

**Valley Bible Church**  
**Sermon Notes for February 4, 2018**

**Mark 14:43-52**  
**The Arrest**

I. The arrival (14:43)

*43 And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.*

- “And immediately, while he was still speaking”
  - Shows that Jesus was spot on in His timing of Judas’ arrival
  - Jesus obviously did not intend to evade or escape from this situation
- “Judas came, one of the twelve,”
  - Mark clearly identifies Judas Iscariot as the “betraye” from verse 42 and earlier at the Last Supper in vv. 18-20
  - Describing Judas as one of the twelve is a reminder of his heinous act
- “And with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.”
  - An armed crowd
    - Since they were armed, they obviously intended to intimidate him into compliance
  - An authorized crowd
    - This crowd was authorized by the Jewish authorities
      - Chief priests, scribes and elders
    - Since Jewish authorities were authorized to make arrests, they had Temple guards they could utilize for this situation
    - There were more than Temple guards in this crowd with Judas
    - Additionally there were Roman guards that joined this crowd
      - John 18:3 “So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons.”
    - Even some of the Jewish authorities came themselves
      - Luke 22:52 “Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, ‘Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?’”
  - How did the Jewish leadership assemble this crowd?
    - “In sending this throng to arrest Jesus, they were acting in unity. The cooperation of the Roman troops probably was secured by the high priest through a direct request to the commanding officer at the Tower of

Antonia for assistance in apprehending the leader of a dangerous Jewish band.”<sup>1</sup>

- How big was the crowd?
  - A band or cohort of soldiers would normally be around 600 men, also known as a battalion.<sup>2</sup>

## II. The arrangement (14:44-45)

*44 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.” 45 And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” And he kissed him.*

- “Now the betrayer had given them a sign,”
  - Mark helps the reader to know the background of what will happen next
  - Judas had already planned a signal that would be recognized by the crowd with him
  - “The fact that a signal for the arrest had been prearranged confirms that the arresting party were not acquainted with Jesus.”<sup>3</sup>
- “Saying, ‘The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.’”
  - Judas had planned the signal of a kiss
    - What exactly did a kiss signify back then?
    - “A customary greeting, especially between a rabbi and his disciple”<sup>4</sup>
    - “In addition to being a special act of respect and affection, this kind of kiss was a sign of homage in Middle East culture. Out of the varieties of this kiss (on the feet, on the back of the hand, on the palm, on the hem of the garment), Judas chose the embrace and the kiss on the cheek—the one that showed the closest love and affection, normally reserved for one with whom a person had a close, intimate relationship (such as a pupil for his teacher). Judas could not have chosen a more despicable way to identify Jesus, because he perverted its usual meaning so treacherously and hypocritically.”<sup>5</sup>
  - Why a kiss?
    - It was dark at night and hard to tell who everyone was
  - Judas warned that Jesus should be seized and led away under guard
    - Judas more than any other in the crowd knew of Jesus’ power and ability to evade this crowd if He so desired

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<sup>1</sup> D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1994), 421.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, *Harmony of the Gospels*, 226, footnote 10.

<sup>3</sup> Lane, 524-25.

<sup>4</sup> D. A. Carson, “The Gospels and Acts,” in *NIV Zondervan Study Bible: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 2052.

<sup>5</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1496.

- “And when he came, he went up to him at once”
  - Judas did not waste time
  - He immediately identified Jesus for this armed crowd
- “And said, ‘Rabbi!’ And he kissed him.”
  - Judas still greeted Jesus as if everything was normal between them
    - At least as far as the kiss and title “Rabbi” are utilized
    - Judas probably did this to make it crystal clear which individual was Jesus
    - A usually affectionate greeting turned into an empty act of treachery
  - Matthew 26:50 “Jesus said to him, ‘Friend, do what you came to do.’”

