

Then they came forward, seized Jesus and took Him in charge. At that, Simon Peter, who carried a sword, drew it and wounded the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

Jesus said to Peter: "Put your sword back in its scabbard; for all who draw the sword will die by the sword."

And touching the man's ear He healed him.

Jesus said: "Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given Me?"

"Do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father who would promptly send more than twelve legions of angels to my defence? But then, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say this is the way it must be?"

It was at this time that Jesus said to the crowds: "Am I a brigand, that you had to set out to capture Me with swords and clubs? I sat teaching in the Temple day after day and you never laid hands on Me. But this is your hour; this is the reign of darkness."

Now all this happened to fulfil the prophecies in Scripture.

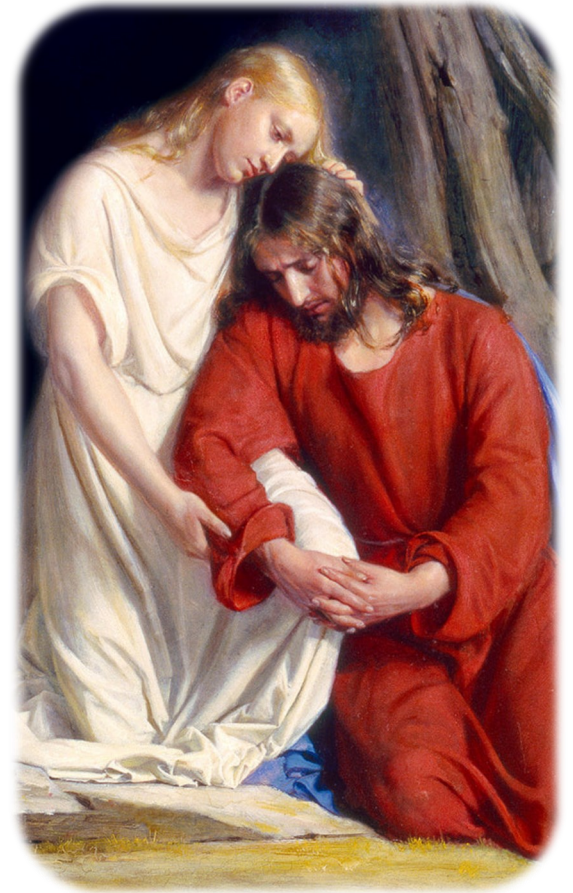
Then all the disciples deserted Him and ran away.

Lord God,
in your goodness
have mercy on me:
do not look on my sins,
but take away all my guilt.
Create in me a clean heart
and renew within me
an upright spirit.



Gethsemane

THE AGONY OF JESUS IN THE GARDEN



"Keep awake with me"

Jesus came with His disciples to the Mount of Olives, to a small estate called Gethsemane. There was a garden there. Judas the traitor knew the place well, since Jesus had often met His disciples there. And He said to His disciples, "Pray not to be put to the test. Stay here while I go over there to pray."

And He took Peter and James and John with Him. And sadness and a sudden fear came over Him, and great distress. Then He said to them: "My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here and keep awake with me."

And going on a little further He threw Himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, this hour might pass Him by.

He said, "Abba (Father)! Everything is possible for You. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as You, not I, would have it."

Then an angel appeared to Him coming from Heaven to give Him strength.

In His anguish He prayed even more earnestly, and His sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.

When He rose from prayer He went to the disciples and found them sleeping for sheer grief. He said to Peter: "So you had not the strength to keep awake with Me one hour? You should be awake, and praying not to be put to the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Again, a second time, He went away and prayed: "My Father, if this cup cannot pass by without My drinking it, Your will be done!"

And He came again back and found them sleeping, their eyes were so heavy; they could find no answer for Him.

Leaving them there, He went away again and prayed for the third time, repeating the same words.



Then He came back to the disciples and said to them, "You can sleep on now and take your rest. It is all over. Now the hour has come when the Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of sinners.

"Get up! Let us go! My betrayer is already close at hand."

He was still speaking when Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared, and with him a large number of men all with lanterns and armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and elders of the people.

Knowing everything that was going to happen to Him, Jesus then came forward and said, "Who are you looking for?"

They answered, "Jesus the Nazarene."

He said, "I am He."

When Jesus said, "I am He", they moved back and fell to the ground.

He asked them a second time, "Who are you looking for?"

They said, "Jesus the Nazarene."

Jesus replied, "I have told you that I am He. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go."

This was to fulfil the words He had spoken: "Not one of those You gave Me have I lost".

Now the traitor had arranged a sign with them. He had said: "The one I kiss, He is the man. Take Him in charge, and see He is well guarded when you lead Him away."

So when the traitor came, he went straight up to Jesus and said: "Greetings, Rabbi," and kissed Him.

Jesus said, "Judas, my friend, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"