

## Episode #935 Matthew 26 Part 8-Arrest Without Resistance

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord and His disciples had just been accosted in the garden by a crowd of soldiers from the chief priests and elders. Judas identified Him to them by showing Him affection, and they laid hold on Him and arrested Him.

III. Betrayed in the Garden. Matthew 26:47-56.

- A. Verse 51. John reveals this was Peter. The Lord had stretched out His hand to Peter to catch him when he had started to sink while walking on water. Here, he stretches out his hand to defend the Lord, but the Lord did not seek defense. In this case this is not the figure Polysyndeton, for there are NOT many “ands” here in Greek, but only one. We would note the parallel with Greek here, that there are four verbs followed by four direct objects. Bullinger says this is “the bondservant,” marking a special body-servant of the high priest. Peter was aiming for a ringleader. No doubt Peter was aiming for his head. He was a fisherman and not a soldier, and what was probably a wild swing either missed, or the man moved enough to have only this result.
- B. Verse 52. Note that Matthew does not mention that He healed the ear (Luke does). “Perish” is *apollumi*, or to be destroyed. This is an important kingdom principle, that anyone who takes the sword in the kingdom will perish with the sword. Violence will not be allowed in any case. Vengeance for wrongs will belong totally to the Lord. Any who dare violence in that day will be dealt with by God’s government. (Of course, the exception would be when the Lord commanded them to take up the sword, as He will do at the final showdown with the forces of the antichrist.) The Lord appeals to this future reality to argue why Peter should not act in such a way now.
- C. Verse 53. “Do you think” or is it your opinion? “Cannot” is *ou dunamai*, that I am not inherently able to? “Pray” is *parakaleo*, entreat favor as a Paraclete. Bullinger suggests that the twelve legions was a legion apiece; one for Himself and one for each of His eleven apostles. A Roman legion apparently was defined differently at different times, but it was roughly 6,000 men (with perhaps 700 or more horsemen attached to them), which would make more than 72,000 angels (with 8,400 horsemen). The 600 or so soldiers who had been sent to arrest Him would have no chance against such a force! Yet the Lord did not ask for this, and so did not receive it. That was not His plan.
- D. Verse 54. “Fulfilled” is *pleroo*, filled full, completed, proven true once again. The Scriptures about His suffering could not have become true if He had acted thus. “Must” is *dei*, it is necessary and proper for it so to be. The disciples had no idea why it was necessary that this be so, but we realize that God’s kingdom and our forgiveness could never have been accomplished without His sacrifice. This was proper and necessary, for it was all part of God’s perfect plan.
- E. Verse 55. “Multitudes” means crowds, describing the force that came against Him. The religious leaders were taking no chances, and wanted to make Him appear as dangerous a criminal as they could. If He had called twelve legions of angels, as He could have done, their precautions would have been vain. As it was, they were unnecessary except for public relations purposes, for He had no plan but to surrender.

1. Notice who the “crowds” were here. This shows us that the “crowds” who cheered Him at His triumphal entry were not the only “crowds” in Jerusalem. Those crowds are often slandered and libeled by being mixed up with these “crowds,” but the two are separate and distinct.
  2. There were two thieves crucified with Him, but this was a terrible misrepresentation. He never stole anything from anyone, nor did anything wrong at all. The leaders who arrested Him, on the contrary, were thieves, Matthew 21:13.
  3. This was the way a teacher would do it at the time: he would teach from a sitting position.
  4. “Temple” is *hieron*, the temple grounds, and not the holy building in the center. This shows that it did little harm to the Lord for Judas to betray Him. He makes it plain that they could have arrested Him any day. The chief priests and scribes were buying a betrayer with the thirty pieces of silver, and not just the ability to arrest Him.
- F. Verse 56. “Fulfilled” is again *pleroO* or filled full, completed. All the disciples had sworn up and down they would never abandon Him. He was unwilling to fight these enemies who came out to arrest Him, submitting to the will of God, yet the disciples were prepared to do no such thing. They never imagined just standing there to be arrested! Now when the time comes, they are not so bold as they had claimed they would be in advance.

#### IV. Trial Before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin. Matthew 26:57-68.

- A. Verse 57. “Led” means they led Him forth to present Him to them. This kind of leading often indicates a leading to present. Caiaphas was the high or literally the chief priest. He was the high priest, but this is the same word as we had three times earlier in Matthew, and twice had translated as “chief priests” when it was plural. Caiaphas was there, the high priest, and guilty, but other chief priests were with him in this. Remember the scribes and elders were assembled to plot this against Him in 26:3. Now they are carrying out their plot. Notice that the Pharisees are not mentioned by name in this connection, nor are the Sadducees. Yet the majority of the priests were Sadducees, and many of the elders would have been Pharisees. This is the group He had torn apart verbally in His confrontation with them in Matthew 21-23. “Assembled” is *sunagO*. This word indicates an official assembly, but we would doubt very much that this was a legal assembly.
- B. Verse 58. “Followed” is the same word as when he left his nets and followed Him back in Matthew 4:20. He is still following Him, for which we commend him, but this time “afar off.” Yet we can at least credit Peter with enough courage to do this. It will not work out well for him, however. “Went in” means into the courtyard. Again, this was brave. Yet here was Peter’s difficulty: he sat with the scornful, and he would not be blessed because of it. See Psalm 1:1. “The end” means the outcome or the result.

VI. Conclusion: The Lord refused to fight back against those who came to arrest Him. He could have called twelve legions of angels to protect Him, but He must go through with what the Scriptures say must be. The disciples, seeing He is going to simply surrender, all flee. Yet Peter follows Him from a distance to see what happened. This was brave, but poor Peter will not do so well later on, as we will see. May we all look to the Lord, for His power is the only thing we can rely on in the hour of severe trial.