### III. The arrest (14:46-47)

*46 And they laid hands on him and seized him. 47 But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.*

- “And they laid hands on him and seized him.”
  - As Judas had arranged, the crowd acted
  - Jesus was in complete control during this process
    - John 18:3-9 “3 So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4 Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, ‘Whom do you seek?’ 5 They answered him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I am he.’ Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6 When Jesus said to them, ‘I am he,’ they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 So he asked them again, ‘Whom do you seek?’ And they said, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ 8 Jesus answered, ‘I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go.’ 9 This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: ‘Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one.’”
- “But one of those who stood by”
  - We know this to be Peter from parallel passages
  - John 18:10 “Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.)”
  - Matthew, Mark and Luke do not identify the one striking the servant
    - Written earlier and still trying to protect people from Jewish persecution
  - John wrote later and resolved that this was in fact, Peter (John 18:10)
- “Drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.”
  - Peter stepped into action and attempted to back up his claims of loyalty and commitment to Jesus
  - The victim is identified as the servant of the high priest
    - John 18:10 “Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.)”
    - “Malchus (John 18:10). He was neither a soldier nor temple policeman, but rather was a high-ranking personal slave of Caiaphas, the High-

Priest, probably sent along to observe Judas and report on the events of the evening.”<sup>6</sup>

- “Probably aggressive in the move to effect the arrest of Jesus, he was the first man in reach of Peter’s sword.”<sup>7</sup>
- Matthew and Luke reveal Jesus’ rebuke of Peter
- Luke also adds Jesus’ healing of the servant’s ear
  - Matthew 26:52-54 “Then Jesus said to him, ‘Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. 53 Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? 54 But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?’”
  - Luke 22:51 “But Jesus said, ‘No more of this!’ And he touched his ear and healed him.”
- It is as if Mark is trying to show a small glimmer of bravery and loyalty from (one) disciple
  - This loyalty from Peter would not last long as the passage will show

#### IV. The admonition (14:48-49)

*48 And Jesus said to them, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? 49 Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.”*

- “And Jesus said to them,”
  - Jesus now addressed the armed crowd in this hostile moment
- “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me?”
  - What does the term, “robber” mean?
    - Armed bandit, or more probably, a revolutionary, rebel, or insurrectionist
  - Jesus appears to be identifying the odd behavior of these people
    - Does this course of actions really fit the person of Jesus?
      - The surprise armed attack at night does not seem to fit Jesus’ profile as a religious teacher to the people
    - Where is this coming from?
      - They are treating Jesus like a rebel and insurrectionist when He has been doing everything out in the open for them to see
- “Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me.”
  - Jesus is rebuking the crowd and Jewish leaders
  - Jesus acknowledges the obvious about His location for the past week
  - Yet those previous interactions did not lead to more conversations and discussions between Jesus and the religious leaders

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<sup>6</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1497.

<sup>7</sup> D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1994), 423–424.

- Instead, the religious leaders had secretly begun to plot about how they were going to kill Jesus
- "... the temple authorities have resorted to this tactic because they know that their actions would not win the approval of the public."<sup>8</sup>
- This is a ridiculous injustice
  - This is no way for a religious teacher to be treated
    - Ambushing Him by nightfall on Passover?!
  - This is no way for the Son of Man to be treated!
    - It is not just that they fail to recognize Him as the Messiah
    - It is that they treat Him in this outrageously wicked manner
  - There can be no greater injustice than how Jesus is being treated here
- Question: Yet how does He respond to this injustice??
- "But let the Scriptures be fulfilled."
  - To the shock and dismay of the disciples, Jesus submissively accepts this seizure and arrest
  - Jesus is calm and at peace with events that will unfold
  - How???
  - What brought Him to this point where He could respond in such a manner???
  - Jesus has full confidence in God and His plan due to the truth revealed in God's Word
    - Earlier, Jesus was struggling and laboring intensively in prayer
    - Now, Jesus is embracing this moment
  - Jesus' laboring in prayer brought alignment of His will with His Father's will
    - Jesus, through prayer, came to accept the truth of God's Word and the plan of God already revealed and made known in the Scriptures
    - Jesus had arrived at a place of peaceful obedience to the will of God as revealed in the Word of God
  - Jesus acknowledged this moment as a fulfillment of Scripture
    - How exactly was this a fulfillment of Scripture?
      - "No specific text is mentioned, but given the importance of Isaiah 53 for Jesus' understanding of his death, it perhaps refers to Isaiah's suffering servant being numbered with the "transgressors" (Isa 53:12, where the Hebrew is "rebels"; cf. Luke 22:37). At the same time, the scattering of Jesus' disciples (v. 50) also suggests Zech 13:7."<sup>9</sup>
    - He was numbered with the transgressors?
      - "Entirely apart from the crowd's sinful intentions against Jesus, God was sovereignly using it to fulfill prophecy (cf. Is. 53:7–9, 12)

