

John 18.1-11—The Second Adam is not Hiding in the Garden

I. Introduction

- a. King David fled Jerusalem and walked the near same path as Jesus did in our text.
 - i. (2 Sam. 15:13-14) ¹³ And a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom." ¹⁴ Then David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Go quickly, lest he overtake us quickly and bring down ruin on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword."
- b. There are "Peter-like" figures in this story too:
 - i. (2 Sam. 15:21) ²¹ But Ittai answered the king, "As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be."
- c. As the story goes on, the company crosses the same brook:
 - i. (2 Sam. 15:22-23) ²² And David said to Ittai, "Go then, pass on." So Ittai the Gittite passed on with all his men and all the little ones who were with him. ²³ And all the land wept aloud as all the people passed by, and the king crossed the brook Kidron, and all the people passed on toward the wilderness.
- d. David's longtime advisor betrays him:
 - i. (2 Sam. 15:31) ³¹ And it was told David, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O LORD, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."
- e. I'm sure you are familiar with how the story ends. Ahithophel's counsel was seen as foolishness and he hung himself much like Judas. Additionally, David's son, Absalom, dies and the kingdom is restored.
- f. David and his household fled to hide and be safe. Jesus goes to this same place so that he would be found. Judas knew that place (just like Ahithophel knew how to defeat David) because they often went there. And it was remote enough that the crowds would not interfere with his capture.
- g. That's pretty amazing! This King stands forth and protects and saves his household.

II. Main Point

- a. It's time for Jesus, the second Adam, to be found in the garden so that he may take that death sentence issued in the first garden.

III. Outline

- a. Jesus went to this garden to be found
- b. Jesus stepped forward instead of hiding among the trees
- c. Jesus readies himself to finish what he was sent to do—drink the cup of the Father's wrath

IV. Exposition

- a. I'm reminded of another story that happened in a garden. When Adam and Eve heard the sound of the LORD they hid themselves among the fig trees because they had sinned. They received the sentence of death for disobeying God. Their sentence was not immediate. God gave them a promise that a child would be born to crush the head of the snake. Well, that Child is here in this garden and the snake has found him.
 - i. As soon as Jesus finishes speaking the words of this amazing prayer in chapter 17, they leave, which I think is the upper room. It's the middle of the night and they make their way across the brook Kidron to a frequented spot where they often stayed in a garden.
 - ii. This was probably the Garden of Gethsemane but for some reason, John doesn't identify it. Regardless, it was very well known to his disciples, even Judas.
 1. It says he knew the place because Jesus often met there with his disciples. Some would say that this was Jesus' home.

2. Based on the predictable patterns of Jesus, Judas takes a cohort of Roman soldiers and some of the officials from the chief priests and Pharisees to the garden.
3. If you recall the scene from chapter 13 where Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, he also revealed the one who would betray him.
 - a. (Jn. 13:27) ²⁷ Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly."
 - b. The timeline has only been a matter of hours. All of this has happened since sunset on Thursday. We would say, as we think of time, that Jesus was encountered in the garden in the early hours of Friday. Maybe 1 or 2 am.
- iii. It could mean that Judas procured—paid—these Roman soldiers to accompany him. The word used is simply took them. In other words, Judas is merely their guide.
 1. There is a strange union here between the Romans and these officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. When I see the government and religion working together, I am very suspicious. To see Rome and Jerusalem as one tells me somethings wrong.
 - a. That's why we think freedom of religion is necessary. Governments do not have a moral code that any of us could agree with. The Jews needed them to carry out their wicked plans as we will see later, their law prevented them from putting someone to death.
 2. What is further amazing is the possible numbers of this group. All militaries have different size units. The US Army consist of these units: field army, corps, division, brigade, battalion, company, platoon and squad.
 - a. This group of Roman soldiers would have been like our battalion. A cohort could have been around 600-1000 men. How many are present is not given. But let's assume there's a lot of them—maybe as many as 600.
 - b. And Rome would have had a strong presence during the week of Passover to keep order.
 3. With it being Passover, there was a full moon. That's how they knew it was Passover. Yet, this group is armed with lanterns, torches and weapons.
 - a. There's not much way they could have snuck up on Jesus and the disciples.
- iv. Did they expect resistance? It sure seems that way. But I think Jesus not only meant to be found in this predictable place but also, he determined not be among the crowds who would have put up a fight for him.
 1. To grasp the magnitude of Jesus' love, we need to consider the fact that he is not hiding but rather being found intentionally away from all possible resistance.
 2. But we must also think of who Jesus is and what he has at his disposal. All of humanity could march in against the Son of God with every weapon imaginable and they are no match for the Lord of hosts. Jesus would not even have to lift a finger but rather summon his army of angels or he could just open the ground to swallow them up. He could send bees or hornets or lions to run them off.
 3. His love is magnified when we see all of this rightly. On the other side of the cross and resurrection, this should break our hearts with this sort of a joyful weeping with our hands over our mouths in awe of his love.
 4. That should be our response. Do you deserve such love?
 5. They think their supreme weapon is killing but Jesus' supreme weapon is dying. He appears to be weak and caught but it's really love. Love wins.
- b. So, as these troops and officials come marching through the valley with lanterns and swords, led by Judas because he knew the place (that's all he knows...he cannot be sure), Jesus is expecting them. And he doesn't escape but rather steps forward.

