

Arrested by the Savior

John 18:1-11

Over the centuries, many have tried to make sense of the life and death of Jesus Christ. Some, like Albert Schweitzer, concluded that Jesus was a mere man who was dominated by the expectation of the coming of God's kingdom who in desperation tried to force its coming by seeking his own death. In contrast, *the apostle John portrayed Jesus as the sovereign Lord who was in control of all the terrible events surrounding his death.*

John's account emphasizes that Jesus suffered voluntarily (4, 8, 11), his suffering fulfilled God's divine plan (4, 9, 11), and it showed his majesty (6).

After teaching his disciples and praying in the upper room (John 13-17), they left and crossed over the Kidron Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane (1).

A drain ran from the temple altar down to the Kidron ravine to drain away the blood of sacrifices. At the time of the Passover, more than 200,000 lambs were sacrificed. When Jesus and his band cross the Kidron, it was red with the blood of sacrifice.

By mentioning a garden, John seems to be making a deliberate comparison with the original Garden of Eden

Garden of Eden	Garden of Gethsemane
Adam began life	Jesus came at the end of his life
Adam was deceived by Satan	Jesus was betrayed by Judas
Adam sinned	Jesus overcame sin
Adam fell	Jesus conquered
Adam hid himself	Jesus boldly presented himself
The angel's sword was drawn	Jesus told Peter to sheath his sword
Death born out of life	Life born out of death

There is a gap between verses 1 and 2 that is filled in by the accounts in the other gospels. Jesus prayed for about three hours and experienced intense agony as he wrestled with the reality of what was to come (Matthew 26:37-44). Jesus repeatedly fell to the ground "and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him" (Mark 14:35). His anguish was so great that his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground (Luke 22:44).

Jesus deliberately went to a place where Judas anticipated he would go (2). Jesus was not trying to avoid arrest.

Judas brought with him Roman soldiers (200-600 men) as well as Jewish religious officials (3). They were prepared to restrain anyone who might oppose their plan to arrest Jesus.

Jesus knew their intentions and took the initiative to approach the group (4).

Jesus responded, "I am he," to their statement that they were seeking Jesus of Nazareth (5-6). Overwhelmed by his statement of his deity and majesty, the group fell back in fear and dismay.

Being a commanding leader, Jesus sought to make sure his followers were safe (7-9). This was a preview of his work on the cross.

Simon Peter had previously stated his willingness to die for Jesus. Perhaps he thought he could at least go down fighting. Drawing his small sword or long knife, he cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, Malchus (10).

Jesus told Peter to put his sword away (11) and he healed Malchus' ear (Luke 22:51).

Earlier in the garden, Jesus wrestled with the terror of the cup, saying "Not my will, but yours be done" (Matthew 26:39, 42). Now he sovereignly says, "Shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?" Jesus was committing himself to doing the Father's will.

Principles to Practice

Trust the One who is in control of the details of life.

Trust the One who willingly went to the cross.