

Matthew 26:17-46

Willingness and weakness



There's a lot of probably quite familiar stuff happening in this long passage. "The flesh is weak" pervades the passage, with weakness sometimes evident as sin (even if masquerading as strength), but at other times simply as vulnerability. Even Jesus, "in the days of his *flesh*" (Hebrews 5:7), undergoes mental and spiritual torment here, knowing that to continue the path to the cross would lead to the terrible moment when "the Father turns his face away", as, "bearing sin and scoffing rude, in my place condemned he stood". "Nevertheless" (39) ... do we not see here a most magnificent and worthy Saviour?

➤ The inner-circle traitor (17-25)

Jesus' quiet confrontation of Judas (25) acts as his final warning. But could Judas still have repented at that moment, since "the Son of man goes as it is written of him" (24)?

If it was pride that kept Judas from repenting ... what do we find ourselves doing (or refusing to do) because of pride?

➤ The altered Passover (26-29)

Check out Hebrews for ways in which the *new* covenant surpasses the "old" covenant. So are we sometimes too interested in things Jewish, which the Bible said, many centuries back, were even then obsolete (Hebrews 8:13)?

➤ The arrogant leader (30-35)

Peter's brave words stir all the disciples to make a bold declaration – but is this out of strength or weakness (pride, again?)?

➤ The vulnerable Saviour (36-46)

Are we right in investing that word "*watch* and pray" (41) with more meaning than was intended? Does it imply more than just "stay awake"? How might we apply that "watch" command to ourselves?

What "temptation" were the disciples told to pray about?

"The flesh is weak" - but is every weakness *sinful*?

What particularly caused Jesus "to be sorrowful and troubled" (37)? Even at his weakest, why does he still show us the truest strength in the whole of today's passage?

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