

The Surrender & Obedience of

Jesus

Good morning and welcome, and welcome to all those online as well.

Today's passage is **John 18:1-14** (SLIDE 1. Title & passage) READ

If you need a bible raise hand...

While you're getting to the passage...:

2. (SLIDE 2. Sermon Notes)

Pray: (Long Pause – Israel - Children)

In today's passage we have the privilege of watching Jesus surrender his *power* in obedience to the will of the Father and it is done as a demonstration to the "world" of his love for the Father.

To set up the backdrop for what we see in the passage today, let's begin by reading **John 14:30-31** (hilite "ruler of the world" "no power over me") READ.

The context of this verse is that Jesus and disciples were in the upper room where Jesus had washed the disciples feet as a demonstration of *his love for the disciples*. They shared the Passover meal together including the cup of the covenant which we celebrate today in communion. Judas left the group to go betray Jesus to the religious officials, and Jesus prepared and equipped the remaining disciples for living as disciples after Jesus left them. In that conversation Jesus informed the disciples that the "*ruler of this world approaches*."

That was the 2nd time Jesus used this language, "*ruler of this world*". The first was in **John 12:31** (hilite "Ruler of the world") READ. This is a reference to "Satan". There are three important things going on in this verse involving the "*ruler of this world*" and Jesus. The first is "timing". The "*time for judging this world has come*". (use in closing) So there is a "*divine timeline*" unfolding in the gospel of John, involving Jesus, and from my perspective this timeline unfolding seems to be picking up speed.

The *second* thing happening here is the "divine timing" involves the "*world being judged*". That sounds serious right? And *who* is the ruler of *this the world*? Satan. Thus divine Judgement of *Satan and his world*. Again "world" being people living in spiritual darkness under Satan's rule.

And the *third important thing*, is that the text implies that whatever Jesus does in this divine timeline results in Satan being "*judged*" and "*cast out*". So Jesus acts, the judgement happens, and the result is Satan is "cast out". Satan is cast out, and those

living in spiritual darkness are judged, yes, but have the option till their last breath, of choosing a different ending than the ruler of the world, Satan **John 3:16**. So from John 12:31 and 3:16 there is divine timing unfolding, Satan and the world will be judged, Satan is “cast out”, but the people of the world have a choice till their last breath.

Now jump back to **14:30** where Jesus and the disciples were in the upper room, and Jesus tells the disciples the “*ruler of this world approaches*”. (the one who will be *judged and cast out*), he is the one that is approaching Jesus and the disciples.

Have you ever been walking somewhere and you notice another person on an intercept course to you? Someone spots you at the grocery store, and they start coming towards you. It doesn't take long till you realize an intentional meeting is about to happen- the two paths converging. The language of 14:30 indicates a “convergence of two paths” or more accurately “*two powers*”, Satan and Jesus, and they are on an *intercept course*. **(SLIDE 3. Intercept Course)**.

From the time Jesus and the disciples enter the garden there is no further mention of Ruler of the World, Satan or the devil in the gospel of John. So does Satan literally approach Jesus? Look at **John 13:26 -27, 30** .. the context is that Jesus had told the disciples that one of them would betray him. READ. So from this point on Satan is *in* Judas. Judas with Satan in him Jesus, leaves and “*goes out into the night*”. That is a *chilling* verse spiritually. So Judas, with Satan in him, goes and arranges Jesus betrayal and sets up the intercept course.

So back in **14:30b** Jesus sees Satan, the ruler of the world, in Judas, on an intercept course and he says to the disciples of “*he (Satan) has no power over me*”. This is a statement of “*comparison of power*”. Obviously Satan has power, because he is “the ruler of this world.” Look at all the damage, destruction and chaos he has influenced in world history to that point. That power is significant yes, but in *comparison* to Jesus' power? Jesus says “*he has no power over me*”. Now is Jesus just “trash talking” like two football lineman facing off from each other? Or is this a statement of fact? In a few minutes here you will see evidence from our text that this is a *fact*.

