

"Gethsemane"

Have you ever been so troubled and brokenhearted that you wished you could die? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're exploring the prayer of Jesus at Gethsemane. Stay tuned.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Scriptures speak to us about every aspect of life, the happy and the sad, the victories and defeats, and the moral and immoral. Through it all, God gives us promise and hope. He offers us healing for our wounds, encouragement when we lose heart, and the promise of everlasting life. Scripture provides us with real life events that inform us of what He can do to help us through the struggles of life. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

What if you knew you would suffer and die before the day was over? How would you pray? Of all the challenges that Jesus faced, none was greater than what He faced at the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus went there at midnight and spent three hours praying because He needed to talk with His Father in heaven. He predicted His upcoming death, how one would betray Him, how one would deny Him, and how all of them would be scattered. He knew they would be disheartened and would doubt that He would be raised from the dead.

We all face times of great heartache and trouble. Though Jesus was the Son of God, He faced those things at Gethsemane. He walked this earth knowing that He would be despised and rejected. We may not face a cross that will cause our execution; but we too face rejection, failure, and disappointment. Jesus turned to the Father in prayer, and I hope on your darkest night you too will turn to God in prayer. Jesus prayed to do what was right and best for all, and God heard His prayer. If you ask God's help to do what is right, God will hear your prayer too.

We offer this study on Gethsemane free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have many free programs and materials on our website, www.searchtv.org. You can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Hebrews 5:7 to 9, and examine the Lord's prayer at the garden of Gethsemane.

Our reading today comes from the book of Hebrews chapter 5 verses 7 to 9. And discusses Jesus' prayers while He is at Gethsemane and what He prayed.

In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

Oh how thankful we should be that Jesus was willing to die for us. To obey His Father. And it encourages us to obey Him. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful for the sacrifice of Jesus. Father we're so sorry that He had to endure such pain and suffering. But we're thankful that He loved You Father and that He loved us enough to be willing to die for us. Father just as He obeyed we pray that You will help us to be obedient in all things. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

The Lord Jesus had an extensive prayer life. He loved and needed to remain close to His Father in heaven. Jesus frequently prayed before speaking, acting, through difficult times, or making decisions. Prayer for Jews was a normal practice of everyday life. The Jews had set prayer times and prayers in

the synagogue, and the saying of grace before meals, and the saying of personal prayers in the morning, in the afternoon and at the end of the day. And at the time of sacrifice in the Temple. Though much in His day-to-day life is not mentioned in Scripture, the four Gospel accounts say much about the prayer life of Jesus Christ.

As the Son of God, Jesus knew the importance of regular, private prayer. Jesus had been in heaven with the Father from all eternity past. He loved His Father, and He was loved by His Father. Prayer time was holy time with His Father in heaven. And His entire ministry was filled with prayers to the Father, whom He loved. When we love somebody we talk to them. We talk in good times and in bad, because we love and want to share our lives with them. It's by prayer that we share our lives with the Father in heaven.

Now Jesus was going through a very tough time facing the cross. He knew what scourging and crucifixion were. He knew how great the agony of the cross would be.

He knew from Psalm 2 that the Jews and Gentiles would turn against Him. Psalm 2 and verse 2 predicted that, "The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed."

He knew from Isaiah 53 that He would be despised and rejected. Jesus knew the Lord would lay upon Him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:4 to 6 says "Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah's words.

The Lord Jesus Himself prophesied specifics about His upcoming death. Matthew 20:17 to 19 there Jesus said: "As Jesus was about to go up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up." Jesus could see the light of His resurrection, but the disciples did not understand it at first.

So when Jesus went to Gethsemane, He worried about His disciples. He said to them in Luke 22:39, "Pray that you do not enter into temptation." Oh He knew His death would be devastating to them. Matthew 26 verses 36 to 39 there Jesus continues: it says, "Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

Now Jesus was extremely sorrowful and troubled because He knew what was ahead. Hebrews 10:4 to 7 explains why Jesus came to this earth: For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'" Now Jesus knew what He had to do to fulfill the Scriptures. Hebrews 10 and verse 7 quotes Psalm 40 verses 7 to 8, which says: Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart." Though Jesus was troubled in heart, His delight was to do the will of God.

And this is the prayer that included loud crying and tears. It came from one dreading what was to come but accepting it nonetheless. Luke describes how difficult this was for Jesus. Luke 22:44 says, "And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Now this passage describes the extreme emotional pain Jesus felt as He thought about what was to happen on the cross.

Some people have imagined Jesus, because He was the Son of God, that He didn't have much suffering on the cross. And we must not forget, Jesus as the Son of God was also human, and fleshly. John 1:14 says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only (begotten) Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." Now as a man, he physically suffered hunger, thirst, weariness, pain, and death. He also could hurt emotionally.

