**Mark 14:35a** **Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed**

**Luke 22:41** **He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down <sup>4</sup> and prayed,**

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<sup>3</sup> *This wasn't to be a prayer to avoid temptation. It was a prayer to be delivered through it: 1 Corinthians 10:13 “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”*

<sup>4</sup> *Evidently, Jesus first fell to His knees before He prostrated Himself on the ground.*

Afterward He went aside from the three just a little way. It was evidently close enough that they could see Him <sup>5</sup> and hear His prayer. We have already studied the Messianic Psalm 41 that bears on this place of sorrow in Lesson 48:

Psalm 41:3 “The Lord will strengthen him on his couch <sup>6</sup> of sorrow, and restore him from his place of grief.”

Matthew 26:39b **“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”**

Mark 14:35b-36 **that if possible the hour might pass from him. “Abba, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”**

Luke 22:42 **“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”**

This is another of those verses that indicate that in His incarnation Jesus did not have omniscience to see the future except by faith. He had to rely on His faith in the Father’s goodness and truth. He had to believe that, if He were to bring about redemption and reconciliation, retreat from this crisis was impossible. This made the trial of His faith even more difficult. Jesus was reminded that the Father’s knowledge was more perfect than His. He also knew that the Father’s love was the same as His, so He submitted His will to the Father’s. One of the benefits for each of us in going into the presence of God in prayer should be that Christ’s prayer reminds us of who the Father is and how much we can count on the goodness of His plan.

Luke 22:43 **An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.**<sup>7</sup>

This helps to emphasize that the Elect Angels were not passive observers of this drama. They were among those who would be reconciled to God by the Cross as Paul tells us in Colossians:

Colossians 1:19-20 “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all,<sup>8</sup> whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” RST

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<sup>5</sup> Remember this was 14 Nisan, fourteen days after the new moon. It was a full moon.

<sup>6</sup> The two Hebrew words translated “bed” by the NIV in this verse do not necessarily speak of furniture, but merely a place where one lies down (whether on a bed, couch, or the ground). Since a couch was a place of lying down, this may indicate Jesus was on His face.

<sup>7</sup> Edersheim speculated that the angel strengthened Him by telling Him the cup would not be taken from Him.

<sup>8</sup> There is no word in the Greek for “things” as in “all things” as the NIV has it.

**Luke 22:44** **And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was ~~like drops of~~ *thick like* blood falling to the ground.**

As Matthew and Mark recorded below, there were evidently three sessions of Jesus' prayer. During this first session the three stayed awake long enough during Jesus first prayer to see this phenomenon. The Greek does not say it "was like drops of blood," but that is was "thick like blood." We must realize that it was not a night when anyone would usually sweat. It was a cold night – it was April 3, and the guards at the High Priest's house later that night warmed themselves at a fire (Mark 14:54). This sweating could be interpreted several ways. First, perhaps this means that Jesus sweated so profusely that His sweat poured out like blood from a wound. Perhaps it meant that, somehow in that light, it looked like blood. Or perhaps it meant that there was blood mingled with the sweat, or it was blood instead of sweat. Whatever it was, God was using the event to speak of what Jesus was about to undergo in the way of agony, sorrow, and pressure. Within twelve hours His whole face and body would be covered in his own blood. As we will see from Luke below, the sight of this first session of prayer, and the agony Jesus was under must have seriously disturbed the three disciples. Jesus had always been the one who was calm and assured in any situation. Now, for the first time they saw Him in real anguish. That seriously unsettled them. Finally, they must have begun to sense the reality of the horror of what was about to happen to Jesus.

**Luke 22:45-46** **When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."**

**Matthew 26:40-42a** **Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." He went away a second time**

**Mark 14:37-39a** **Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Simon," he said to Peter, "are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." Once more he went away**

Luke recorded the fact that they were exhausted from sorrow. It seems likely that Luke had asked either Peter or John something like; "How in the world could you be sleeping at a time like that?" This was their answer. We know from scripture that Luke was with Paul when he met both Peter and John.<sup>9</sup> By that time James, the third eyewitness in the Garden, had died a martyr's death by execution.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Galatians 2:9*

<sup>10</sup> *Acts 12:2*

Typically, Jesus wasn't upset about how the slumber showed disrespect for Him. He was upset for the disciples who would be more likely to fall to the self-destructive temptation of unfaithfulness. Here Jesus repeated the injunction to pray so that they could stand under the temptation to come. The temptation was to lose faith.<sup>11</sup>

**Matthew 26:42b and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."**

**Mark 14:39b and prayed the same thing.**

This was Jesus' second session of prayer. The disciples stayed awake long enough to hear that Jesus' second prayer was the same as the first. However, again during this period of prayer, His disciples fell asleep.

Luke, writing thirty years after the event based his account on interviews with eyewitnesses. He only recorded one prayer and one rebuke and injunction. The second and third prayers were the same as the first prayer, and the other rebukes and injunctions given by Jesus were the same. As a result they were left out of Luke's gospel as not relevant to the point being made in Luke. The point of the threefold repetition of these things as recorded in Matthew and Mark was to underscore the patience of Jesus with His disciples with their continued failure.