To give an idea of the *comparison of power* between Jesus and Satan, think of our earth in relationship to the sun. From *our vantage point* on earth, our “sun” is really huge and powerful, and its 93 million miles away **(SLIDE 4. earth size)** . If our orbit was any closer to the sun we would all be fried. At 93 *million* miles that is crazy power. Itty bitty earth – big giant sun, *massive* amount of power. But if you compare *our sun* to the size and power of the *largest* known star – our sun is now the “itty bitty” one. **(SLIDE 5. Star Size chart)**.

So when Jesus says in **14:30** “*he has no power over me*”.. think of it this way. Satan in comparison is an itty bitty star, oh yes lots of power from our vantage point on earth,

and power that we have to respect, but in comparison to Jesus' power, it is as Jesus says, "he has no power over Jesus". Jesus is God, creator of all the suns, and all the universe! That's unfathomable power over creation. And Satan is a *created being*, a "fallen" *created being*, who now is "ruler of this world". Yet Jesus, God, came into this world, Satan's world, and made himself really, really, really small. (SLIDE 6. Descending Sequence animated)

But look what Jesus says next in v14:31 "I will do what the Father requires of me, so that the world will know that I love the Father". This is Jesus surrendering his power in obedience to the will of the Father, because he *loves* the Father. Jesus chose to make himself small, he came to earth, itty bitty teetsy wheeny earth, where Satan is the ruler and holds the power. Jesus made himself small out of obedience and love for the Father. "I will do what the Father requires of me". That is surrender and obedience, and Jesus' continual surrendering of power is what we see unfold in Chapter 18.

18:1 READ

(SLIDE 7. Map of Jerusalem) Its dark. Jesus and his disciples are walking from upper Jerusalem on Mount Zion to the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. And remember they are on an intercept course with Satan, who is in Judas. V1 says they crossed the Kidron Valley. The names "Kidron Brook" and "Kidron Valley" are misleading here. (SLIDE 8. Kidron Valley) Those words are the English renderings. Rather this is a "Wadi" that only flows with water when there are winter storms, (SLIDE 9. Wadi Kidron) and the Wadi Kidron goes the whole way to the dead sea. The last slide has green vegetation it in because of the brief winter rains. It is a very short green season in Judea. Some historians believe that at the time of Jesus the Kidron also flowed on Passover when the blood of an estimated 200,000 or more sacrificed Passover lambs drained from the temple mount into the Kidron. Interesting the name "Kidron" comes from the word "kedar" that means "dark".

Jesus and his disciples crossed over the Kidron and entered a grove of olive trees. It's believed that the olive grove was on the lower slope of the Mount of Olives. (SLIDES 10, 11, 12 Gethsamene)

A few of the olive trees still standing there are believed to be over 1000 years old and maybe considerably more. (Cats)

One more piece here, note where it says they "entered a grove of olive trees". (SLIDE 13. grk "Garden") In greek the word is actually the word "garden" and its used for both "garden and orchard". So the intercept point where their paths converge, between Jesus and Satan is in a "garden". The word "garden" here *may* be what some scholars are calling a "hyperlink". John's use of the word "garden" would be a hyperlink to the Gen 3 "garden" where Satan "intercepted" Adam and Eve. This understanding of the word "garden" gets even more interesting. Look ahead to 19:41 NIV. READ So where Jesus surrendered his power, where he was seized and arrested by Satan was in a

“garden”. Where Jesus was crucified was a “garden”. Where Jesus was buried and then resurrected from was in a “garden”. Where Jesus’ death and resurrection defeated Satan was in a “garden”. Where Jesus “crushed the head” of the serpent (**Gen 3:15 NIV** **hilite “crush”**) is in a garden. Is that an intentional full circle? You decide.

So back in John 18.. Jesus and the disciples are now in the Garden of Gethsemane, and this must have been their regular “spot” because **v2** tells us Judas knew where to find them.

