

## Matthew Chapter 26 Second Continued

**Matthew 26:31 "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."**

“Be offended” (see verse 56). The Greek word is the same word Jesus used (in 24:10), describing the falling away and spiritual treachery that would occur in the last days. Here however, Jesus spoke of something less than full and final apostasy. In a moment of fleshly fear they disowned Christ (verse 34), but He prayed that their faith would not fail (Luke 22:32; John 17:9-11), and that prayer was answered. The verse Jesus quotes here is (Zech. 13:7).

This is an interesting Scripture. Judas was not now with them, he had already gone to do his deceptive work. Jesus was speaking to the remaining eleven. He told them that for a time they too, would lose their faith and some would sin

Jesus is the Shepherd. The Shepherd leads His sheep. When the Shepherd is not there to lead them, the sheep scatter. Fear would grip the disciples and cause them to flee as we see (in verse 56).

**Matthew 26:32 "But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."**

This does not mean they would not see Him until then, He was seen by the apostles several times before they saw Him in Galilee (Luke 24:15, 24, 36; John 20:19, 26). But His supreme post-resurrection appearance was in Galilee, where “He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at once” (1 Cor. 15:6).

Jesus continued to promise that He would rise again. The disciples seemed to just ignore this, or else they did not believe Him. He was even telling them that He would come to them in Galilee.

**Matthew 26:33 "Peter answered and said unto him, Though all [men] shall be offended because of thee, [yet] will I never be offended."**

Peter was brave at this point, because Jesus had not yet been taken by the authorities. Pretty soon he would be put to the test. We will see in the face of death, and a cruel death at that, if he would still feel as brave. Peter was saying in essence, they may all run, but I won't.

**Matthew 26:34 "Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice."**

“Before the cock crow”: The rooster would begin crowing about 3:00 a.m. (Mark 13:35). Though Peter and all the disciples insisted that they would never deny Christ (verses 33, 35), they were only a few hours away from fulfilling this prophecy (verses 74-75; Mark 14:66-72).

Jesus again had foreknowledge of Peter and his actions when he was frightened. He said, Peter, you will not only deny me, but it will be tonight, and you won't deny me once, but three times.

**Matthew 26:35 "Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples."**

When Jesus had spoken of the denial, Peter knew that the desire of his heart was to stand with Jesus. He said over again, I will not fail you; I will stand, and he had every intention of doing just that. It would not be many hours until this would be tested.

“Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee”: He does not take the warning which his Lord gave him, he trusts in the warm, sincere attachment to Christ which he now feels, not considering that this must speedily fail, unless supported by the power of God.

Verses 36-39: “Gethsemane” means “Olive Press” and was a lush garden east of the city near the slopes of the Mount of Olives. Jesus often resorted there for peace and quiet. He took the same inner circle as at the Transfiguration (Peter, James and John), further into the garden.

“My soul is exceeding sorrowful” is found in the Greek Septuagint version of (Psalm 43:5). The prayer for the “cup” to “pass” is not due to Jesus’ fear of death. Jesus questions the “will” of the Father as to the necessity of drinking the cup.

While this may refer to death (“he tasted death”), it is more likely that the cup represents the wrath of God against sin, the divine wrath Christ would incur on the cross as man’s sin-bearer. In the awful anguish of that moment, the sin of the world was poured on Christ and He became “sin for us” (2 Cor. 5:21). Thus, the Righteous One dies a substitutionary death for guilty mankind.

**Matthew 26:36 "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder."**

“Gethsemane” is the garden spot on the western slope of the Mount of Olives where Jesus frequently went (John 18:1-2; Luke 22:39-40). The temple lay directly opposite it across the Kidron Valley. It was the place of Christ’s agonizing prayer, Judas’s betrayal, and Christ’s arrest (Luke 22:39-54).

A garden of ancient olive trees is there to this day. Judas’ familiarity with Jesus’ patterns enabled him to find Jesus there, even though Christ had not previously announced His intentions.

Jesus, while He was housed in His body here on the earth, from time to time went aside to pray to the Father. He wanted to be alone with the Father, so He asked the disciples to wait at the bottom of the hill.

**Matthew 26:37 "And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy."**

“And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee”: That is, James and John (Matthew 10:2). On two other occasions, he had favored these disciples in a particular manner, suffering them to go with him to witness his power and glory, namely at the healing of the ruler's daughter (Luke 8:51), and at his transfiguration on the mount (Matthew 17:1).