- i. I say that he was expecting them because verse 4 says, “knowing all that would happen to him, he came forward.”
 1. If I can say it this way...that old enemy, satan, is coming clothed in Judas. The serpent knows who Jesus is. In fact, he knows more than anyone in the crowd.
 2. Here they are, if I can borrow Paul’s words, the Second Adam and the snake face off again in the garden.
 3. Unlike the first Adam, Jesus steps forward.
 - a. Adam left is wife/bride to deal with the snake.
 - b. Here Jesus steps forward to protect his disciples—the bride.
 - c. He initiates the conversation—whom do you seek?
- ii. If I were forced to guess who replied to Jesus, I think it’s probably the officials of the chief priests. They are under orders of the leaders of Israel to carry out their will. The Roman soldiers are there to protect them and apprehend the person they are looking for.
 1. They answer, “Jesus the Nazarene” which is an odd way to say someone’s name in that day. Usually, they would say, John, son of Zebedee.
 2. I think it’s meant to be condescending...kind of like how Nathanael used it in chapter one—“can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”
- iii. Jesus answers with transcendence, “I am.”
 1. Many translations supply “he” which makes it say, “I am *he*.” Certainly, that’s how English works and it makes more sense to answer them that way. I think Jesus is meaning to say (for those who have ears to hear) that he is YHWH...I am!
- iv. John adds sort of a parentheses here and says at the end of verse 5, “Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.”
 1. This statement is heartbreaking. It reminds me of Psalm 1 which describes those who take their stand with sinners.
 2. I know there are family members and friends even neighbors who stand with the wrong crowd.
 - a. You will not do them any favors by trying to stand on both sides. They need to see you as the blessed man stands like a tree by streams of water yielding its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither.
 - b. I must admit that in the fullest sense, only Jesus is that Psalm 1 man. But we can be the branches that abide in him.
 - c. Happy are those who abide in him and delight in the word of the Lord.
- v. John now picks back up where he was in the conversation and repeats the exchange and this time, we hear the response of the opposing crowd.
 1. My translation of verse 6 says, “When, therefore, he said to them, ‘I AM,’ they went back and fell to the ground.”
 2. I’m not sure exactly how to explain this. Maybe this was a flicker of divine authority when he spoke. Was their going back and falling down out of fear or awe?
 - a. Their following response doesn’t seem to fit either one of those. If fear then why did they not run back to Jerusalem? Why did they answer again? What did they expect to happen the second time Jesus asked, “whom do you seek?”
 - b. If it was awe, why do they go ahead and arrest him?
 3. Here’s what I conclude. As is with every detail of this account so too here. All of humanity could have taken up arms against Jesus and all of them would have fallen.
 - a. I suggest, this event proves once again what Jesus had said back in (Jn. 10:17-18)
¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ 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."

