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By Dan Maines

John 18

John 18:1

When Jesus had spoken these words, He went away with His disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden which He entered with His disciples.

† The Kidron Valley had deep symbolism, associated with judgment and purification (2 Samuel 15:23; 2 Kings 23:6). Jesus entered Gethsemane, the place of His final surrender.

† Josephus (Wars 5.4.1) mentions the Kidron Valley near Jerusalem, emphasizing its proximity to the temple and the

Mount of Olives.

John 18:2-3

Now Judas, who was betraying Him, also knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with His disciples. So Judas, having obtained the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, *came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.*

† Judas exploited intimacy for betrayal. The torches highlighted the irony of seeking the Light of the world in darkness.

† Tacitus (Histories 5.9) notes Roman patrols in Jerusalem, fitting the description of armed cohorts.

John 18:4-6

Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, came out into the open and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "I am He." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. Now then, when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

† The divine "I am" revealed His authority. His enemies fell backward, showing His power even in arrest.

John 18:7-9

He then asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; so if you are seeking Me, let these men go on their way." This took place so that the word which He spoke would be fulfilled: "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one."

† Even in betrayal, Jesus protected His disciples. His word was fulfilled in their preservation.

John 18:10-11

Then Simon Peter, since he had a sword, drew it and struck the

high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus. So Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, am I not to drink it?"

† Peter's zeal misunderstood Christ's mission. Jesus accepted the Father's cup, submitting to God's will.

† Chrysostom noted Peter's rashness contrasted with Christ's patience.

John 18:12-14

So the Roman cohort, the commander, and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him, and brought Him to Annas first; for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was in their best interest for one man to die on behalf of the people.

† Political power, not justice, drove the trial. Caiaphas' earlier words (John 11:50) were now fulfilled in God's providence.

John 18:15-18

Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in. Then the slave woman who was the doorkeeper said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the slaves and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, because it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.

† Peter's first denial revealed fear in contrast to his earlier zeal. The setting by the fire foreshadowed his coming shame.

John 18:19-21

The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues and in the temple area, where all the Jews congregate; and I said nothing in secret. Why are you asking Me? Ask those who have heard what I spoke to them; look: these people know what I said."

† Jesus exposed the illegality of the trial. His teaching was public, transparent, and witnessed by many.

John 18:22-23

But when He said this, one of the officers, who was standing nearby, struck Jesus, saying, "Is that the way You answer the high priest?" Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?"

† Jesus' calm response revealed injustice. Violence replaced truth in His unlawful trial.

John 18:24-27

So Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. Now Simon Peter was still standing and warming himself. So they said to him, "You are not one of His disciples as well, are you?" He denied it, and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the high priest, who was related to the one whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" Peter then denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

† Peter's threefold denial fulfilled Jesus' prophecy. His pride gave way to fear, leaving him humbled.

John 18:28-32

Then they brought Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter the Praetorium, so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover. Therefore Pilate came out to them and said, "What

accusation are you bringing against this Man?" They answered and said to him, "If this Man were not a criminal, we would not have handed Him over to you." So Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your Law!" The Jews said to him, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." This happened so that the word of Jesus which He said, indicating what kind of death He was going to die, would be fulfilled.

† Hypocrisy was evident: they avoided ritual defilement while plotting murder. Roman authority ensured crucifixion, fulfilling prophecy.

John 18:33-36

Therefore Pilate entered the Praetorium again, and summoned Jesus, and said to Him, "You are the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own, or did others tell you about Me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed You over to me; what have You done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not from here."

† Jesus declared His kingdom spiritual, not political. His mission transcended earthly power.

John 18:37-38

Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this purpose I have been born, and for this I have come into the world: to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to My voice." Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And after saying this, he came out again to the Jews and said to them, "I find no grounds at all for charges in His case."

† Jesus bore witness to truth itself. Pilate's cynical question revealed his blindness.

† Philo (On Dreams 2.18) wrote of truth as God's essence, contrasting with Pilate's skepticism.

John 18:39-40

"But you have a custom that I release one prisoner for you at the Passover; therefore do you wish that I release for you the King of the Jews?" So they shouted again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a rebel.

† The crowd chose a violent rebel over the Prince of Peace. Their rejection fulfilled the pattern of preferring false saviors.

How it applies to us today

† Jesus submitted to betrayal and unjust trial, showing sovereignty even in suffering.

† His "I am" still causes His enemies to fall.

† The kingdom of Christ is not of this world, but of truth and eternal life.

† We are warned against Peter's failure and called to boldness in testimony.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Josephus, Wars 5.4.1 – Kidron Valley

† Tacitus, Histories 5.9 – Roman patrols

† Chrysostom, Homilies on John – Peter's rashness

† Psalm 41:9 – prophecy of betrayal

† Philo, On Dreams 2.18 – truth as divine essence

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