**Matthew 26:43 When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy.**

**Mark 14:40 When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.**

For the second time Jesus found they had sought escape from their grief in sleep.

**Matthew 26:44-45a So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing. Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting?"**

**Mark 14:41a Returning the third time, he said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting?"**

If there ever was a time when Jesus might have lost His patience, this third time might have been the time. He came to His three closest disciples, and they were still sleeping instead of praying. He was about to make a terrible sacrifice for these men, and to the outward view, all they seemed to be concerned with was their own comfort.

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<sup>11</sup> *Romans 14:23b "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."*

**Matthew 26:45b-46** **Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”**

**Mark 14:41b-42** **Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”**

Physically, it was into the hands of the High Priests and the Sanhedrin that He was being betrayed. However, in the deeper spiritual sense, He was being betrayed into the hands of sinners. This betrayal had been begun by Adam in the Garden of Eden four thousand years before when Adam rebelled against God and made Jesus’ sacrifice necessary. It was only fitting that its ultimate fulfillment took place in this other Garden.

### **The Arrest of Jesus**

**John 18:2** **Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples.**

We know from the other Gospels that they had stayed on the Mount of Olives <sup>12</sup> the night before. Almost certainly, they always stayed at the Garden of Gethsemane when visiting Jerusalem. It allowed them some privacy from the crowds. Because of details we will see later in Mark’s Gospel, there is good reason to suppose this was the second place to which Judas guided the arresting party. The first place would have been the upper room where Judas had last left Jesus.

**John 18:3** **So Judas came to the grove, guiding a ~~detachment of soldiers~~ *company* and some officials from the ~~chief priests~~ *High Priests* and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.**

**Mark 14:43** **Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the ~~chief priests~~ *High Priests*, the teachers of the law, and the elders.**

**Matthew 26:47** **While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the ~~chief priests~~ *High Priests* and the elders of the people.**

**Luke 22:47a** **While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them.**

The Greek word in John 18:3 which the NIV translates as a “detachment of soldiers” is *σπεῖρα* {spā'-rā}. The NIV translation isn’t accurate at all. It has led to a serious misapprehension of the

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<sup>12</sup> *John 8:1, Luke 21:37.*

scene here. That Greek word can be applied to any band or company. It can be used for a band or company of soldiers. However, “of soldiers” doesn’t appear in the original Greek text. When  $\sigma\pi\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha$  {spā'-rā} was used to refer to a detachment of Roman soldiers it meant a cohort. A cohort was the tenth part of legion. A cohort consisted of about 600 legionaries. If this word had been used of the arresting party in the other Gospel accounts, it might be an argument for this being a contingent of Roman soldiers as many dramatizations erroneously portray the scene. However, every other gospel account (Matthew 26:47, Mark 14:43, Luke 22:47) refers to this same crowd as an ὄχλος {o'-khlos} which is defined as a crowd, a casual collection of people, a throng, troops of people gathered together without order. A cohort of 600 Roman troops could in no way be defined as a disordered throng. Furthermore, the armament of the men here, as described in the Gospel accounts (swords and clubs) doesn’t match that of Roman troops, which would be swords, spears, and shields. Furthermore, it is extremely unlikely, that the Jews would have invited Gentile Roman soldiers into their High Priest’s courtyard on the day of Passover, as this band or company evidently was. According to Jewish tradition, the presence of Gentiles would have defiled the palace of the High Priest. Furthermore, it is even more unlikely that Pilate, who was in Jerusalem at that time, would ever have given over command of his entire Jerusalem Garrison to the High Priest. Additionally, the account in Matthew indicated that the people sent were all Jews. I suspect that the crowd was made up of Temple guards (they were under the authority of the High Priest Caiaphas) and other servants of the members of the Sanhedrin. I suspect the Temple Guard were not completely trusted to do it on their own because they had been sent to arrest Jesus before and had failed because of the power of Jesus’ teaching (John 7:32-47). We will see that the High Priests (Annas and Caiaphas) never left that arresting company until they had seen Jesus crucified.

**Mark 14:44** Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.”

**Matthew 26:48** Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him.”

Evidently before the arresting party had even arrived at the Garden, Judas had arranged a signal as to who should be arrested. They might have arrested all the disciples. It should be noticed that Judas asked that they only arrest Jesus. He evidently had no animus against the other eleven disciples. However, it should be remembered that Judas had no authority to tell them who they should arrest and who they shouldn’t.

**Luke 22:47b-48** He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

Just a few hours earlier, Jesus had warned Judas: Mark 14:21 “The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

Mark 14:45 **Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him.**

Matthew 26:49 **Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him.**

Judas must have known from their conversation at the Last Supper that Jesus knew that he was there to betray Him. He still hypocritically called Him by the honorific “Rabbi” (Teacher).

Matthew 26:50a **Jesus replied, “Friend, do what you came for.”**

Notice how even at this last moment, in His matchless grace, Jesus offered Judas His friendship by calling him “friend.” Instead, Judas chose to be His enemy.