Who is *in* Judas? Satan.

Now look at this show of *force*, or demonstration of *power* that converges in **v3** READ. So when Judas went to the religious authorities to arrange Jesus betrayal, both the religious leaders *and* the Romans sent a show of force, of power, to arrest Jesus. The Romans sent cohort or part of a cohort and the religious leaders sent the temple police. We don’t know the total size of the force that night , but a “cohort” is 600. It’s likely they only sent part of the cohort but who knows. Either way it would have been a formidable display of power. Their goal was to arrest Jesus, and because it was Passover week and there were 1000’s of pilgrims in the area, they also needed to prevent a riot or uprising. Look who the Romans and religious authorities give this power to? Judas the “betrayor” who has Satan in him. No surprises right?

v3 tells us they show up with.. READ “*blazing torches, lanterns, weapons...*”. Its night, dark, they have torches and lanterns...i.e flame, fire...such fitting imagery for what happens here spiritually. So this large group of Roman soldiers and temple guards, with torches and lanterns and weapons, would have been highly visible from many places surrounding Jerusalem as they left the temple mount, probably coming from Antonia Fortress, and crossed the wadi Kidron and entered the garden where Jesus and his disciples were. And who is the tip of the spear leading the group? Satan, in Judas.

If I were in the group of disciples I’m pretty sure I would have already been running away ... (ditty “He who fights and runs away....”) 12 against 600+ – yeah – those aren’t my odds.

But that is not what Jesus does. He steps *towards* the soldiers and guards and of course steps towards Judas, who has Satan in him. Intercept. **v4** READ. He knows what was going to happen to him!

This is the convergence of two paths, of two powers, of two kingdoms. Satan, the “ruler of the world” with his army with torches and weapons and the Jewish religious leaders and the roman government backing him, and Jesus with his 11 men.. and other gospel accounts tells us they have “two swords”. **Luke 22:38** And of course one of the swords ends up in Peter’s hands.

And John's writing portrays Jesus majestically as a king who would "step forward" in battle to meet an opposing army. FF Bruce says, "the narrative proceeds in such a way as to show how Jesus took command of the situation".

And Jesus steps toward the opposing force and says "Who are you looking for?". When Jesus asks questions is he typically looking for answers? No, he knows the answer already, he's looking for honest admissions of truth that reveal where people are spiritually in relation to truth, he wants them to "own" their truth.

V5 READ. They didn't call him "The Rabbi Jesus", they didn't call him "the prophet or the miracle worker", they didn't call him by the common respectful way "Jesus bar Joseph", identifying him by his earthly father. They called him "Jesus of Nazareth". Yes this was a common designation for Jesus, but let me tell you about that title. The title has a double "dig" to it. The first dig was that Nazareth was near a crossroad between major Roman cities, and trade routes, and thus influenced heavily by both secular Greek and secular Roman cultures. It was known to be rough and worldly, sort of the hood, or ghetto. **(SLIDE 14. of Nazareth)** Hence Nathanael's reply when he heard Jesus was from Nazareth **John 1:46** "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth". Nathanael was Galilean, even *Galileans* looked down on those from Nazareth. There is some scholarly support that a person referred to as a "Nazarene" was also "slang" for someone who grew up in the hood. Either way, that is so Jesus right? Born in a stable, from a secular perspective it's not clear who his biological dad is, then Jesus is known to be from the rough part of town, the hood. That's the perfect setting for the story line we love, the under privileged kid from the hood rises up to lead a revolution against the corrupt aristocracy. That seems to be the story line Judas was hoping for and maybe even trying to force happen by bringing the fight to Jesus.

The second dig is that the religious leaders knew that there was no prophecy concerning the Messiah coming from Nazareth. Not one. So for them to say "Jesus of Nazareth" is a complete rejection of Jesus' claim to be "the Messiah, the Son of God".