“Sorrowful”: Affected with grief.

“Very heavy”: The word in the original is much stronger than the one translated "sorrowful." It means to be pressed down or overwhelmed with great anguish. This was produced, doubtless by a foresight of his great sufferings on the cross in making an atonement for the sins of people.

**Matthew 26:38 "Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me."**

“Sorrowful, even unto death”: His anguish had nothing to do with fear of men or the physical torments of the cross. He was sorrowful because within hours the full cup of divine fury against sin would be His to drink.

Jesus again, had taken Peter, James and John with Him. They were carried closer to where He would go and pray than the others, but they did not go all the way. Jesus was living in a body of flesh, and He would feel pain as any other person; so this was a sorrowful time. What He was really asking these three to do was to pray and watch with Him.

John was John the beloved. He loved Jesus so dearly. Peter and James had been with Jesus on so many special occasions, and they too loved Jesus. These three seemed to have a special closeness with Him.

**Matthew 26:39 "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou [wilt]."**

“This cup”: A cup is often the symbol of divine wrath against sin in the Old Testament (Isa. 51:17, 22; Jer. 25:15-17, 27-29; Lam. 4:21-22; Ezek. 23:31-34; Hab. 2:16). The next day Christ would “bear the sins of many” (Heb. 9:28), and the fullness of divine wrath would fall on Him (Isa. 53:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:21). This was the price of the sin He bore, and He paid it in full. His cry of anguish (in 27:46), reflects the extreme bitterness of the cup of wrath He was given.

Jesus was not looking forward to the pain and humiliation of the cross. He was in the flesh and knew there would be great pain involved in this type of death. But I believe more than the pain, He dreaded becoming sin itself and having the Father turn His back to Him, if even for a moment.

**Matthew 26:40 "And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"**

“And findeth them asleep”: It may seem remarkable that in such circumstances, with a suffering, pleading Redeemer near. Surrounded by danger, and having received a special charge to watch, that is not to sleep, they should so soon have fallen asleep.

It is frequently supposed that this was proof of wonderful stupidity, and indifference to their Lord's sufferings. The truth is however, that it was just the reverse; "it was proof of their great attachment, and their deep sympathy in his sorrows."

Luke has added that he found "them sleeping" for sorrow, that is "on account" of their sorrow; or their grief was so great that they naturally fell asleep. Multitudes of facts might be brought to show that this is in accordance with the regular effects of grief.

This was very disappointing to Jesus. These three trusted disciples, after Jesus had asked them to watch and wait, had gone to sleep.

The flesh part of Jesus needed their caring. What a time to let Him down. Peter had just bragged that he never would. I do not know whether the hour was a real hour, or just a span of time. At any rate, these three disciples' human weakness was showing.

**Matthew 26:41 "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed [is] willing, but the flesh [is] weak."**

“The flesh is weak”: The tenderness of this plea is touching. Christ Himself was well acquainted with the feeling of human infirmities (Heb. 4:15), yet without sin. At that very moment He was locked in a struggle against human passions which, while not sinful in themselves, must be subjugated to the divine will if sin was to be avoided.

As God, He knew the needs of the people and was willing to go through with this terrible death to save the world.

**Matthew 26:42 "He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."**

“He went away again the second time”: To the same place as before, or at some little distance; after he had reproved his disciples for their sleeping. And had exhorted them to watchfulness and prayer, suggesting the danger they were liable to, and the condition they were in.

“And prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done”: The sense of this prayer to his God and Father is, that if his sufferings and death could not be dispensed with; if it was not consistent with the decrees of God, and the covenant of grace, that he should be excused from them.

Or if the glory of God and the salvation of his people required it, that he must drink up that bitter cup, he was content to do it. Desiring in all things to submit unto, and to fulfill his Father's will, though it was so irksome and disagreeable to nature.

**Matthew 26:43 "And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy."**

"And he came and found them asleep again": For they were aroused and awaked, in some measure, by what he had said to them. But no sooner was he gone but they fell asleep again, and thus he found them a second time. For their eyes were heavy; with sleep through fatigue, and sorrow.