Philippians 2:5 to 8 says to us, "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." If Jesus didn't have flesh, He could not have died as an offering for our sins.

Hebrews 2:14 to 15 explains "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery." The Lord Jesus through His suffering He could overcome the devil and deliver us from the fear of death.

Jesus prayed all through His suffering. Jesus began, continued, and ended His experience of the cross with prayer. Jesus prayed for those who were crucifying Him when He was being crucified. And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. (Luke 23:33 and 34)

Jesus prayed at the ninth hour, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:45 to 46). Now the ninth hour would be 3:00 in the afternoon. Now when I think about, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me," this saying breaks my heart. Jesus suffered doing the will of God for my sins. And it makes me see my sins in a new light. That it was my sins that caused His suffering. It also pricks my conscience and causes my own guilt and shame.

This statement about being forsaken is a quotation of Psalm 22 and verse 1. It's a prayer psalm that begins with a feeling of abandonment but ends with a statement of praise to the Lord the Father in heaven. Now while Jesus felt forsaken, He also knew that His death would glorify the Father and bless us all. Peter reveals that Jesus prayed throughout this painful ordeal actually. 1 Peter 2:21 to 24 says, "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (and listen to this part) When he was reviled, (that is on the cross) he did not revile in return; when he suffered, (that is on the cross) he did not threaten, but (what did He do He) continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed."

Jesus prayed just before He breathed His last, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23 verse 46). Now Jesus had been entrusting Himself to the Father all along. Now as He was passing away, He placed His spirit (separated from the body) into the hands of His Father. He knew that after His suffering, He would go to the Father.

And this is why He could pray His ultimate prayer at Gethsemane. And remember Matthew 26:39 says: And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, (and here comes the real prayer) not as I will, but as you will." His fleshly desire was to avoid suffering and death, but His heart and soul's desire was to do the will of the Father. Matthew 26:41 says: Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." Jesus' prayer reflected His understanding that what was best was not being rescued from agony but rescuing us through His agony.

Jesus made His choice before He was betrayed. Revelation 13:8 in New King James Version calls Jesus "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The Lord Jesus could say in John 10:17 to 18, "For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father." Later Jesus would say in verse 30 that, "I and the Father are one." On the night Jesus was betrayed Jesus said in John 14 verse 31, "but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here." And of course that's when He went to Gethsemane. Jesus had made up his mind. Jesus understood the Father's will was bigger than His personal comforts.

Hebrews 12:1 to 3 says, "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

The joy that was set before Him on the cross, was in the winning the hearts of those who follow Him to heaven. He set His heart on the people who love Him and sacrificed Himself. Jesus did not give up on the cross, because He knew what it meant for Him to die for our sins as an atoning sacrifice. He didn't call for twelve legions of angels to rescue Him from crucifixion. He was willing to suffer to the very end, so that we could be set free from sin and live to righteousness.

Oh is it your prayer today to follow the will of God? Will you sacrifice yourself for the will of Christ? You too may need to pray the hard prayer to do the will of God. Will you put your trust in the Lord? Will you pray, "Thy will be done"?

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father in all things may Your will be done. Help us to live lives that glorify You. And that live in such a way that praise Your name. Father even in the hardest times we pray Your will will be done on earth as it is in heaven. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Hebrews 5:8 to 9 says, "Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation." Jesus learned obedience the hard way by suffering through the trials, the scourging and the cross. We too must learn obedience in our lives. Doing what is hard in order to do the will of the Lord is where we deny ourselves, take up our crosses daily and follow the Lord Jesus.

Philippians 2:5 to 8 reminds us to, "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but (He) emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, (and) He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

The Scriptures make it clear the way of the Lord is how we serve God. There are no substitutes for the way of the Lord, and there are no substitutes for obedience. Just as Jesus had a cross to bear, so we to have a cross. We'll never deny ourselves and take up our cross till we place our faith and love in the Lord Jesus Christ. And this means believing in Him and in what He says. Now denying ourselves means that we must cease living in sin or for our selfish lives and we begin living in righteousness for the Lord's sake. Taking up a cross also means confessing Christ Jesus as the Son of God before others.

We are first crucified with Christ when we die with Him, and are buried with Him, and are raised with Him in baptism (Romans 6:3 to 7). When we're baptized, God gives us newness of life, frees us from sin, and makes us His child. And that's why I urge you to be baptized into Christ.

We hope that today's study about Gethsemane and that prayer has helped you grow in your appreciation for Jesus Christ. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy, send your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. There's a schedule of our programs and a map of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. You can watch SEARCH on YouTube anytime! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry" and like the programs. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not begging for money. We're here to help you to find the Lord and to love Him and serve Him.

Show God your love by worshiping at church. You need a church family. And if you can attend, don't neglect worshiping at church. There's probably a church of Christ near you. If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. Well, we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program and urge them to watch it. As always we say, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.