At this point Judas kissed Jesus. The Gospel of John recorded the next incident which the others omitted. Remember, much of John’s Gospel is about filling in gaps. The incident was important in linking Jesus to the Old Testament shadows of Him.



*Mount of Olives - Looking East from the Temple Mount*

**John 18:4 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, “Who is it you want?”**

Remember, at this point, it was past midnight on a hillside crowded with thousands of pilgrim tents. When He saw the party approaching, Jesus could have easily stepped over the back wall, and disappeared into the crowded hillside and escaped, even without calling on the legions of angels that were at His beck and call.

**John 18:5-6 “Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “I am he,” Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground.<sup>13</sup>**

Where the NIV has “I am he,” the original Greek is only Ἐγώ εἰμι {e-gō' ā-mē'} or simply “I am.” This was the name the LORD gave as His name at the burning acacia tree in Exodus to Moses:

Exodus 3:13-15 “Moses said to God, ‘Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?’ God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: **I AM** has sent me to you.’” God also said to Moses, ‘Say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.”

This was the name that the Jews would not even pronounce. They supposedly held it in too much reverence. This was the name that knocked these Jews to the ground involuntarily, probably on their faces where they should have been to begin with if they had acknowledged who He was. At the original event in Exodus this is what the LORD had said:

Exodus 3:5b “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”

These two words “I am.” were probably the “two swords” that Jesus meant would be “enough” of a defense in Luke 22:38.

**John 18:7-8a Again he asked them, “Who is it you want?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” “I told you that I am he,” Jesus answered.**

Undoubtedly, after the men had recovered their feet and their composure, Jesus asked them again who they wanted. He answered again “I am” but this time they were allowed by God to

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<sup>13</sup> See Mark 13:5-6 in corrected translation: “Jesus said to them: ‘Watch out that no one deceives you. Many will come in my name, claiming, **I am,**’ and will deceive many.’” See also Luke 21:8 and John 13:19 in the literal translation.

stand. Remember, among those knocked on their faces before Jesus were not only the armed men, but the teachers of the Law (Pharisees) and the elders (members of the Sanhedrin) who had accompanied them. Remember, this group of prostrate men actually included the High Priests, Annas and Caiaphas (Luke 22:52). This experience did not humble them. Instead, it stiffened their resolve to do their best to humiliate and kill Jesus, their Messiah.

**John 18:8b-9** “If you are looking for me, then let these men go.” This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: “I have not lost one of those you gave me.”

This referred to Jesus earlier prayer for His Disciples in the upper room in John 17:6-12. It had concluded with:

John 17:12b “None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.”

**Mark 14:46** The men seized Jesus and arrested him.

**Matthew 26:50b** Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him.

Probably, many of the men, having been embarrassed by their earlier involuntary obeisance on the ground at Jesus feet, responded with even more violence than was necessary.

**John 18:10** Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the High Priest’s servant,<sup>14</sup> cutting off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.)

**Matthew 26:51** With that, one of Jesus’ companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the High Priest, cutting off his ear.

**Mark 14:47** Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the High Priest, cutting off his ear.

**Luke 22:49-50** When Jesus’ followers saw what was going to happen, they said, “Lord, should we strike with our swords?”<sup>15</sup> And one of them struck the servant of the High Priest, cutting off his right ear.

Only John, writing of these events more than 60 years later, recorded the name of the one whose ear was cut off. It was Malchus. He was merely a *δοῦλος* {dü'-los}. That means he was a slave or menial servant of the High Priest. Why did John record it, and why had the name stuck in his mind all those years? I believe that it was because this wasn't the last time that John encountered Malchus. By some means Malchus had made a lasting impression on John. When

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<sup>14</sup> The Greek word *δοῦλος* {dü'-los} which means slave or menial servant.

<sup>15</sup> Remember, they had two (Luke 22:38).

specific names are mentioned in the Gospels it is often because those names were expected to be recognized by the readers of the time. I believe it is likely that Malchus was named because he became a believer who John subsequently came to know as a brother. As the servant (or slave) of the High Priest he may have even become one of the earliest martyrs for the name of the One who healed his ear and “his spiritual hearing.” The name Malchus is derived from the Hebrew word for “king.” It may have been his salvation name.

**John 18:11a Jesus commanded Peter, “Put your sword away!”**

**Matthew 26:52a “Put your sword back in its place,”**

**Luke 22:51a But Jesus answered, “No more of this!”**

Jesus put a swift end to the violence which could have resulted in injury to His disciples.

**John 18:11b Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?”**

Although in his Gospel, John didn't record Jesus' prayer in the Garden, here He recorded how Jesus referred to the prayer He had just prayed. He reminded Peter, who had wielded the sword, of what he had heard Jesus pray: “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”

**Matthew 26:52b Jesus said to him, “for all who draw the sword will die by the sword.**

This is often misquoted as “Those who live by the sword will die by the sword.” It is thus misused to justify pacifism and the refusal to go to war. Pacifism is certainly not endorsed by the Bible. Much of Deuteronomy 20-24 dealt with how the people of Israel were to conduct war. I must argue that this is really dealing with taking up the sword to oppose the rule of law. In that case, one can expect to die by the sword of the law. That isn't to say that opposing unjust laws is necessarily wrong. It only says what one should expect from such actions. The mission of Jesus' disciples wasn't to change human governments. It was to change human hearts. When hearts are changed governments always improve.