Mark adds, "neither wist they what to answer him" (Mark 14:40). They were so very sleepy, they knew not how to speak; or they were so confounded, that he should take them asleep a second time. Especially after they had had such a reproof, and exhortation from him, that they knew not what answer to give him. Who probably rebuked them again, or gave them a fresh exhortation.

**Matthew 26:44 "And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words."**

"And he left them, and went away again": At some little distance from them; they being so overpowered with sleep, that he could have no conversation with them. And prayed the third time; as the Apostle Paul did, when under temptation for the thorn in his side. He prayed thrice that it might depart from him (2 Corinthians 12:8).

“Saying the same words”: The Arabic version renders it, "in the words which he before expressed". And Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads, "he said the same prayer"; not in the selfsame words, or in the express form he had before delivered it. For it is certain, that his second prayer is not expressed in the same form of words as the first.

The sense is, that he prayed to the same purpose. The matter and substance of his prayer was the same, namely, that he might be exempted from suffering. But if that could not be, he was desirous to be resigned to the will of his heavenly Father, and was determined to submit unto it.

We see here again, that Jesus returned to the Father a third time. Jesus surely felt left alone by His earthly friends and companions. They (Peter, James, and John), did not feel the urgency that Jesus did, because, really, they had no idea what was about to take place.

They were exhausted after the recent activities, even though it was not their desire to sleep, they did anyhow.

**Matthew 26:45 "Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take [your] rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."**

“Sleep on now, and take your rest”: Perhaps it might be better to read these words interrogatively, and paraphrase them thus: Do ye sleep on still? Will no warnings avail? Will no danger excite you to watchfulness and prayer? My hour, in which I am to be delivered up, is at hand. Therefore now think of your own personal safety.

“The Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners”: The Gentiles or heathens, who were generally distinguished by this appellation from the Jews. Here it probably means the Roman cohort that was stationed on festivals for the defense of the temple. By the Romans he was sentenced to death; for the Jews acknowledged that they had no power in capital cases.

Here we see that Jesus had lined up His will with the Father's will. There was no more need for prayer. It was settled. Jesus knew that even though the Father did not remove the cup, He (the Father), would be with Him to strengthen Him. When we are sure something is the will of the Father, it is easier to bear.

Jesus was fully aware of the urgency of the hour. He knew that Judas was on his way with Roman soldiers and people from the town to apprehend Him. He had prayed through, and He was ready.

**Matthew 26:46 "Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me."**

"Rise, let us be going": Not to run away from the enemy, but to meet him. This was said, partly to arouse his sleepy disciples; and partly to show his love to his Father, and his submission to his will. He was free from those agonies and dreadful apprehensions of things, he was but a little while ago possessed of. And likewise, to signify his willingness to be apprehended, and to suffer, and die.

“He is at hand that doth betray me”: This shows his omniscience: he not only knew, as he did from the beginning, who should betray him; but he knew when he would do it; and he knew where the betrayer now was, that he was just now coming upon him, in order to deliver him into the hands of sinful men.

And this he spoke with intrepidity of soul, with greatness of mind, being no more concerned about it, than when he gave him the sop, and bid him to do what he did quickly. He does not mention his name; nor did he ever, when he spoke of him as the betrayer.

### **Matthew Chapter 26 Second Continued Questions**

1. How many of His disciples did Jesus say would be offended that night?
2. When the Shepherd is smitten, what happens to the sheep?
3. How many disciples were still with Jesus?
4. What was Jesus really saying would happen to them?
5. What province would Jesus go into after He had risen?
6. What encouragement was Jesus still giving the disciples?
7. Which disciple quickly said even if the others be offended, he would not?

8. What was Jesus' answer to him?
9. He said though I should \_\_\_\_\_, yet I will not deny thee.
10. Jesus went to what garden with His eleven disciples?
11. What did He tell them to do while He prayed?
12. What is the proper name for an olive press?
13. What three disciples did Jesus take part way with Him?
14. What two things did He ask them to do?
15. Why was He sorrowful?
16. What did Jesus say in His prayer?
17. More than the pain, what did Jesus dread?
18. When He came back from the three disciples, what were they doing?
19. What did Jesus tell them to watch and pray for?
20. By Jesus praying more than once, what does this tell us?
21. When Jesus came back to the disciples the third time, what did He say to them?
22. Who is the Son of man betrayed into the hands of?
23. Why did Jesus tell them to rise?
24. Who was coming with Judas after Jesus?