

A Grave Injustice *Mark 14:43-52*

Good morning.

Here in America, we have certain rights and laws pertaining to false arrests.

An article about false arrests on a legal encyclopedia website asked the question, “*Is False Arrest a Crime?*”

“In many states, false arrest or false imprisonment are crimes.

An unlawful arrest case is a civil lawsuit that usually asks for the "remedy" of damages.

In most false arrest cases, a successful plaintiff can collect two kinds of damages: special damages and general damages.”

In Jesus’ time, Roman citizens had many rights but, non-citizens within the Roman Empire, especially the Jewish people, did not enjoy the same rights and freedoms as Roman citizens.

Please open your Bibles to **Mark 14**, as we continue in our line-by-line study of **Mark**.

Last time we were in **Mark**, we learned how Passover dinner was over, and Jesus and His disciples made their way to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus went to a secluded place to pray, and He instructed the Disciples to go sit and pray as they waited for Him.

Jesus took just His inner circle of followers with Him to pray, as He showed the importance of **prayer** and reliance upon God.

Jesus left His closest friends behind. He went on to pray, yet at each break He took from prayer, He found His Disciples sleeping.

Gethsemane was a garden outside the city, across the Kidron Brook on the Mount of Olives. The name Gethsemane means **Olive Press**, and it was a very remote, walled garden.

Jesus drank the cup of God's wrath on the cross, as He took the burden for all sin, for all eternity.

In today's passage, we will see the final betrayal of Judas while Jesus was still in the Garden of Gethsemane.

I. The false arrest.

Read *Mark 14:43-46*

We ended last time saying, Jesus did not receive the answer He initially requested, (*let this cup pass from me*), but instead the Father gave Him **strength** as the answer to be able to endure.

Once Jesus received strength from the Father, He was ready to **face** the hour at hand and so He went out to meet His betrayers.

The agony of Gethsemane was now behind Jesus but the **reality** and brutality of His arrest, false trials, beatings, and the cross were about to take place.

Right after Jesus said, “*My betrayer is at hand*”, this section begins with the words, “*Immediately, while He was still speaking*”, Judas came with others from the Chief Priests.

The religious leaders of Israel were known as the Sanhedrin, and they were made up from three groups.

The Chief Priests who led the nation in worship, the Scribes who were the Bible scholars of the nation, and the Elders who were charged with the spiritual welfare of the nation.

The arrest of Jesus, the One true Messiah and King of Israel, was ordered by the religious leaders of Israel.

In the same narrative in *John*, we are told this great multitude was actually a battalion of troops, about 600 men. We are not told whether these men were temple guards or Roman soldiers.

Some believe that since Jerusalem was under Roman authority the Jews did not have organized armed soldiers of their own.

So, they believe the religious leaders went to the Romans and procured soldiers from the Antonia Fortress to arrest Jesus.

Judas brought a massive group of armed soldiers and temple **police** to falsely arrest Jesus in the middle of the night.

When we study the Garden scene in the *Gospel of John*,

We read in *John 18:4*, *Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"*

John 18:5 They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them.

John 18:6 Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground. NKJV

In ***John 18:6***, Jesus attributed the **divine** name of God "***I AM***" from ***Exodus 3:14***, to Himself.

The Greek word recorded here for "***I am***" is *ego eimi*. It literally means, "***I am***" who I am, the self-existent God!

In the present tense in the Greek, Jesus is saying, "*I was not created, I have always been*", "***I am who I am***".

As Jesus revealed that He is the same God Moses met at the burning bush, He revealed some of His Shekinah Glory to those who came to arrest Him in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Shekinah is an English transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning "dwelling" or "settling" which symbolizes the dwelling or settling of the divine presence of God.

Jesus' Shekinah Glory is seen in the Tabernacle in ***Exodus***, and it was the same Glory **Jesus** revealed to His closest followers on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Jesus asked those who came to arrest Him, "***Whom are you seeking***" and they respond by saying, "***Jesus***" so He revealed His true identity to them.

As Jesus showed just a small portion of His Glory to the mob, they were overwhelmed. **John 18:6** tells us that they all fell backwards to the ground!

Keep in mind when watching people fall at the sight of Jesus in scripture, those who worship the Lord always fell forward and the enemies of Jesus always fell backward.

Here in our passage, it is ironic that Judas identified Jesus with a kiss, not a hug or handshake, but the kiss of a betrayer.

The kiss at this time in history was the common mode of greeting in the Middle East.

Today, the idiom “*The kiss of death*” has been used as a title to many songs and even a movie. This saying is meant to show how some use the kiss to mark someone for death.

Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. NKJV

But Judas had to identify Jesus.

It seems as if Jesus was fairly ordinary looking, even to the point that those soldiers had to have someone point Him out to them.

The prophet Isaiah, foretelling of the Messiah, said in the NLT,

Isaiah 53:2 My servant grew up in the LORD's presence like a tender green shoot, sprouting from a root in dry and sterile ground. There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. NLT

After the kiss of betrayal, the mob laid their hands on Jesus.

II. Miracle during a betrayal.

Read *Mark 14:47*

Again, from *John 18:10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. NKJV*

Like I said last week, “*The moral of that story is we should never trust a sword in the hands of a fisherman.*”

It is ironic the last miracle of Jesus prior to taking the cross was to fix the mess of one of His followers and to show grace to someone who had come to falsely arrest Him.

Matthew 26:52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.

Matthew 26:53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?

Matthew 26:54 How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?" NKJV

Henry Ironside said, “*Suddenly, spurred by intense emotion, one of them, whom we know was Peter, drew his sword, struck a servant of the high priests’, and cut off his ear.*

*Peter was asleep when he should have been alert, watching unto prayer. Now, when he should have been calm and trustful, he was excited and active. But it was the activity of the **flesh**.”*

Peter was foolish for attacking Malchus, and Jesus communicated to Peter that the battle in the Garden was not a **physical** battle but a necessary, spiritual battle.

2 Corinthians 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,

2 Corinthians 10:5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, NKJV

Some people take this passage as Jesus forbidding all use of weapons, which disagrees with other scripture.

J. C. Ryle, *“The sword has a lawful office of its own. It may be used righteously in the defense of nations against oppression.”*

But Jesus went on to explain to Peter, ***“If I wanted to call down more than 12 legions of angels to fight for Me, I could!”***

The religious leaders brought a battalion to arrest Jesus, but Jesus said He could call 12 legions of angels. During this time of history, roughly 4,000-6,000 men made up a Roman Legion.

Jesus used the example of legions of angels because everyone knew of the Roman Antonia Fortress, adjacent to the Temple.

Inside the massive Antonia fortress complex there were anywhere from 300 to 600 specially trained soldiers, stationed there.

Those troops were positioned to act defensively in the event of a riot. A staircase led from the tower into the temple so the troops could enter the temple very quickly if a disturbance started.

Jesus could call between 48,000-72,000 angels to save Him.

Allow me to illustrate the power of angels through an Old Testament narrative.

2 Kings 19:35 And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses — all dead. NKJV

One Angel in one night killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. *What could 48,000-72,000 angels do to protect their Creator?*

Our takeaway here is that the All-knowing, All Mighty, Creator God of the universe, who knows full well what is about to take place, stops in order to heal an enemy combatant.

III. The scriptures must be fulfilled.

Read ***Mark 14:48-50***

Jesus was basically telling them I have been with you day after day for all this time. I have not been on a covert mission.

He reminded the mob that He could have been found any day in the temple, teaching, so, He had not been hiding from the religious leaders.

This mob scene in the middle of the night was unnecessary, but even with this event, the Word of God given through the prophets was being **fulfilled**.

Had Jesus not submitted to this injustice from His enemies, they would have been helpless trying to arrest Him.

But Jesus allowed all of these things to take place so the will of God would happen.

Remember from *Mark 14:35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.*

Mark 14:36 And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will." NKJV

Jesus allowed these atrocities to take place as He humbly **submitted** to the Father and showed His love to those for whom He was about to die.

Over the next few hours, Jesus was subjected to six illegal trials, beatings, and then finally, He was condemned to death.

The religious leaders, who **prided** themselves on keeping the law, broke every Jewish law in regard to Jesus' criminal trials.

But before any of these things could happen, all of His followers would forsake Him.

Jesus was subjected to three illegal trials by the Jews: one before Annas the High Priest, and then one before Caiaphas, and finally one before the Sanhedrin.

Jesus was also subjected to three trials before the Gentiles: one before Pilate, then one before Herod, and finally back to Pilate.

There are some other laws broken as they arrested Jesus as well:

- A trial was supposed to begin and end in the daytime.
- There were no trials allowed during the Passover holiday.
- Only an acquittal could be reached within the first day of a trial. A guilty verdict had to wait two days after the trial.
- All evidence had to come from two or more witnesses.
- All false witnesses were to be put to death.
- All trials had to begin with proof of the person's innocence before any evidence of guilt could be provided.

Jesus came as the Savior of the world for all to see, not covertly, so that all could come to know Him for Salvation.

(Because) Jesus chose, as part of the predetermined will of God, to come and save lost sinners.