Considering the prominent use of the sword as a figure for the cross, it might not be amiss to see this statement of Jesus as having a deeper meaning. Perhaps it was really meant to apply to Satan and his followers. Satan would try to destroy Jesus by the sword (the cross), but Satan would wind up being destroyed by the Cross.

**Matthew 26:53 Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?**

Twelve legions in the Roman Army came to 60,000 men. Perhaps these legions of angels were the very host of angels that had rejoiced at His birth and hovered over Shepherd's Field outside of Bethlehem (Luke 2:13-15). Perhaps they had been a permanent standing guard since then.

**Matthew 26:54** **But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"**

Everything that was to follow had been written in Scripture. It had to happen in just the way it would.

**Luke 22:51b** **And he touched the man's ear and healed him.**

It doesn't say He picked up Malchus' ear and reattached it. That would have been miracle enough. Instead, He evidently just touched Malchus' ear and it was regenerated while the old ear was lying on the ground. It was a great metaphor for the healing of understanding which the Holy Spirit could bring.

**Matthew 26:55a** **At that time Jesus said to the crowd,**

**Luke 22:52a** **Then Jesus said to the ~~chief priests~~ *High Priests*, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him,**

Here in Luke, we are given the best census of the crowd that came to arrest Jesus. They not only included the two High Priests, Annas and Caiaphas, but many of the elders (the Sanhedrin). We know that the crowd had also included servants like Malchus. We are also told that it included the officers of the Temple Guard. That tells us that much of the "company" was made up of the Temple Guard. They would have been the ones carrying swords. The servants would have been the ones carrying clubs.

**Matthew 26:55b** **"Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me?"**

**Mark 14:48** **"Am I leading a rebellion," said Jesus, "that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me?"**

**Luke 22:52b** **"Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs?"**

Everything Jesus had done to that time had been legal. That is one of the reasons He had shut down the violence of Peter. Jesus hadn't broken the Laws of Moses or the laws of the Romans. Because these Jews knew they were the ones breaking the Law of Moses, they were afraid of the people. However, they treated Jesus as if He was the one inciting revolt.

**Matthew 26:55c** **Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me.**

Mark 14:49a **Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me.**

Luke 22:53a **Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me.**

The fact that they had never dared to lay hands on Him in the presence of the people proved their guilt.

Matthew 26:56a **But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.”**

Mark 14:49b **But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.”**

This was to remind His Disciples that all that would happen was in God’s will and was the fulfillment of prophecy.

Luke 22:53b **But this is your hour—when darkness reigns.”**

This was addressed to His enemies, above all Satan. This was the hour for which Jesus had come. Darkness would reign. God would not limit the attempt of Satan to extinguish the light of Christ. On the other side of that “hour,” the light would shine like the sun.

Matthew 26:56b **Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.**

Mark 14:50 **Then everyone deserted him and fled.**

As we shall see, some fled out of the Garden and kept going. Peter and John evidently just fled out of sight in the darkness, but then turned around to follow the torches of the arresting party.

Mark 14:51-52 **A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.**

Mark gives us the story of a late arriving and mostly undressed participant who was probably the writer himself. He evidently made the mistake of trying to follow within the sight of the arresting party. Alfred Edersheim, in his Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, explains the significance of Mark’s observation: “To us at least it seems most likely, that it (the house where the Last Supper was held) was the house of Mark’s father (then still alive), a large one, as we gather from Acts 12:13. For, the most obvious explanation of the introduction by St. Mark alone of such an incident as that about the young man who was accompanying Christ as He was led away captive, and who, on fleeing from those that would have laid hold on him, left in their hands the inner garment which he had loosely cast about him, as, roused from sleep, he had rushed into Gethsemane, is, that he was none other than St. Mark himself. If so, we can understand it all: how the traitor (Judas) may have first brought the Temple-guards, who had

come to seize Christ, to the house of Mark's father, where the Supper had been held, and that, finding Him gone, they had followed to Gethsemane, for 'Judas knew the place, for Jesus oft times resorted thither with His disciples, and how Mark, startled from his sleep by the appearance of the armed men, would hastily cast about him his loose tunic and run after them; then, after the flight of the disciples, accompany Christ, but escape intended arrest by leaving his tunic in the hands of his would-be captors.'"

**John 18:12-13** **Then the detachment of soldiers crowd <sup>16</sup> with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the High Priest that year.**

**Luke 22:54** **Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the High Priest.**

As we shall see, the houses of Caiaphas and his father-in-law Annas evidently shared a courtyard. Joseph Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas. He had been appointed by the Roman procurator Gratus in 18 A.D. He then served 18 years or until 37 A.D. which was the same year that Pontius Pilate was replaced as Governor and Herod Antipas was replaced as ruler of Galilee. This was also the year in which the Roman Emperor Tiberius, having died, was replaced by Emperor Caligula.

