

Gethsemane,



Beyond The Prayers of Jesus

Written By: Dempsey C. Howard

GETHSEMANE

BEYOND THE PRAYERS OF JESUS

A look at the Gethsemane Experience before
and during the time of Jesus, and how it applies
today.

by: Dempsey C. Howard

Howard Family Ministries

P.O. Box 110591

Nashville, Tennessee 37211

© 1997 Howard Family Ministries, Nashville, Tennessee

About The Author

Mr. Howard has been involved in the ministry for a great deal of his life, as he literally grew up under the pews of his Father's churches all along the eastern North Carolina Coast.

Moving to Nashville, TN in 1976 he began a life in the Southern Gospel Music Industry working with many of the nations top award winning artist.

After his marriage and the birth of his two children Ryan and Jayme, a call was surging once again in his life to do that as directed by God. For years there was a struggle to do that which was laid before him, and it was a sincere desire to that if only directed by God. And not because of his families involvement. That struggle was the learning process that would take him into Gethsemane.

Making a statement to a very close friend during a highly traumatic time in his life in the Fall of 1996, he said “I know now what Jesus must have experienced in Gethsemane,...” That friend replied, with “Not yet you don’t”. During the next several months the Gethsemane was revealed even greater.

Though it would have been desired to avoid the event leading to this, he presents, Gethsemane - Beyond The Prayers Of Jesus.

I have never been to Jerusalem to walk the land of our Lord and Savior, but I have many friends who have done so. The recollections of events happening to them have become memories to them and thoughts in my mind of what it might be like to see and experience them for my self.

At a time prior to the writing of this book, I have had a type of the Gethsemane experience to be revealed to me and what events really happened the night our Lord was betrayed. I have found that there is a much deeper meaning to Gethsemane than just a place of prayer. It is that meaning and experience that I wish to share with you in this writing.

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (KJV) James 5:16

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place
called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples,
Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. (KJV)
Matt 26:36

We each have our own Gethsemane.

How many times in our lives have we asked
others to pray for us? Telling them earnestly
what the burdens of our heart, minds, and lives
are to the day. We put our trust and faith in their
words of encouragement, that they will be
praying for us. Yet, while we go and pray in our
own place of prayer, for what ever the need may
be, we look back and see those who said they
would pray, “sleeping in the world”.

There was a deeper meaning to the place where
Jesus prayed.

We each have our own Gethsemane. It is a place where we experience the yielding of our fruits. All too often when we think of the place called Gethsemane, we think only of the place where Jesus went to pray the night of his betrayal. Again, It is my opinion that there was a deeper meaning to the place where Jesus prayed.

The Garden

The garden of Gethsemane, though I have never seen any more than pictures and heard the descriptions given by those who have seen it, is a beautiful place. Yet it is a place of birth and death. The birth of the garden comes in the new life that is brought forth by the care and dedication of those to whom it is entrusted. It is

in that same respect that death from the garden is experienced as we will see later in this chapter.

The garden of Gethsemane was just that, a garden, located at the foot of the Mount of Olives, where olive trees grew and life was given to new fruit each year. **The olive is cultivated for its fruits, which yield an edible oil and are also pickled for eating. Olive oil, is used in cooking, in canning, and as a table oil. Olives for eating are picked either when unripe or when ripe. Unripe olives are green and remain so during pickling. Ripe olives are dark bluish when fresh and turn blackish during pickling. The seed, or stone, of the olive is often removed and the cavity stuffed with spicy materials such as sweet red pepper.

As with any garden there is a constant care that

must be given to the life that is being produced. The gardeners or care givers were constantly working to see that each tree was well cared for and properly pruned at the right time to produce the highest yield at harvest time. It was during that day that pesticides were not in use as we know it and the bugs most likely would be removed by hand. In the driest of days, water would be carried to each tree to insure proper nourishment. In the coldest of nights that would cause damage, fires would be lit to decrease the effects of the cold. With out that care and cultivation, the expectation of new life “fruit” would cease to exist, and the plants would wither and die away. It is with and after that cultivation that the gardeners each year were able to pluck the fruit from the trees which we can associate with harvest time, and take it to the place of it’s yielding.

The Oil Press

At the oil press the workers would carefully pour in the fruit of the trees and there by turning a crank, apply pressure to the contents of the vat.