While Peter gave testimony in *Acts 4:27 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together.*

Acts 4:28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. NKJV

God's plan will not be **thwarted** by any man.

Jesus came from Glory, was going back to Glory, and someday will return in all His Glory.

Jesus said in His High Priestly Prayer in *John 17:4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.*

John 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. NKJV

But woe to the men who played a part of His execution.

IV. A young man fled.

Read *Mark 14:51-52*

The words, “*Young man*” in the Septuagint as well as in the writings of Josephus, is a reference to young men who are exceptionally strong, valiant, or faithful and wise.

J.R. Edwards said two verses in *Mark* are a reference to the Old Testament prophet *Amos 2:16, The most courageous men of might shall flee naked in that day," says the LORD. NKJV*

According to J.R. Edwards, the prophet Amos was describing a day of judgment so terrible that “*he who is stout of heart among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day.*”

Many commentators believe John Mark was describing himself here, as he told of a “**young man**” fleeing the scene.

Many people believe the Passover Supper was at Mark’s family home seen in *Acts 12* and they believe Mark had some sort of knowledge that Judas was going to betray Jesus in the Garden.

Those who believe the “**Young man**” was Mark, think he took it upon himself to run after Jesus and the Disciples to warn the Lord and then he also witnessed Jesus being arrested, so he fled.

Warren Wiersbe asked the question, “*Was this John Mark?*”

*We do not know, but since the **Gospel of Mark** is the only one of the four gospels that records this event, the author could well have been writing about himself.*

If the upper room was in the home of John Mark, then perhaps Judas led the soldiers there first.

“John Mark may have hastily put on an outer garment and followed the mob to the Garden. The soldiers may have even tried to arrest him, so he fled.” (Warren Wiersbe)

“The disciples were scattered, and the Servant was now alone.”

Jesus speaking to His Disciples about leaving, said in...

John 16:32 Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. NKJV

V. Practical Application.

In Jesus' time, Roman citizens had many rights but, non-citizens within the Roman Empire, especially the Jewish people, did not enjoy the same rights and freedoms as Roman citizens.

As a citizen of Israel there was nothing Jesus could do about the false arrest, false trials, and conviction from the religious leaders and the Romans.

As Almighty God, Jesus could have called down **angel armies** to defeat Rome, as well as the Jewish religious leaders.

Jesus said in *John 12:27* "**Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. NKJV**

Warren Wiersbe said, "Our Lord's struggle in the Garden can be understood only in the light of what would happen to Him on the cross."

2 Corinthians 5:21 **For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. NKJV**

By becoming sin, Jesus took the burden of the curse of the Law.

Galatians 3:13 **Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"). NKJV**

*“It was not the physical suffering that almost overwhelmed Him with “anguish and sorrow,” but the contemplation of being forsaken by His Father (**Mark 15:34**).*

*This was “the cup” that He would drink (**John 18:11**).*

*According to **Hebrews 5:7–9**, He asked to be saved, not “from death” but out of death—that is, raised from the dead—and the Father granted His request.” (Wiersbe)*

The Lord’s ways are not our ways. Most of us try to find logical reasons for everything event that happens in our lives.

But we need to remember that God has a plan, and He is working His plan out. Again, His ways are not our ways.

Judas, the world, and this mob still didn’t understand the **power** or the love of Jesus Christ!

How could they have been so close to the King of the World and still be that clueless?

Jesus’ question in **John 18:4**, “**Whom are you seeking?**” is the most important question we can answer in all eternity.

Within that question, there is an unspoken question: *Who or what are you trying to find **fulfillment** from?*

But the answer to this question has eternal ramifications as well.

Jesus is not only, the One who gives true fulfillment, He is also the Only way to be saved from our sin and gain eternal life.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. NKJV

It is not enough to intellectually know Jesus can change your life ...we must grab onto Him like we really believe it and by that faith in Him, He will become all we need!

Jesus is the only way to eternal life and to be made whole spiritually.

If you ask, He will not only grant you Salvation, but He can make you spiritually whole, no matter what your past looks like!

Do you realize who this Jesus really is; He is the Great I AM, the almighty God who promises to live within His followers.

Do you want to live with a constant awareness of God's power living inside you?

We should pray, *“Lord, I am so thankful You possess the greatest power in the whole universe! I don't want to just intellectually know about You; I want to **truly** know You.”*

I want to experience Your power and walk in Your ways!”

When we are faced with a situation that requires power, we can open our heart and ask Jesus to intercede for us. His power is more than enough to face and overcome any obstacle in our life!

Whom are you seeking? Jesus is the Only way to Eternal and Abundant Life!