### **Thumbnail Sketch of Annas**

Annas,<sup>17</sup> the son of Seth was appointed by Cyrenius Roman governor of Syria as officiating High Priest in 6 A.D. He served in that capacity until 14 A.D. He lived until 67 A.D. when he was at least 90. He conducted what is usually called the first trial of Jesus which we will see in the next lesson. That "trial" amounted to a private interrogation before Jesus' general trial. Although no longer retaining the post of "officiating" High Priest in the Temple, at this time, Annas still retained the honor of being called by the title "High Priest." That is why he and his son-in-law Caiaphas are called jointly the High Priests. However he retained the powerful office of President of the Sanhedrim. We saw that office in operation when he conducted the trial of Peter and John in Acts 4:6. Annas was the true supreme power of the Jewish religious establishment and held that position for most of the last 60 years of his life. After his son-in-law Caiaphas left the office of officiating High Priest, he was able to secure the appointment of five other sons to that office before the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. In 52 AD he was sent to Rome by the Roman governor of Syria to be tried before Claudius concerning an outbreak between the Jews and the Samaritans. The fact that he was sent to Rome to have his case heard by the Emperor indicates that Annas, like Paul, had been given Roman citizenship. He was evidently exonerated as he was returned to his offices and to Judea.

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<sup>16</sup> *The word the NIV translates "detachment of soldiers" is same Greek word σπεῖρα {spā'-rā} as occurs earlier in the third verse of this chapter.*

<sup>17</sup> *He was called Ananus by Josephus.*

The account of Annas' behavior close to the end of his long, wicked life was given by Josephus in his Antiquities of the Jews:

“But as for the high priest, Annas he increased in glory every day, and this to a great degree, and had obtained the favor and esteem of the citizens in a signal manner; for he was a great hoarder up of money: he therefore cultivated the friendship of Albinus (the Roman governor), and of the High Priest, by making them presents; he also had servants who were very wicked, who joined themselves to the boldest sort of the people, and went to the thrashing-floors, and took away the tithes that belonged to the priests by violence, and did not refrain from beating such as would not give these tithes to them. So, the other high priests acted in the like manner, as did those his servants, without any one being able to prohibit them; so that some of the priests, that of old were wont to be supported with those tithes, died for want of food.”

### **The Misleading Translation - “Chief Priests”**

The Greek for “High Priest” in the nominative masculine singular is ἀρχιερεύς {ar-khee-er-yuce'}. It is always translated “High Priest.” However, the Greek for “High Priests” in the nominative masculine plural is ἀρχιερείς {ar-khee-er-ace'}. Instead of being translated as “High Priests” as it should, the word is translated 60 times as “chief priests.” The one time the word is correctly translated “High Priests” is in Luke 3:2a which says “while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests.” All 16 English translations of the New Testament that I looked at made the same mistake. However, the Latin Vulgate had it correct in Latin and the Spanish Reina Valera had it correct in Spanish. I can only generously suppose that the English translators thought that since there was only supposed to be one High Priest, they would not pluralize the word out of respect to the Law of Moses. In the process, they obscured the meaning.

According to the Law of Moses there could only be one High Priest, who served until his death. However, beginning with the corrupt reign of Herod the Great, the High Priesthood became a revolving door of temporary political office. There were serving High Priests, and former High Priests. All were called High Priest for the remainder of their lifetimes, and they all retained positions of authority in the Sanhedrin. Later, during the time of Acts, there were as many as seven living High Priests at one time. Only the serving High Priest officiated in the Temple. However, during the time of Christ's ministry there were only two living persons who were called High Priest. They were Caiaphas who was the serving High Priest, and Annas who was honorary High Priest. When the Gospels refer to the “High Priests” it is referring to those two men who are identified here as the moving figures in the arrest, trials, and crucifixion of Jesus.

### **Psalm 109 - Another Messianic Psalm**

When Paul said, “We have the mind of Christ,” he wasn't talking about the New Testament. He was talking about the Old Testament. At the time he wrote that sentence in 1 Corinthians 2:16 (57 AD), only four other books of the New Testament had been written.<sup>18</sup> However, with the

life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for the first time the Old Testament had been revealed in its full meaning. We have the testimony of Jesus Christ himself that the Old Testament was full of prophecies and scriptures which spoke of Him. Witness the following passage in Luke:

Luke 24:44 “He (Jesus) said to them, ‘This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.’”

When we study the Psalms which were written in the voice of the Messiah we have an unparalleled opportunity to comprehend the mind of Christ. We can begin “to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you (*we*) may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:18b-19)

Here we will study Psalm 109 which is quoted in the New Testament as speaking of Jesus Christ. Like many of the rest of the 1<sup>st</sup> person Messianic Psalms, it was written by David, though it is manifestly not about David.

### ***Psalms 109***

Verse 8 of Psalm 109 was quoted by Peter in Acts 1. There he indicated that he understood that Psalm 109 spoke of Jesus Christ. Peter also made it clear that Psalm 109 dealt with the betrayal by Judas Iscariot. This is the passage from Acts 1:

Acts 1:15-20 “In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, “Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus-- he was one of our number and shared in this ministry.” (With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) “For,” said Peter, “it is written in the book of Psalms, “‘May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,’ and, ‘May another take his place of leadership.’”

