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John 18 - Part II

The Oil Press

John 18:1: *When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.*

Mark 14:32: *And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane.*

Gethsemane ^{g1068} means *oil-press*. Below is a picture of one found in Jerusalem in 2013, adding to the first one found a few years earlier. Notice the circular shape of the base and the wheel, used to press the olives, leaning against the back of it. The wheel was rolled inside the base by a person or an animal, like an ox.



There are several types of wheels in the OT from which spiritual lessons can be drawn: a wheel of a cistern used in drawing water from a well, Eccl 12:6; on chariots used in war, Ex 14:25, Jer 47:3; a potter's wheel to shape the clay, Jer 18:3; and the wheel of a press for separating chaff from the grain or to make wine by pressing grapes, or oil by pressing olives. Which type wheel do you think Ezekiel saw?: Ezekiel 10:10: *And their appearance was as one, the four of them, as if the wheel were in the midst of the wheel.* (Also Eze 1:16)

Read Luke 22:39-46; Mark 33-35, 41-42: (The Study is based on Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:39-46)

1. What caused the suffering of Jesus in the garden at this time? Mk 14:34; Heb 2:14-15

{Three times Jesus asked the Father that he might not go through the experience, to the point his sweat is described as being like "great drops of blood." In his humanity he overcame the fear of death.}

1a. What does the cup represent? Ps 165 & 116:13; Jer 16:7 comfort; Eze 23:33 horror & ruin; 1Cor 10:16 blessing, verse 21 the Lord's versus demons.

{a vessel from which to drink: a part of the mind that holds a particular understanding. Jesus knew the experience of the cross he was facing, and desired not to partake of it. Cf Ps 75:8; Jer 25:15-17; Rv 14:8; 17:4}

2. Considering the oil-press as a metaphor, what spiritual lessons might be gleaned by Jesus' experience in the garden? Heb 2:16-18 ^{note}; Pr 20:26; Dan 7:9-10a + Jer 23:29 (Lord's prayer - Mt 6:10)
{Pure olive oil is used for light, Ex 27:20; The press brings forth the oil, a symbol of the Spirit, to give light in your temple (mind - 1Cor 3:16). As the oil is separated from the pulp, there is a separation of "wills" - not mine, but God's will be done: Mk 14:36; Gal 1:4; mankind - Rom 12:2; 1Jn 2:17. Oil for anointing is olive oil mixed with four spices. Note: cp Heb 4:15 with Jam 1:13 - the Father & Son are different & the Father anointed the Son, Lk 4:18.}

Read Luke 22:43:

3. The messenger from heaven is not named. Who might it have been? Lk 9:30-31

{When Jesus was transfigure, Moses & Elijah spoke to him about his death he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. Perhaps he remembered this, or one of them came again. Note: this verse does not make sense in a Trinitarian environment, since in their belief Jesus is the only God. How could an angel strengthen God better than God himself? Some say his divinity left him; others say the human nature was to be left alone - but no scriptural support for any of it. - cf 2Pt 1:1-4: we partake of the divine nature through knowledge, as did Jesus, and yet we still suffer temptation.}

Read Luke 22:44:

4. Did Jesus really sweat blood?

{The phrase in the KJ, *as it were* ^{g5616}, which is translated correctly, could indicate it more in a figurative sense or blood colored sweat. Luke, being a physician, would take note of this. There is a rare condition whereby a person can sweat blood - From Wikipedia: *Hematidrosis, also called blood sweat, is a very rare condition in which a human sweats blood.* Sweating blood would be caused by extreme mental stress.}

Note ^{question 2}: *Angels* in Heb 2:16 is referring back to verse 7, a quote from Ps 8:5, which uses the Hebrew word *elohim* (rendered mostly as *God, gods*) and not *malak* ^{h4397}, which is the word for angel, or messenger. Lexicons list more of the usage of the Hebrew words *el* ^{h410}, *elohim* ^{h430}, and *eloah* ^{h433} rather than the definitions.

From the Ancient Hebrew Lexicon:

el ^{h410}: power: one who holds authority over others - judges, chiefs, gods. Carries the sense of being yoked together (as with the strength of an ox). *el* ^{h410} is the root of *elohim* ^{h430}, and *eloah* ^{h433}.

elohim ^{h430}, and *eloah* ^{h433}: The power or might of one who rules or teaches; one who yokes with another (often applied to rulers, gods and God, cf Ex 7:1.).

Therefore "angels ^{g32}" in Hebrews 2:7, 9, 16, based on Ps 8:5 should be rendered as "mighty ones ^{h430}," which likely refers to religious and spiritual leaders of that day. Jesus did not come as an earthly leader, as religious leaders expected, but as a man of humble means, a poor carpenter who had no place to lay his head, Mt 8:20.