And Jesus in reply says these three powerful words "I AM he" **(SLIDE 15. "I AM he" grk "ego eimi")**. (*eh - go' I mee'*)

Now first, Jesus' response is a clear acceptance of the title "Jesus of Nazareth", he says "I AM he". Maybe Jesus is ok being the kid from the hood who isn't suppose to make it?

Yet Jesus' response is what FF Bruce calls "words of power". And in the text he doesn't say it once he says it 2x! And what results from him saying this clearly demonstrates his power. **V6** READ. I know you have already engaged your imagination and are picturing the scene.. but before we paint that picture more, let's look at Jesus' response means. "I AM he".

This phrase is one of John's many, many hyperlinks to the Old Testament. This is a link to Ex. 3:14. In Exodus 3, 1500 years before Jesus, God reveals himself to Moses, the prince of Egypt, at the burning bush. The context is God wants Moses to go and lead the enslaved Hebrew people out from under the harsh hand of Pharaoh in Egypt where they have been for nearly 430 years. And he wants Moses to take lead them to the promise land. When Moses hears God speak this from the burning he does what I would have done and asks the question.

Ex 3:13 READ And in essence the question Moses asks God is not just a "who are you?", but in Hebrew it means "what are you"? Which I think is an appropriate question to a fiery bush that speaks and gives commands. And look how God responds – note the words. **EX 3:14-15.**

"I AM who I AM" - and then in the next line God gives his personal name "YHWH". **(SLIDE 16. YHWH)** Many English translations translate any occurrence of the word YHWH as "LORD" (all caps). It comes from the Hebrew verb "to be". Older Eng translations translate it as "Jehovah". In essence then "I AM, YHWH, LORD, Jehovah" – all mean "self-existent one, the eternal one, unchanging one, sense of always has been always will be". The "I AM, YHWH" is God's personal name, which again in Hebrew culture informs "what" you are. So this describes God's character, it's a self-description, if you will. "Self-existent, eternal, unchanging". For those like me with trust issues, it means he is very reliable, and very very powerful. And I need both.

In John's gospel I counted the words "I AM" crossing Jesus' lips 43 times. I'll point out a few of them. A significant one is in **John 6:18-20.** (context first) The context here is earlier that day Jesus had fed the 5,000 Then that night Jesus sends the disciples across the lake by boat READ

In the Greek it's more like. "The I AM is here". And in John's account the "I AM" climbs into their boat and immediately they arrive at their destination. Creator over all creation, huge power, steps into their boat, and they arrive.

Jesus goes on to describe himself with seven more I AM statements, that you are probably familiar with, **(SLIDE 17 "Seven I AM" statements).**

All of these build up to continue revealing Jesus as Yahweh to the disciple and world including our passage today.

So when Jesus responds with "I AM he". These are "power words" based on who he is, LORD all caps, YHWH, Jehovah.

And look what happens when he says it. They all fall back, torches, lanterns, weapons.. maheim. They are on the side of the mount of olives so maybe it's a steeper part.. I imagine in my mind a bunch of them rolling down a bit, maybe that just wishful

imagination. Honesty knowing what happens to Jesus next makes me smile at that thought of them knocked to the ground sliding down the hill, torches flying everywhere. (Yesss! Fist clenched)

John makes it very clear in **v5** to point out that Judas is standing *with the opposing force*, and with Satan in him, he is part of the group that gets knocked down. Again, comparison of power. Jesus spoke and they fell back. That was just the power of his voice. I can't imagine them knowing what just happened to them.

Interestingly then Jesus repeats his question in v7. READ. You think the second time they answered a bit more humbly? A little more unsure of themselves, a little more humbly? Cringing a bit instinctively when answered Jesus the 2nd time.

V8 -9 READ This was an answer to his prayer just hours before in **John 17:12** READ. And it was a fulfillment of what Jesus said in **John 6:39** READ.