The manner of Judas Iscariot’s death was also related in Matthew:

Matthew 27:3-5 “When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the high priests and the elders. ‘I have sinned,’ he said, ‘for I have betrayed innocent blood.’ ‘What is that to us?’ they replied. ‘That’s your responsibility.’ So, Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away

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<sup>18</sup> *Matthew, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, and Galatians.*

and hanged himself. The high priests picked up the coins and said, ‘It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.’ So they decided to use the money to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners.”

We can conclude from the two passages together that Judas hanged himself and then he fell into the valley below. This would have been the result of one of two things. Either the branch from which he hanged himself broke, or the belt or sash with which he hanged himself snapped.

Acts 1:20 actually contained two quotations from the Messianic Psalms, which both referred to the betrayal by Judas Iscariot. The first quotation, “may his place be deserted,” was from Psalm 69. We studied that in detail in Lesson 13. The second quotation, “May another take his place of leadership,” is from the Psalm we are looking at now.

The one who was betrayed in the Psalm is the “I” and “me” of the Psalm. That makes the voice of the Psalm the voice of Jesus Christ. The subject of the first part of the Psalm is the opposition of Jesus’ enemies and the betrayal of Judas.

**Psalms 109**  
**For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.**

The superscription is part of inspired scripture. Although the Psalm was written down by David, it was written as the Holy Spirit came upon him and flowed out through his pen. Thus, the real author was the omniscient God, who could see these things a thousand years before they happened. This Psalm is badly translated by the NIV, so I have liberally substituted from other translations. I have always noted which translation I have used for the substitution.

**Psalms 109:1-2 O God, whom I praise, do not remain silent, for wicked and deceitful men have opened their mouths against me; they have spoken against me with lying tongues.**

This described Jesus’ trial before Annas, the Sanhedrin, Herod Antipas, and Pontius Pilate. Jesus had stood silent against the charges made by liars. He had longed for the Father to vindicate Him, but He had to wait.

**Psalms 109:3a With words of hatred they surround me;**

Jesus had testified to their enmity before: John 7:7 “The world -- hates me because I testify that what it does is evil.”

**Psalms 109:3b they attack me without cause.**

John 15:25 “(Jesus speaking) But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: ‘They hated me without reason.’”<sup>19</sup>

They hated Jesus because He exposed their sin. They had no real justification for hating Him. After all, He had come to pay the penalty for that sin.

**Psalms 109:4a For my love they are my adversaries, KJV**

They repaid His love by becoming His adversaries. This was still speaking of all those who took the part of being Jesus' adversary at his trial. The Hebrew word translated here as "adversary" is שָׂטָן {sä-tan'} or Satan. That of course is one of the names of "that old serpent," the Devil. In other words, they took the part of Satan. While He came offering His love, they turned on Him with their hatred.

**Psalms 109:4b but I am a man of prayer.**

Jesus did not spend His time conspiring against the rulers of Judah. He spent His time in prayer. Powerful teaching and miracles came as a result. They came because His prayers brought Him perfectly in tune with the will of the Father.

**Psalms 109:5 They repay me evil for good, and hatred for my friendship.**

Jesus was always willing to have an open and friendly discussion with these men. He often broke bread with the Pharisees. Here however, at the mention of friendship, the Psalm switches from the plural "they" to the singular "he" and "him." This is where the subject switches to the most bitter betrayal of all, that of His own disciple, Judas Iscariot.

**Psalms 109:6a Let evil govern him; RST (my translation)**

Literally translated this should be "Give him over to evil." There is no word for "man" in the original Hebrew.<sup>20</sup> There is only the Hebrew adjective רָשָׁע {rä-shä'} which means "evil." Implied are "evil deeds." In Romans Paul talked about what happened to those who kept resisting the truth: Romans 1:28 "Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done."

**Psalms 109:6b and let Satan stand at his right hand. KJV**

The Hebrew word which some have translated "accuser" is the Hebrew word שָׂטָן {sä-tän'} from which we get the name "Satan." The King James Version has it translated just that way. Since

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<sup>19</sup> See also *Psalms 35:19, Psalms 38:19, Psalms 69:4, and Lamentation 3:52.*

<sup>20</sup> *The NIV translation is "Appoint an evil man to oppose him;"*

we are told by the testimony of Peter that this is talking about Judas Iscariot, we can see to what this was referring. It happened twice:

Luke 22:3-4 “Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the High Priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus.”

John 13:27 “As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. “What you are about to do, do quickly,” Jesus told him.”

**Psalms 109:7a When he is tried,**

Judas was never tried in a court. He was tried by his own conscience.

