

I. **Celebrating Christ as the I Am.**

Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. John 8:58. This identifies Jesus with Yahweh of the Old Testament. The same root word.

II. **Read this week's story: Matthew 26: 36-56; Mark 14: 32-50; Luke 22: 39-53; John 18: 1-12 DA 74 and background.**

III. **For Meditation:**

- a. As Christ felt His unity with the Father broken up, He feared that in His human nature He would be unable to endure the coming conflict with the powers of darkness. In the wilderness of temptation the destiny of the human race had been at stake. Christ was then conqueror. Now the tempter had come for the last fearful struggle. For this he had been preparing during the three years of Christ's ministry. Everything was at stake with him. If he failed here, his hope of mastery was lost; the kingdoms of the world would finally become Christ's; he himself would be overthrown and cast out. But if Christ could be overcome, the earth would become Satan's kingdom, and the human race would be forever in his power. With the issues of the conflict before Him, Christ's soul was filled with dread of separation from God. Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world, the separation would be eternal. He would be identified with Satan's kingdom, and would nevermore be one with God. DA 686
- b. In Matthew 26:40 Christ asks the disciples if they can watch and pray with Him. The word "watch" is used about 70 times in scripture. What do you think Christ was asking the disciples to do when watching and praying? We are also asked to watch and pray. What does this mean to you? _____
- c. The Depth of Christ's agony,. "Behold Him contemplating the price to be paid for the human soul. In His agony He clings to the cold ground, as if to prevent Himself from being drawn farther from God. The chilling dew of night falls upon His prostrate form, but He heeds it not. From His pale lips comes the bitter cry, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." Yet even now He adds, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." DA 687
- d. Why do you think Jesus often had Peter, James and John with Him on special occasions? Was this favoritism or do you see another reason? _____
- e. After all the training and close fellowship Judas enjoyed with Jesus, what was the motive and emotion behind the kiss? Matthew 26: 49 _____
- f. After the statements of commitment that they would be willing to die for Him, why did the disciples all run away in Gethsemane? Matthew 26: 56 _____
- g. In Luke 22: 43 it says that an angel came and ministered to Christ. Have you personally experienced the ministry of an angel? _____
- h. Does Christ sometimes find us "sleeping" when He needs us to share His agony over a lost world? _____

IV. **Prayer this week:**

1. Five People who need your prayer support;
2. Your Church in its witness for Christ;
3. Your Family it will be close and united.
4. The leaders of your church, conference, city and province.
5. That you will have the courage to leave your comfort zone to fulfill a calling from God.

Background

Thursday— From the Last supper to His trials (Starts the day in the Mount of Olives and ends with a night of trials mostly at Caiaphas' palace)

As I embark on this part of the story in the countdown toward Calvary, it seems appropriate to pause and thank Jesus for all He has done to provide for our salvation. "Thank You Jesus for your pain and death on our behalf!"

I will first give a chronology of the events of the day(Times are suggestion, not known exactly)—then have some devotional comments.

Chronology of Thursday's events--Mid-afternoon: Preparation for Last Supper. 6 pm: Last Supper: Preceded by Jesus washing their feet, they sang Psalms 113-118 at this event; Following the supper on the way to Gethsemane He gave the passionate messages and prayer recorded in John's gospel (John 14-17)—Judas left after the supper to betray Jesus); Perhaps around 10 am they arrive in Gethsemane and Jesus prays His most agonizing prayer asking His disciples to pray with Him. Around 12 midnight: Judas and the mob capture Jesus and take him to trial—the disciples flee; around 1-2 am the appearance before Annas occurs where Jesus' face is slapped; Trial before Annas and Caiaphas and other Sanhedrin members 2-3 am; (During the night Peter denies Jesus three times outside Caiapha's palace. Today a bronze statue is there picturing Peter in denial); a night appearance before the Sanhedrin where religious leaders seek to form a basis for condemnation 3-4 am: then just after the break of dawn 5-5:30 am, another meeting with the Sanhedrin—they condemn Him for blasphemy (Saying He claimed to be the Son of God). The reason for this second meeting is that no trials were to be allowed at night where death might be a penalty.

Judas left three meetings to negotiate with religious leaders on the betrayal—Saturday night, Tuesday night and Thursday night. How could he have been in fellowship with Jesus and the other disciples during the day while planning betrayal at night?—sin leads to strange behavior.

In the garden of Gethsemane, the disciples (Peter, James and John) fell asleep during Jesus greatest moments of agony in prayer. Jesus said, "Could you not watch with me one hour?" Perhaps during this unusual time of Covid 19 when we have more time than usual at Easter, we could spend time reading and praying through the accounts surrounding Calvary in the gospels and even the book *Desire of Ages*: Matthew 26-28; Mark 14-16; Luke 22-24; John 19-21; DA 685-795 (Free Online).