(Note: Let me say at this point that it is quite possible that the method for extracting the juices of the fruit was as that mentioned in Micah 6: 15 “tread the olives”. The word tread as mentioned in this reference means to walk upon or to step on. I think that according to the progress of man, that a more efficient way to increase productivity (as is man’s desire) could have been created. Given the location of the Garden near the city of Jerusalem, the demand for product would be increased. This is my personal thought.)

Either way, it was under that pressure that the fruit would burst and the juices it contained would be extracted. **Olive oil, which is derived from fresh, ripe fruits contain about 20 percent oil. We could easily associate that with a half a teaspoon of oil from each olive. From that we can determine the enormous amount of olives it would take to produce one bottle of oil. Since it took so many olives to produce one bottle of oil, this would validate the high cost of the anointing oil being a year's wages as complained about by Judas in John 12:5.

After the oil was extracted it would be combined with various fragrances and made ready to distribute to all who would purchase. The fragrance of this anointing oil must have been great, and might even have determined the cost, for it is written in John 12, that the aroma of the anointing that Mary released upon Jesus,

filled the house. This could have some validation as to Judas' knowledge of the cost due to the certain aroma.

The events and ultimate results of distribution of the oil was a continuous and beneficial process, year after year.

JESUS IN GETHSEMANE

Jesus in the flesh was a man born of woman, Mary. His father, was God. His earthly father was Joseph a carpenter. Jesus was treated as any other child, even though he was unlike any other. He was taught, and educated properly in the fashion of the day. Joseph taught Jesus his trade of carpentry. He made friends, and got to know the earth as we know it. It was not until

he reached the age of thirty that he began his ministry.

We are all familiar with the picture of Jesus praying in the garden. It is at the sight of this picture that we sometimes stop and go to the next event, which was the betrayal. But when we take time to expand on events leading to, and during his prayer time, we will begin to understand the true agony of Gethsemane.

Here was Jesus, a man who was preparing to go through one of the most excruciating times of his life. He knew that his life would soon end, for that was his purpose. Whether he knew in his mind as to the way of his death, I am uncertain. But I can only imagine that he (being God in the flesh) knew the direction man would take. Or could it possibly have been that God kept this hidden from his son? It is quite

possible that it was for this purpose, of the knowledge or hidden knowledge, that Christ was in agony on this night in Gethsemane.

Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.
Matt 26:38-39 (KJV)

Jesus had commanded eight of the disciples to wait at a certain place upon entering the Garden of Gethsemane, taking only three, Peter, James and John with him a little farther as they walked. Why did he choose these three to go farther with him? It was these same men who had been with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. It was they who had witnessed

the humbling of Jesus as a man before Moses and Elijah. It was they who also witnessed the change in him occur. Now, it is these same men who are seeing Jesus in a struggle with a situation beyond his control as a man. It is true that as the Son of God, he could have put a stop to what was happening to him, but his purpose would not be fulfilled. Jesus was feeling pain and mental torment throughout his body. Christ himself expressed his emotions as he walked through the garden. As he walked with his friends, no doubt there were tears in his eyes as he spoke, telling them of his feelings as a man. It had been for these feelings that Jesus told them to "wait here and pray". Pray for what? Pray that they not fall into temptation. Could it be that he was referring to them as men, feeling as he, in their future walks. He walked off alone.

I can almost visualize Jesus eventually running, until he fell and knelt upon the rock, crying out to God. Did he cry out that he might escape the cross? No! I feel that he cried out, that the pain within the man would be ended and he could have the spiritual strength to endure without agony. He did not say to God, let that which is to come, upon me pass meaning the cross, but, Father if you will, let “this cup” pass from me. The word this being a present, occurring event. God heard his prayer and sent comfort.

And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Luke 22:43-44 (KJV)

Even though he had comfort from the heavens with him in the presence of a ministering angel , he the man, continued in agony. This which was a struggle between man and spirit. Surely the prayers of this “man” Jesus were not the quiet monotone prayers that so many of us are guilty of today, but they must have been intense heart wrenching cries.

Why say this? The bible makes mention of His sweat being as drops of blood. With His heart pounding at a much faster rate than normal and the blood coursing through the body more rapid each time, the pressure on the vessels that carry the blood was more than could be handled. The blood burst through the lining of the vessel walls and escaping the body with the perspiration of a fervent laboring prayer. Now that is prayer!

What was happening here? Jesus is in the oil press. Not physically, but emotionally and spiritually. The agony of the press, or the pressures of what was to come, was more than man could endure. As the pressure increased, there was a release of the oil, which was the result from the exertion of the press. Ultimately there was a release of the anointing. A fragrant aroma of willingness and humility, mixed with sacrifice filled the surroundings. It was that anointing that allowed Jesus to be scourged, spat upon and ultimately go to the cross for our redemption of sin.