V10 READ Of course one of the two swords ends up in Peter's hands and he strikes out at Malchus the High Priest's slave, and lops off an ear. John intentionally includes the name of Malchus and his position even tho he left out other details of this event that are in other gospels. That is probably to emphasize the authority and legitimacy of the group coming to arrest Jesus. In their culture, if you sent a servant to do something, they acted on your behalf, as your "agent". They were in essence "you" and carried your power and authority. Malchus as the servant of the high priest would have been the highest ranking person representing the religious authorities. Check this out, his Hebrew name means "King" or "Kingdom". Getting the picture of clash of two powers, two kingdoms?

Interesting here now Jesus turns his voice to Peter and challenges Peter's thinking and actions, and in his challenge of Peter Jesus reveals his heart of surrender and obedience. **V11** READ

The "*cup of suffering*". The imagery there is that God the Father *handed* Jesus a cup to drink. And whatever the Father hands to him, Jesus is to drink it. In this cup is "suffering".. Jesus uses this language imagery to describe what he would be facing between this moment of Satan in Judas leading several hundred soldiers finding Jesus, and when they kill him on the cross. Suffering. Earlier in the evening after the Passover meal, Jesus handed the "*cup of the covenant*" to the disciples. **Luke 22:20**. READ. The covenant was Jesus betrothal commitment to them that if the disciples accepted the "cup of the covenant" he would come back for them and they would dwell with him forever. But the "covenant" would only happen if Jesus drank from the "cup of suffering."

What would you do if you had that much power and were facing that "cup of

suffering”?

Yet we see Jesus is surrendered and obedient to the coming suffering. We know from the other gospels that this scene in John 18 happens after Jesus was in agony of Spirit asking the Father to take this very “*cup of suffering from him*”. **Luke 22:42** READ

Yet now Jesus is surrendered and continues in obedience to the will of the Father – out of Love for the Father *and for us*, his bride. And Jesus is modeling for Peter and the disciples what discipleship is.. surrender and obedience to the will of the Father, even if you have to take up your cross, i.e. willing to lay down your life, for Him, to humble yourself and make yourself small. And his words to Peter as his disciple are predictive of what Peter will experience as well. Peter like Jesus will also experience a “cup of suffering” in the manner by which he dies.

So in **v12 -13** we now see Jesus no longer using his voice of power, but now he “*allows*” himself to be arrested. Jesus had power and expressed his power by knocking them all to the ground. And this showed to the them and to the world that he was surrendered and obedient to the Father. Because he then allowed himself to be arrested. That’s how much Jesus loved the Father. READ (he allowed..., “commanding officer” another position of power).

Here are some thoughts for your consideration:

Surrendered and obedient to the Father sometimes looks like “making yourself small.”
Surrendered and obedient to the Father sometimes looks like surrendering your power and submitting to the will of the Father.

Surrendered and obedient to the Father sometimes looks like drinking from a cup of suffering.

Surrendered and obedient to the Father looks like being a part of His plan and timing even when we don’t understand it.

For those who are not in a relationship with Jesus as your savior from your sins. Jesus tells us that Satan and this world have been judged. Satan’s choice was already made long time ago, but you still have choice to escape being “cast out” from God, the judge. Jesus is the choice you can make to have eternal life.

Supplemental Notes.

John 13:26 -27, 30 So from this point on Satan is *in* Judas.

Contrast Satan *in* Judas vs. Jesus and the Father *in* the disciples (John 17:21).

18:2 Who is intercepting who?

The text narrative seems to imply that Satan is the one doing the intercepting. However, in God's sovereignty this intercept point is designed by God.

18:5 on "Jesus the Nazarene"

1. An article explaining some of the uses of this title.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Matthew-2-23-Jesus-Nazarene.html>

18:5 "I AM – YHWH" is different from the word for God in Gen 1:1 "Elohim" which means supreme being, creator, judge.

A book I love on God's name is : "God Has a Name" by John Mark Comer. Super helpful to me.

18:6 on them all falling back: According to commentator Keener, the diaspora writer "Artapanus" writes that Jewish tradition teaches that when Moses revealed the name of God to Pharaoh, pharaoh fell back.