

General Service in Malang, January 08, 2012 (Sunday Morning)

Matthew 26:47-56 is about "Jesus' arrest" and it still happened in Gethsemane.

Matthew 26:47-50

26:47 And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people.

26:48 Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him."

26:49 Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.

26:50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.

In Gethsemane, Jesus experienced flesh suffering without any sins until he was arrested by a great multitude led by Judas Iscariot. In the last days, God's church (the body of Christ) will also experience flesh suffering without any sins, in the form of suffering to be able to minister God, suffering to defend the truth, injustice, slander, etc. This is the time before antichrist reigns over the world up to the time antichrist reigns over it for three years and half.

The ambience of Gethsemanecan only be tackled by watching and praying, and we always have to be in the ambience of spiritual revival (in the shepherding).

Judas Iscariot did not watch and pray, and he was not shepherded, such that he submitted Jesus to be arrested and crucified. Judas Iscariot became equal to antichrist.

Be watchful!

Judas is greater than we, he is an apostle and treasurer, but since he did not watch and pray, also he was not shepherded, Judas became antichrist at the end.

Matthew 26:50

26:50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.

Matthew 9:14-15

9:14. Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?"

9:15 And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

John 3:29

3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.

Jesus Himself confessed that Judas Iscariot was His friend (Matthew 26:50; Matthew 9:14-15).

According to John 3, John the Baptist is also called as the friend of the bridegroom.

The friend of the bridegroom is life who rejoices when listening the bridegroom's voice (Bride Tidings).

There are two types of the preaching of the Word as follows:

- The gospel Word = milk = Good News, that is the Word which preaches Jesus' first coming, to bring sinful people to believe Jesus, to repent, and to be saved.
- The teaching Word = solid food = Bride Tidings, that is the Word which preaches Jesus' second coming in glory, to purify, to renew, until perfect His church to become the perfect heavenly Bride.

If Judas Iscariot is also called as the friend, it means that Judas can also enjoy the Bride Tidings, but he cannot practice the Word (not being obedient). Why?

- Because Judas defended the desire of the flesh, those were evil and unclean desire.
- Because Judas frequently listened to strange voice from the chief priests and the elders.
Strange voice is another teaching which is clearly different from Jesus' teaching, gossips whose truth cannot be accounted.

John 13:18

13:18. "I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.'"

The consequence is Judas lifted his heel. It means being proud, raising himself, and opposing Jesus, that is starting to avoid the Word, criticize the Word, getting bored, until cannot stand anymore to listen to the Word. At the end, Judas went out and became antichrist (betrayed Jesus).

Be watchful!

"*He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me*" means that many lives who have experienced the care of the true teaching Word physically and spiritually, will become proud and against God, until become the same as antichrist.

Do not be proud in success!

Do not be desperate in failure, since the teaching Word is still able to lift us up!

John 3:29-30

3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.

3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

John the Baptist is mentioned as the friend of the bridegroom. It means life who can hear and enjoy the Bride Tidings, until being obedient.

The result is experiencing purification, starting from the heart, that is **purification from pride**, such that we can humble ourselves.

Isaiah 14:12-14

14:12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!

14:13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;

14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'

Pride is the character of Satan (Lucifer).

Five times Lucifer said "I will" until "I will be like the Most High" (the peak of pride). It equals to being against Jesus' five wounds on the cross (the peak of humility).

The consequence is Satan will be downed to the death.

Matthew 23:12

23:12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

On the contrary, John the Baptist humbled himself such that he was exalted by God, he was used to glorify the name of God.

If there is anyone who lifts his heel or being proud, we do not need to follow, since there will be God's time and he will be downed.

Although John the Baptist has been exalted and used by God, he still has weakness, especially when he faced the ambience of Gethsemane.

Matthew 11:2-6

11:2 And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples

11:3 and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

11:4 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:

11:5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

11:6 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

In the beginning, the position of John the Baptist was as the friend of the bridegroom, that is

- He was used for God's glory, he baptized many people.
- He really knew Jesus, as the Savior (Gospel Word) and the heavenly Bridegroom (teaching Word).

John 1:29, 36

1:29. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

1:36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

Afterwards, John the Baptist was allowed to enter the prison, which denotes limitation, problems.

When facing the ambience of Gethsemane, John started to doubt Jesus.

In the beginning John persuaded many people to believe Jesus, but after he was in prison, he himself started to doubt Jesus. The situation of John the Baptist is as a bruised reed and a smoking flax. If this condition is continued, he will also betray Jesus as Judas Iscariot.

The disciples of John came and brought testimony about Jesus.

Testimony about Jesus reminded John the Baptist about the prophecy in the book of Isaiah which has been fulfilled in Jesus.

Isaiah 35:3-6

35:3 Strengthen the weak hands, And make firm the feeble knees.

35:4 Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you."

35:5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

35:6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.

John the Baptist became strong again until he was willing to be beheaded.

A bruised reed is straightened, and a smoking flax is flared.

Who are we compared to John the Baptist?

We have to experience the ambience of Gethsemane, but there is God's testimony and glory behind.

Nowadays, let us strengthen each other through testimony. Do not weaken each other!

There are two important lessons in facing the ambience of Gethsemane as follows:

1. We must look for the true teaching Word, which is written in the Holy Bible, and whose secret is revealed (one verse is explained by another verse).
2. We need testimonies about how the teaching Word has worked and helped our life.
We can testify through distributing the recording of the ceremonies, also joining the fellowships.

Why does God let us deal with the ambience of Gethsemane?

1. **A test of faith** for us, such that our faith will increase until we can stand fast in the faith and have perfect faith.
We do not become discouraged and desperate, we do not reject Jesus (the true teaching Word). We are willing to sacrifice anything to hold on to the true teaching Word.
2. **Such that we can understand Jesus' activity as the Lamb of God and heavenly Bridegroom who has the power.**
We believe and fully surrender ourselves to God, and we will experience His miracle.
The resurrection power of God cannot be defeated by anything.

For example is if Abraham had not been obedient to sacrifice Isaac, he would have never experienced the power or miracle of God, and maybe Isaac would die.

There is nothing impossible to God, physically and spiritually.

Physically, impossible things become possible.

Spiritually, we receive miracle of renewal of life to perfect us as the heavenly bride who has the same glory as God.

I Thessalonians 4:15-17

4:15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

4:17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Later, those who are dead in Christ (as John the Baptist) and we who are alive and remain, will meet in the glorious body to welcome Jesus' second coming.

God blesses us.