The agony of Gethsemane was not just as a passage way to the cross, but it was the ultimate release of the will of man, to the release and fulfillment of the anointing as dispensed by God through man. What a sacrifice!

SLEEPING CHURCHES?

There are many people today who contain within themselves that same anointing. They are the fruit of the church, whether it be the leaders or the sheep. Within each one of us is an anointing oil just waiting to be combined with the fragrant aroma supplied by God.

There is a cry that is coming and going churches all across the world for God to send a revival. Why do they not receive that revival that they cry for? Could it be that the church as a whole has become like Peter, James, and John, sleeping while one does the crying out to God. Yes, there are some that are willing to pray, for a while, but they grow weary and their faith in God and human strength becomes weak. Those are the fruit picked from the trees before becoming mature. They are the ones that allow

themselves to be used for other purposes and eventually be consumed to the world. They call out to the gardeners in the vineyard to take me for I am ready. But when it comes time to be placed in and endure the oil press they are rejected, for the yield will not be to it's fullest extent.

What would have happened, had Jesus the second time come upon His three friends, and finding them sleeping, gave up as a man and joined them in their slumber. Sure, He would still have gone to the cross, but the power of the anointing would not have been fully released. It was in His willingness as a man to break through the emotional barriers of of the mind and body, surroundings that He had become accustomed to, and people with whom He had lived, that there was and is a full release of the anointing. In regards to that, we too have that

same responsibility in the garden.

CHURCH GARDENING

The church is a vineyard. And in this vineyard are many trees. These trees are the body of the church.

In using the word trees, we can relate to it like this,... Each tree has many branches and from those branches come fruit that bear seeds. And you know what happens when we plant more seeds. We have a bigger vineyard!

The church is a vineyard

It is here that the trees that yield fruit are cultivated. Each of us are gardeners in the vineyard. Each have a duty to care and protect

that fruit bearing tree that is entrusted to us. In the failure to perform the duties of cultivation, and provide nourishment, we lose a yield from our labors. And if we take the fruit from the trees before it is time and reached its maturity, we not only lose the yield of the fruit, but we lose an effective seed. This is the effect of inefficient gardening techniques.

A CALL TO THE CHURCHES

There is a call out to the churches today to release itself from the things of the world such as politics, human rights debates, and even religious barriers. This is where the struggle between the “church” and how the anointing exists. We have become afraid to declare that which is God’s word as a whole. Instead we

allow it to be filtered and diluted with the conformities of the world. In our doing so we eliminate the risk of losing people because of the message we present. Forget the risk! Let there be again an anointing flowing from the pulpit of the church and you individual lives.

OBTAINING THE AFFECTS OF THE ANOINTING

To obtain the affects of the anointing we must have (1) nourishment. We can obtain that nourishment from being in the word daily, (2) continuously searching the many given directions from God. (3) By listening to the quiet yet powerful words of knowledge as given by God. (4) By finding ourselves continuously on our knees. This is the one that

when combined with being in the Word daily
will reap the most benefits!

It is while on our knees, being close to the
source, we are able to see the many weeds that
hinder our growth and it is there that we are
able to remove those weeds from around us. It
is the act of the humility of man by bending the
knee, that will gain a closer fulfillment to the
prayers that are being prayed. After that is
accomplished, we will walk out of Gethsemane
with victory.

GETHSEMANE, AN APPOINTED PLACE

All of us as Christians will have some form of the Gethsemane experience. Some will experience it in ways different than others. It may come in the form of loss of a loved one, a job, or a financial disaster. Gethsemane can bring you to what feels like the very brink of ruin. Be warned a Gethsemane experience can tear you to shreds. But, when you have come away from Gethsemane and have had the anointing oil extracted from your very being, the fragrant strength that you have obtained can not be measured. Withstanding the press is when you experience a release of the anointing and are able to move forward in the direction given by God.

Where Do You Stand?

Are you standing at the gate of the garden? Do you feel the fear of the press? If there is a true call to ministry on your life, Gethsemane is not a place that you can avoid as it is a place that you must experience in your anointed walk with the Lord. Our churches, our pastors, our deacons, and elders must have an anointing flowing from them. Everyone who has a place of authority in the area of church service (and that is each of us) must have an anointing flowing from them.

In the Gethsemane of your life, I encourage you to submit, commit, and endure the press. The anointing will follow.