**Psalms 109:7b it shall come to pass that he is found guilty, RST**

The verb here for “found guilty” is in the Qal imperfect. There is not an imperative here in the Hebrew. Whenever a Qal imperfect is translated as an imperative, as the NIV has done, it is a subjective translation. This is the NIV translation: Psalms 109:7 “When he is tried, let him be found guilty, and may his prayers condemn him.” I believe what I have suggested is more accurate than the NIV which has it translated in the imperative. The accurate translation therefore does not suggest that Judas was predestined to betray Christ, only that he was foreknown to do it.

**Psalms 109:7c and his prayers will condemn him. RST** (*my translation of verse 7*)

When Judas tried to repent in his own legalistic way, he had to condemn himself. Unfortunately, because he had never learned to accept God’s grace, he tried to atone for his sin himself by committing suicide.

**Psalms 109:8a His days are few; RST**

In verses 8-15 we also have subjunctives erroneously translated as imperatives. Because the verbs are not translated as imperatives, they are understood as prophecies rather than as curses. There are no imperatives here but only statements of what would happen. I have changed the translations to reflect that. What I have given is very similar to Young’s translation.

**Psalms 109:8b another will take his place of leadership. RST**

This verse was quoted by Peter in Acts 1:20 to justify his action in replacing Judas among the twelve disciples of Jesus. He understood correctly that this meant that Judas would be replaced. I believe that he was wrong in thinking Judas would be replaced by means of an election and lottery. I believe that scripture indicates that Paul was the Apostle who the Lord Himself chose.

**Psalms 109:9 His children will be fatherless and his wife a widow. RST**

This tells us something about Judas Iscariot that we did not know from the New Testament. He was married with more than one child. We certainly know that many of the other disciples were married according to Paul's testimony:

1 Corinthians 9:5 "Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers <sup>21</sup> and Cephas (Peter)?"

**Psalms 109:10-11 His children will be wandering beggars; they will be driven from their ruined homes. A creditor seizes all he has; strangers plunder the fruits of his labor.**

This may tell us something of why Judas was moved by thirty pieces of silver to arrange for the High Priest a convenient opportunity to arrest Jesus privately. He was evidently improvident for his family.

**Psalms 109:12 No one extends kindness to him or takes pity on his fatherless children.**

This would not justify the lack of mercy shown by men to his children. It only reflected what would happen.

**Psalms 109:13 His descendants are cut off, their names blotted out from the next generation.**

In the culture of Israel, a man's main concern was the extension of his lineage. It was considered his duty to get married and have children. Evidently, none of Judas' children would survive to have children of their own. One of the reasons that I believe this section can't be translated with imperatives is that such a translation would imply that the LORD was judging the children of Judas for Judas' sins, which is against the law of the LORD:

Deuteronomy 24:16 "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin."<sup>22</sup>

**Psalms 109:14 The iniquity of his fathers (ancestors) is remembered before the LORD; the sin of his mother is never blotted out.**

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<sup>21</sup> This indicates that at least several of the Lord's brothers went out from Jerusalem to preach the gospel. We know that Jude (Judas) went to Antioch. (Acts 15:22) James seems to have stayed in Jerusalem as leader of that church until his death. Simon became Bishop of Jerusalem very much later (about 100 AD). About Joseph we hear very little after he was nominated to become one of the twelve apostles. Acts 1:23.

<sup>22</sup> This passage is quoted in 2 Kings 14:6 and 2 Chronicles 25:4. This concept is also stated in Jeremiah 31:30, Ezekiel 18:4.

This wasn't talking about Judas' biological father, or his sins. This was talking about the whole history of the people of Israel. They are referred to here as Judas' "fathers" or ancestors. This also wasn't talking about Judas' biological mother, but Israel. Ezekiel used the same metaphor to refer to Israel as a mother of the people of promise:

Ezekiel 19:10-13 "Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard planted by the water; it was fruitful and full of branches because of abundant water. Its branches were strong, fit for a ruler's scepter (*the LORD's provision*). It towered high above the thick foliage, conspicuous for its height and for its many branches. But it was uprooted in fury and thrown to the ground (*the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah*). The east wind made it shrivel, it was stripped of its fruit; its strong branches withered and fire consumed them. Now it is planted in the desert, in a dry and thirsty land (*the Babylonian exile*).

The sins referred to in verse 14 were not personal sins or the Israelites inherited sinfulness.<sup>23</sup> All of those sins would be covered by Jesus' death on the cross. This is talking about the one unforgivable sin, which was the sin of unbelief. It was the sin of rejecting the LORD's free gift of salvation. This was the sin of many of Judas Iscariot's ancestors (Judas' fathers) and mother (Israel) for most of their generations. It was the guilt which would create a permanent barrier to fellowship with God.

Numbers 14:18 'The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.'

We know that this can't be talking about holding Judas' ancestors or parents responsible for his sin. Like the case with children (verse 13), that is against the law of the LORD. Parents are not held responsible for the sins of their children:

Jeremiah 31:30 "Instead, everyone will die for his own sin; whoever eats sour grapes--his own teeth will be set on edge."

Ezekiel 18:4 "For every living soul belongs to me, the father as well as the son--both alike belong to me. The soul who sins is the one who will die."