4. I do not think the disciples fell down, only those who oppose him and do not believe.
 - a. If Psalm 1 informs us of Judas taking counsel with the wicked, it goes on to say that contrary to the prosperous tree-- (Ps. 1:4) ⁴ The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
 - b. This little burst of divine power and authority tells us what could have happened but Jesus steps forward willingly and lays down his life!
- vi. To finish this point, Jesus says, look if you seek me, let these men go.
 1. The purpose of this statement is given in verse 9 which says, "...so that the word may be fulfilled which he had spoken: I have not lost from them no one." There are two negatives to emphasize the certainty of fulfillment.
 2. Now, a few questions come up.
 - a. Was this to save the disciples from being arrested or physical safety or even being killed?
 - b. Was this salvation in the sense of saving their souls? If they had been arrested, would they have turned back like those in chapter 6 and said this is too much?
 - c. Well, I think this scene illustrates eternal salvation. Much like when Jesus healed someone, this pointed to the reality that one day there will be no more sickness and death. So too here, though these disciples will suffer martyrdom, this scene is a symbol of what is to come.
 - i. Why? Because Jesus' impending death sentence issued from the Garden of Eden and the resurrection secured eternal salvation for all who believe.
 - ii. The path for us to the tree of life is first through the tree of death— Christ's death. By faith, we are crucified with him and we no longer live but Christ lives in us by faith (Gal. 2:20).
- vii. The reality of this hope should change how we live. We should be stepping forward not shrinking back. Let's be people of faith who are not afraid of the world.
 1. Like the man we prayed for last Wednesday night. Here is the prayer request: Brother Amir was traveling with his wife and a friend when he received a phone call from a member of an Islamist group. The man threatened Amir's family, telling him that his family is under surveillance and that they spotted his only son attending a Christian church. The man warned Amir that if he doesn't stop his son from going to church, he will "reap what he sows with his only son." The man also asked Amir what kind of financial support the church was giving to him. "The only support they are giving me is the joy and peace of having Jesus Christ as my Savior," Amir told the Islamist.
 2. This isn't our home. We are strangers in this foreign land. The resurrection and eternal life await those who believe. Death is gain for those who believe!
- c. Finally, we see Jesus preparing to finish what he was sent to do—to drink the cup of the Father's wrath
 - i. Jesus Christ is on the mission of redemption. Here, he is only hours away from dying on the cross. Knowing all that would happen to him, he goes to the place that he would be found. He goes there away from the crowds so that there is no interference by those who would seek to protect him.
 - ii. Yet, he is not alone. If that were possible, I am sure that's how Jesus would have arranged it. However, the disciples are eyewitnesses to all that happened. The reason we have such clear details of these events is due to the fact that these disciples were eyewitnesses.

- iii. And as Jesus promised this: (Jn. 15:26-27) ²⁶ "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. ²⁷ And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.
1. To bear witness, they must be there to see it.
 2. In one sense, that's dangerous. But Jesus is there to protect them like the Good Shepherd that he is.
 3. The continuation of the mission depends on the message of these eyewitnesses. Christ will protect the accurate account of these things through his disciples.
 - a. Even the very details of Peter's useless attack. Noble, I suppose but misguided. Peter misses the point as is often the case. He's caught up in the moment.
 4. The emphasis is on the purpose of this event to which in (Jn. 18:11) ¹¹ So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"
 5. We are going to sing In Christ Alone in a moment. A phrase in that song has been omitted by some: "Til on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied." They changed it to the "the love of God is magnified."
 - a. It seems pretty plain to me. "Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"
 - b. What is this cup? Is it not the cup of God's wrath? Indeed it is!
 - c. When the Ethiopian Eunuch asked Phillip who this man was in Isaiah 53, who did he say it was? (Acts 8:35) ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.
 6. I can sing that line without any hesitation because of what Jesus said and this clear text in (Isa. 53:3-6) ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ 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. ⁶ 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.

V. Response

- a. Dear friend, God has met all of His demands himself by sending his only Son. Throw yourself on the One who took the death sentence you deserve or you will drink not just a cup but bowls upon bowls forever of God's wrath.
- b. Dear church, beloved of the Lord, this homecoming day is but a taste of that great homecoming that is come when we sit at the wedding banquet with good food in joyful celebration of what Christ has done for us. Let's lift up our voices in thanksgiving and praise!