<sup>8</sup> Craig A. Evans, Mark 8:27–16:20, vol. 34B, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2001), 426.

<sup>9</sup> D. A. Carson, "The Gospels and Acts," in NIV Zondervan Study Bible: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 2052.

and accomplish His gracious purposes (see note on Matt. 26:54).”<sup>10</sup>

#### V. The abandonment (14:50-52)

*50 And they all left him and fled. 51 And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, 52 but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.*

- “And they all left him and fled.”
  - This is an exact fulfillment of Zechariah 13:7 as Jesus earlier prophesied in verse 27
  - Even Peter, who was bold enough to strike someone with a sword, became frightened and fled
  - Jesus’ embrace of God’s will led to the fleeing of the disciples
    - “The disciples found no comfort in Jesus’ reference to Scripture, but instead their faith in Him collapsed as they realized He would not resist arrest and that they also might be captured.”<sup>11</sup>
    - “and abandoning him, they fled—all (of them).”<sup>12</sup>
  
- “And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body.”
  - Who was this young man? How did Mark learn of this detail?
    - Was this possibly Mark who was young at the time?
    - “Some suggest that this unnamed man is Mark himself. Whoever he is, his naked flight (v. 52) is a far cry from the riot the authorities feared (11:18; 12:12).”<sup>13</sup>
    - “This perhaps was Mark himself. If the mob under Judas’ guidance had first gone to Mark’s mother’s house in search of Jesus—possibly where the last Passover was observed by Jesus and the 12—Mark could have heard the noise, suspected what was happening, and hurried to follow the multitude.”<sup>14</sup>
    - “Several Fathers of the Church conjectured that the young man was Mark himself, who is known to have been a resident in Jerusalem (Acts 12:12) and in whose house, it was held by tradition, Jesus celebrated the

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<sup>10</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1497.

<sup>11</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1497.

<sup>12</sup> Craig A. Evans, Mark 8:27–16:20, vol. 34B, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2001), 427.

<sup>13</sup> D. A. Carson, “The Gospels and Acts,” in NIV Zondervan Study Bible: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 2052.

<sup>14</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1497.

paschal meal. If this is correct, Mark was an eyewitness to the transactions in Gethsemane.”<sup>15</sup>

- Why was he only wearing a linen cloth?
  - Was that normal or not?
  - “The lack of an undergarment might imply that he had dressed hurriedly to follow Jesus.”<sup>16</sup>
- “And they seized him,”
  - Even as this young man tried to follow Jesus, he was seized
- “But he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.”
  - This young man was almost seized but the crowd only had him by his clothes
  - This allowed the young man to shamefully run away naked
  - “Naked here is probably literal, although the term was sometimes used of a person wearing only an undergarment.”<sup>17</sup>
  - Why in the world would Mark want this detail in his gospel???
    - “These two verses, which are unique to Mark’s record, appear to be an appendix to the statement in verse 50 that ‘all fled.’ They serve to emphasize the fleeing of the disciples by focusing upon a young man who was present and who also fled... His primary purpose for including this vignette, however, appears to have been to emphasize the fact that *all* fled, leaving Jesus alone in the custody of the police. No one remained with Jesus, not even a valiant young man who intended to follow him.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Lane, 527.

<sup>16</sup> D. A. Carson, “The Gospels and Acts,” in NIV Zondervan Study Bible: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 2052.

<sup>17</sup> D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1994), 426.

<sup>18</sup> Lane, 527-28.