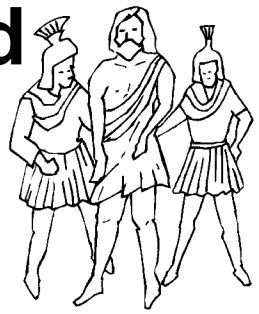
The Great "I AM" is Arrested



John 18:1-11
10-5-2025

Introduction: vv.1-3

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I. *Jesus gave Himself to be arrested* even though <u>HE KNEW EVERYTHING</u> that would happen to Him (v.4)

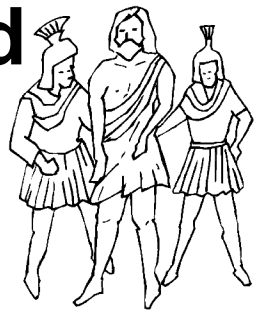
II. *Jesus gave Himself to be arrested* even though <u>HE WAS THE GREAT "I AM"</u> (JEHOVAH GOD) (v.5-6)

III. *Jesus gave Himself to be arrested* but would <u>PROTECT HIS DISCIPLES</u> at this time and suffer alone (v.7-9)

IV. *Jesus gave Himself to be arrested* and <u>DIDN'T NEED ANYONE TO DEFEND HIM</u> (v.10)

V. *Jesus gave Himself to be arrested* because He was about to <u>DRINK THE BITTER CUP OF SUFFERING</u> and <u>FULFILL THE FATHER'S WILL</u> (v.11)

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It's common for those who live in a big city like ours to experience the arrest of suspected criminals. I recall several instances of people being hand-cuffed just outside the front door of our inner-city church.

In most cases the hand-cuffed person is guilty of a crime of some sort; in some cases the person tries to resist arrest.

Here in John 18:1-11, we have the arrest of One who was not guilty of any crime; yet despite His innocence He did not try to resist arrest, although He had all power to do so.

"John's account (of the betrayal) emphasizes the poise of Jesus and His readiness to be taken, making needless the treachery of Judas on the one hand and the attempted display of loyalty by Peter on the other" (Wycliffe, p. 1113).

v. 1
"When Jesus had spoken these words" – After Jesus finished interceding on behalf of His disciples and having prayed for their unity, He goes forward to fulfill the work necessary to make their unity possible. The hour had now come for Him to suffer and die as the Passover Lamb to provide redemption for you and me.

"Over the brook Cedron" – This small flowing stream in the Kidron Valley was situated east of Jerusalem just down the hill from where the Temple stood. What is significant about this brook at this Passover time of the year is that it would have been red with blood.

As the blood of thousands of sacrificial lambs was shed at Passover on the Temple Mount, the blood would flow down from Jerusalem into the Kidron Valley. So as Jesus walks over this crimson stream, He would be reminded of His own blood which was about to be shed at this Passover.

The word "brook" (*cheimarrou)* was an old word meaning "flowing (*roos, reo*) in winter (*cheima*)." This brook was always dry except after a heavy rain during the rainy season of winter. At Passover the river would flow not with water but with blood.

"The Kidron had special historical significance, for King David crossed the Kidron when he was rejected by his nation and betrayed by his own son, Absalom (2 Sam. 15; also note John 18:23). Jesus had been rejected by His people and at that very moment was being betrayed by one of His own disciples! It is interested that David's treacherous counselor Ahithophel hanged himself (2 Sam. 17:23), and David's treacherous son Absalom was caught in a tree and killed while hanging there (2 Sam. 18:9-17). Judas, of course, went out and hanged himself (Matt. 27:3-10)." (Wiersbe, p. 372-373).

"A garden" – This is the garden of Gethsemane (a place filled with olive trees, located on the western slope of the Mount of Olives (Mt. 26:30). This quiet place was where Jesus often resorted with His disciples to avoid the noise and distractions of the city and to spend time alone in fellowship (Lk. 22:39; see Jn. 18:2).

--Do you have your garden of Gethsemane?

Although it was not John's purpose to detail the events of Gethsemane, the other Gospel writers describe some of the events that took place there. See: Luke 22:39-46.

