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The Walk to Gethsemane
Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26, John 18:1
About 11:00 pm on Friday the fifteenth of Nisan



When they had sung a hymn, Jesus was ready to leave. **He** looked around and signaled to **Peter**. It was almost 11:00 P.M. **Yeshua** led the way down the outer stairs, pausing at the foot to whisper **His** thanks to the father of the young disciple **Mark**. Then **they** walked out into the night, a little band of **men** spoke softly to one another in the vivid moonlight. A breeze came from the west. **They** could see white clouds move across the sky toward the moon. **They** saw the thousands of stars, the brilliant jewelry of the heavens. The moonlight was so bright that night that the huge limestone slabs in the Roman steps showed white, and the trees cast a shadow across **them**. While the location of the Upper Room is unknown, the distance from the wall of **Yerushalayim** to the olive press and **the garden of Gethsemane** at the base of **the Mount of Olives** was about a quarter mile.

So Yeshua finished the remainder of His teaching as He and the eleven talmidim walked through the streets of Jerusalem, stopping from time to time, and then across the Kidron Valley. The streets were quiet now, but the Temple would be opened at midnight, and the same streets would be noisy and crowded. **He** used the time wisely. In the cool evening air, **Jesus** pointed to things along the way, using illustrations as **He** did in many of **His** parables, making important lessons as simple as possible. **The Master** taught **them** as **they** walked slowly. It is not easy for one man to be properly heard by **eleven** while walking, so

when **He** had something to say **He** stopped and **the talmidim** clustered around **Him** in the silver moonlight. **He** would say the things **He** had to say and then move on and, in a little while, **He** would stop again. Never had **the apostles** known **the Savior** to talk so much. And with such finality. But this was different. **The Son of God** had an overwhelming sense of urgency to talk to **His Father**. There could no longer be any delay. But **His apostles** still needed to hear some things from **Him** and **His** time was short.[1441]

The group of **talmidim** probably walked right past the adjacent homes of Annas and Caiaphas, north and through a rich residential area. After Lazarus had been raised from the dead, we learn that **Caiaphas** and the Sanhedrin **from that day on planned together to kill Him (John 11:45-53)**. The high priest was the one who prophesied that it was **expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation would not perish . . . he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation (Yochanan 11:49-50)**. If **God** could use a donkey in the TaNaKh to express profound prophetic truths **(Numbers 22:20-35; Second Peter 2:15,16)**, **He** could use Caiaphas just as easily to benefit others.

If **they** would have continued south **they** would have come to the pool of Siloam, where a blind man washed and received his sight **(John 9:1-7)**. Earlier in **John's** gospel **Jesus** emphasized: **For judgment I came into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind (Yochanan 9:39).** In Isra'el's case it was true that **God** had purposely blinded their eyes, **lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and be converted, and I heal them (John 12:39-40)**. In the Kingdom this will change when the literal blind and deaf will be cured: **Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped (Isaiah 35:5)**. And it will be spiritually true as well, for he will open the graves **to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house (Isaiah 42:7)**. But **they** didn't continue south, but turned to the east.

The final leg of the journey through **Tziyon** brought **them** past **the highest point of the Temple Mount,** then along the chalky road that hugs the base of the east wall of **the City**. Going past **the highest point of the Temple Mount**, the pinnacle of **the Temple**, reminded **Jesus** of **Satan's** suggestion that **He** throw **Himself** from there to prove to everyone **He** was indeed **the Messiah**. Shortly **He** would be mocked on the cross with a similar challenge: **Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God (Matthew 27:40c)**.

On the other side of the Kidron Valley **there was a garden** at the base of **the Mount of Olives, and He and His apostles went into it (John 18:1).** As **their** walk continued it took them to the outskirts of **the City** where **they** would have seen the Temple in the glow of the moon before descending into **the valley** below. Crossing it, turned somewhat to the left, where the stony road led up towards **Olivet**, along terraces covered with **olives**, whose silver and dark green leaves rustled in the breeze. Gnarled fig trees also twisted themselves out of the rocky soil; there clusters of palms raised their knotty stems high up into waving plumed tufts, or spread, bush-like, from the ground, the rich-colored fruit bursting in clusters from the pod. Then there were groves of myrtle, pines, tall, stately cypresses, and on the summit itself two massive cedars.[1442] To those shady retreats **Yeshua** and **His talmidim** would often come from **the City of David** to rest and enjoy **themselves**.

The walk from the Upper Room to **the Garden** would have taken some time because of the distance and hilly conditions, which gave **Jesus** time for **His** final words of instruction. **He** used the time wisely. **They went** to **the Mount of Olives** to **the garden of Gethsemane (Mattityahu 26:30; Mark 14:26). Gethsemane** is identified as a place to press oil. It could also have had the appearance of a **garden** or orchard, as there were **olive** trees growing nearby. **Yeshua** specifically chose it as a place for some of **His** prayers during **His** last hours. Appropriately, **He Himself** would endure great agony there. **He was crushed for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5b)** at the place well known for that purpose.