**Psalms 109:15 Their sins always remain before the LORD, so that he cuts off the memory of them from the earth.**

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<sup>23</sup> *Psalms 51:5 "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."*  
*Romans 8:3 "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."*

The sin of unbelief could never be forgiven. In eternity they would be cut off from the LORD's kingdom on earth.

**Psalms 109:16a For he never thought of doing a kindness,**

John described Judas in John 12:6 “He did not say this (that money should be collected for the poor) because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief.”

**Psalms 109:16b ~~but hounded to death the poor and the needy and the brokenhearted but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart. KJV~~**

I have substituted the more literal Kings James translation. Verse 22 of this Psalm makes it clear that “the poor and the needy” and “broken in heart” was the speaker, who is Christ.

**Psalms 109:17-18 He loved to pronounce a curse -- it came back on him; he found no pleasure in blessing-- it departed from him. He wore cursing as his garment; it entered into his body like water, into his bones like oil.**

Remember, there was much in the character of the disciple Judas Iscariot that was like that of Satan, who had been a guardian cherub in the throne room of God.<sup>24</sup> John 6:70 “Then Jesus replied, ‘Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!’”

**Psalms 109:19 It was like a cloak wrapped about him, like a belt tied forever around him.**

Judas wrapped himself in his pride and arrogance. Edersheim suggests that Judas hung himself with his belt or sash, which this would seem to confirm. This verse suggests a figure of the physical source of his self-destruction.

**Psalms 109:20 May this be the LORD's payment to my accusers,<sup>25</sup> to those who speak evil of me.**

Although the rest of the Lord's accusers at His trial, including Satan, did not commit physical suicide, they had committed the same kind of spiritual suicide. That suicide would last “forever.”

**Psalms 109:21 But you, O Sovereign LORD, deal well with me for your name's sake; out of the goodness of your love, deliver me.**

Here the Lord turned His thoughts away from the treachery of Judas and the Jewish leaders and focused on the character of the Father.

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<sup>24</sup> *Ezekiel 28:14 “You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones.”*

<sup>25</sup> *The word for “accusers” here is from the Hebrew שָׂטָן {sä-tan'} or Satan.*

**Psalms 109:22 For I am poor and needy,**

For our sakes Jesus himself became the poor and needy: 2 Corinthians 8:9 “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

**Psalms 109:22b and my heart is wounded within me.**

Yet, although Jesus had known what was going to happen, His heart was truly wounded by the abandonment, betrayal, and hatred that He experienced.

**Psalms 109:23 I fade away like an evening shadow; I am shaken off like a locust.**

There are some authorities who assert that the Hebrew word for locust was also applied to cicadas. If that is the case here, the image is clear. Before entering the final phase of its life, a cicada sheds or molts the skin of its former body and leaves it hanging on a tree. Even so, Jesus Christ died on a tree (the cross) before He was raised again. Also, He died just as the shadows of the three- hour darkness faded away.

**Psalms 109:24 My knees give way from fasting; my body is thin and gaunt.**

This, along with Psalm 69:10, which we studied earlier, indicated that Jesus did a lot of fasting that last week as He spent a lot of time in prayer. He also undoubtedly must have spent every other spare minute teaching His disciples so that they would be prepared for the shock of His death.

**Psalms 109:25 I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, they shake their heads.**

Matthew recorded exactly this event as Jesus hung on the cross:

Matthew 27:39-40 “Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, ‘You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!’”

**Psalms 109:26 Help me, O LORD my God; save me in accordance with your love.**

Neither the power nor the motive of the cross was comprehended by Satan. Satan could never understand the love of God.

**Psalms 109:27 Let them know that it is your hand, that you, O LORD, have done it.**

The cross and the resurrection were surrounded by both fulfilled prophecy and miracles to show that everything was as the Father had always planned.

**Psalms 109:28-29** **They may curse, but you will bless; when they attack they will be put to shame, but your servant will rejoice. My accusers will be clothed with disgrace and wrapped in shame as in a cloak.**

At almost the very moment when Satan thought he had won Jesus proclaimed, “It is finished!” Satan thought Jesus had come as the Messiah so that He could establish His kingdom. Satan didn’t understand that Jesus’ real mission was to proclaim His love which was God’s love. At that point Satan must have begun to realize that he had actually helped the LORD fulfill His plan. He had never understood the hidden wisdom of God. Paul had pointed that out in 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 2:7-8 “No, we speak of God’s secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age<sup>26</sup> understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

However, Satan did his best to recover from his shock. He and the enemies of the LORD are still at work today. Sometimes they seem to have truth on the run. However, ultimately, they and their lies will be “clothed with disgrace.”

**Psalms 109:30-31** **With my mouth I will greatly extol the LORD; in the great throng I will praise him.<sup>27</sup> For he stands at the right hand of the needy one, to save his life from those who condemn him.**

Even in the midst of His betrayal and abandonment, Jesus focused on the sure promises of the Father. We need to do the same in the comparatively small trials that the LORD allows in our life.

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<sup>26</sup> *Satan - Ephesians 6:12 “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”*

<sup>27</sup> *This throng may speak of the spirits Christ preached to in Hell before His resurrection: 1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built.”*