The name "Gethsemane" means "oil press." It was here that the soul of Jesus would be crushed and out of His very pores would flow as it were blood.

v. 3
"A band of men" – normally a group of 600 Roman soldiers (a "*spira*" – a military cohort from the Antonia Fortress), plus officers (temple police) from the Jewish authorities.

Why so many? They were fully aware of Jesus' power; in case He would offer resistance, they thought they had better be ready.

These soldiers were armed with **"lanterns and torches and weapons."** The weapons included "swords and staves (clubs)" (Mt. 26:47).

**** No man could take the Life of Christ, unless He gave it up. Though He could have destroyed all of His enemies, He surrendered Himself voluntarily to die for you and me!***

I. *Jesus gave Himself to be arrested* even though <u>HE KNEW EVERYTHING</u> that would happen to Him (v.4)

The great Knowledge of Jesus regarding all things (including the future) is evident in Scripture:
Peter said to Jesus "Lord, thou knowest all things" (Jn. 21:17)

John 1:48
Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.
John 2:24
But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,
John 4:18

For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.
John 4:29
Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

Because Jesus knew that this was His hour to fulfill the Passover sacrifice by the voluntary sacrifice of Himself, He **"went forth."**

He saw them coming for Him and He went forward to meet them. He willingly offers Himself by taking the initiative and moving forward to hand Himself over.

[In the chronology of events, Jesus would have first met Judas, who led the way for the soldiers and greeted Christ with a kiss of betray. Why a kiss? He wanted to give Jesus the appearance that he had nothing to do with the arrest.]

II. ***Jesus gave Himself to be arrested*** **even though <u>HE WAS THE GREAT "I AM"</u> (JEHOVAH GOD) (v.5-6)**

v. 5
"I AM" – Note the **"He"** is italicized by the translators. In actuality, all Jesus said was, "I AM." The soldiers' reaction to the phrase "I AM" in v. 6 indicates that there was more to Jesus' words than what it seemed.

SEE: Exodus 3:1-15 for the full significance of the name "I AM."

Jehovah is the "I Am" (Ex. 3:14).
Jesus is the "I Am" (Jn. 8:58, 59; 18:5-8).

John 8:58 - "Before Abraham was, I am" **-** Before Abraham lived, I am alive.

It is interesting to note that the most grammatically correct way of stating pre-existence would be to say, "Before Abraham lived, I lived."

But Jesus did not intend that His hearers miss His loaded point. His point is this: Not only did I exist before Abraham, but I am the eternal "I AM" – the God who appeared to Moses at the burning bush (SEE Exod. 3:13-14).

Exodus 3:13-14
And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

The phrase “I AM” was the equivalent to the word *Yahweh* or Jehovah. (the Hebrew words “I AM” and *Yahweh* are related terms).

Jesus is the great “I AM” of:

Isaiah 41:4
Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he.

Isaiah 43:13
Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?

v. 6
John, in keeping with His purpose to present the deity of Christ, adds a detail that the other Gospel writers did not record. This added significant detail was the initial reaction to Jesus words, “I AM.”

As soon as the words “I AM” came out of His mouth, the whole band of hundreds of armed soldiers was blown backwards and helplessly fell down to the ground. The force of His identification of Himself as the “I AM” hit them like a hurricane wind (EX: the Memorex commercial) and drove them away from His holy and powerful presence.

Here Jesus fulfills Psalm 27:2 -
When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

As they fell to the ground, Jesus could have kept them there; but in order to fulfill His purpose for coming into the world, He allows them to get up and arrest Him.

Who is Jesus? He is the great “I AM” – the self-existent One, the eternal *Yahweh* – He is Jehovah God. He shares the same attributes and <u>name</u> as God the Father.

Proverbs 30:4
Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?

The soldiers falling to the ground and “biting the dust” showed Who was really in charge here at the Garden of Gethsemane. It was Jesus!

The Bible speaks of demon-possessed people who could break the chains that bound them. Jesus could have resisted arrest and broken any hold they would place on Him and set Himself free, but instead He willingly gives Himself.

III. *Jesus gave Himself to be arrested* but would <u>PROTECT HIS DISCIPLES</u> at this time and suffer alone (v.7-9)

v. 8

Here Jesus does not allow His words "I AM" to have the same affect again. He will now allow Himself to be arrested, and He will allow His disciples to be set free.

