

JESUS IN GETHSEMANE

1. Location of the Garden

- At the foot of the Mount of Olives, across the brook Kedron - to the northeast of the city walls.
- Actually an orchard of olive trees, the fruit of which produced an important commodity - oil, used for lighting, cooking, preservative and lubrication; also used for anointing of prophets and kings (messiah = anointed with olive oil)

2. Modern day

- Olive trees do not have rings like other trees so it is hard to date them. However, current olive trees there are many hundred years old. Probably not the same ones there in Jesus' day, because history says that the Roman Emperor Titus had all the olive trees cut down around Jerusalem. Current ones may have been planted by Christians to mark the spot or possibly they sprouted up from the old roots.

3. Meaning and Significance of the Name

- Gethsemane - Hebrew Gat (press)+ Shmanim (oils) = "oil press"
- Symbolic meaning - the valuable oil is pressed out of the olives using large stones which exert crushing pressure upon them. The precious blood of Jesus was pressed out of him under the weight of the sin of humanity ("began to be...very heavy.")
- Before the physical suffering began, Christ experienced mental and emotional pain. The world's sin weighed more than the cross.

4. Scripture References

- Mt. 26:36-46
- Mk. 14:32-42
- Lu. 22:39-46

5. Jesus sought solitude away from most disciples, and ultimately from his three closest friends: Peter, James and John. His was a burden only he could bear.

6. The Prayers of Jesus

- Significance of the number three - perfection, completion
- Analysis of his words
 - #1: "If possible, let this cup pass" - wording suggests it might be possible
 - #2 & 3: "If this cup may not pass..." - wording implies he had resigned himself to the reality that it could not pass
- Physically taxing - the need to be strengthened by an angel and the sweating of blood (hematohidrosis) which only occurs when a person is acutely stressed

7. The disappointment of finding his closest friends asleep when he had asked them to watch and pray, added to his "aloneness"

- Think about his emotional state by the time the soldiers arrived to take him away.