They had enough soldiers to adequately arrest all of the disciples, but at this hour Jesus speaks up for their freedom so as to fulfill His prayer of John 17:12.

"Let these got heir way" – Jesus' defense of His disciples would allow them the opportunity of living through His death, resurrection and ascension, and to experience the baptism of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

They would also be part of the newly-born Church; they would minister as evangelists and would spread the Gospel; and some of them, such as Matthew, John, and Peter, would be used to write Scripture.

God was not finished with their lives yet. And until God is completed in using our lives on earth, nothing can end our lives.

IV. *Jesus gave Himself to be arrested* and <u>DIDN'T NEED ANYONE TO DEFEND HIM</u> (v.10)

Impetuous Peter in an attempt to fulfill his "fight to the finish" vow which he gave t the Last Supper, swings his sword and with bad aim misses Malchus' head and neck and cuts off his right ear.

As the ear falls to the ground and blood gushes from the side of his head, Jesus puts the ear back on to him and heals it instantly (Lk. 22:51).

"Peter, with his usual impulsiveness, jerked out his sword and cut off the right ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest. Peter missed the man's head as he swerved to his left. . . There was peril to Peter in his rash act, as comes out later (John 18:26)." (Robertson, p. 285)

"Jesus did not need Peter's protection. He could have summoned legions of angels had He wanted to be delivered." (Wiersbe, p. 374)

Matthew 26:52-54

Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. [53] Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? [54] But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

Jesus didn't need Peter's help and God does not need any of our misguided attempts to work for Him by taking matters into our own hands in the flesh and according to our will, not God's will.

V. *Jesus gave Himself to be arrested* because He was about to DRINK THE BITTER CUP OF SUFFERING and FULFILL THE FATHER'S WILL (v.11)

The death of Christ was not an accident or a mistake in God's plan (as the cult leader Sun Myung Moon teaches); rather, it was part of God's eternal intention.

That abhorrent cup of suffering, humiliation and death, which Jesus dreaded (Lk. 22:39-46) was to be drunk by Jesus. It was the Father's will for Jesus to endure the most horrible suffering ever experienced in order to provide mankind with forgiveness of sin.

"The drinking of a cup is often used in Scripture to illustrate experiencing suffering and sorrow. When Babylon captured Jerusalem, the city had 'drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling' (Isa. 51:17). Jeremiah pictured God's wrath against the nation as the pouring out of a cup (Jer. 25:15-28). There is also a cup of consolation (Jer. 16:7) and the overflowing cup of joy (Ps. 23:5).

"Jesus had compared His own sufferings to the drinking of a cup and the experiencing of a baptism (Mt. 20:22-23). When He instituted the supper, He compared the cup to His blood, shed for the remission of sins (Mt. 26:27-28). The image was a familiar one to His disciples, and it is not an unfamiliar image today. To 'drink the cup' means to go through with a difficult experience; and 'not my cup of tea' means saying not o a certain course of action. The fact that some trophies are designed like cups suggests that winners have been through demanding experiences and had to 'swallow a lot.'

"Jesus was able to accept the cup because it was mixed by the Father and given to Him from the Father's hand. He did not resist the Father's will, because He came to do the Father's will and finish the work the Father gave Him to do. 'I delight to do Thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within my heart' (Ps. 40:8). Since the Father had mixed and measured the contents of the cup, Jesus knew He had nothing to fear.

"This is a good lesson to us: we need never fear the cups that the Father hands to us. To begin with, our Savior has already drunk the cup before us, and we are only following in His steps. We need never fear what is in the cup because the Father has prepared it for us in love." (Wiersbe, p. 374-5).

CONLCUSION:

Everything about John 18:1-17 shows Jesus being totally calm and under control of the situation.

1) His initiative in “going forth” to meet His arrestors (v. 4)

2) His question (whom seek ye” so as to save His disciples from danger

3) His power over His captors (v. 6)

4) His gracious healing of His captors’ ear (v. 10)

5) His stated purpose to drink the cup about to be served to Him (v. 11).

Jesus is still in control of all things today! Trust Him!