

THE LEGACY OF THE GARDEN

Matthew 26:36-46

When we travel the Road to Easter we will walk with Jesus and His disciples into the quiet night shadows of the Garden of Gethsemane. *Gethsemane* means *the oil press where the olives were crushed to extract the oil*. There in the place of crushing the silence of the night shadows was broken by His praying to the Father in heaven. The Garden became a place of **depression** for Jesus. The Scripture states: *“He began to be very sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.’”* (v 37, 38) The agony of His heart was real, as is ours at times! But that same Garden also became a place of **desertion**. After He had struggled in the darkness of the Garden and had spilled out the contents of His heart to His Father, He rose and returned to the disciples, only to find them asleep. He said to them: *“Could you not watch with Me one hour?”* (v 40) Sometimes even those closest to us seem to drift away, and we no longer feel their support. For Jesus the Garden became a place of **desperation**. Matthew’s account is clear: *“He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.”* (v 44) Hear Him as He pleads over and over again, *“O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me.”* (v 39) Life’s pressures often place us in a moment of desperation and we plead for release. But for Jesus that same Garden became a place of **deliverance**. Not deliverance from, but deliverance to! Jesus said to the sleepy disciples, *“Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”* (v 46) The quiet of the Garden was broken. Along the twisting trails, with their lanterns and torches like giant fireflies, and with swords and clubs, and the slinking Judas at the head, came the squadron of troops to assist the officers of the Temple to arrest Jesus. Strange that they needed lanterns and torches to find the Light of the World! He would now be delivered to Calvary where the last drop of soul-healing oil was crushed from the Son of God. That would not be the final destiny. For the first day of the week would come ... now delivered from! An Empty Tomb! Hallelujah!

Yes, it was in the Garden of Gethsemane, the place of crushing, where Jesus said to His Father, *“... nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”* In the English language Christians have many beautiful words they attach to their relationship with God, such as *peace, joy, happiness, love, mercy, and grace*, and many more. But the Legacy of the Garden is found in the most beautiful word in the entire scope of language. In the Authorized, or King James Version, it is **Nevertheless!** Some translations use the word **Yet!** Either translation of that little four-letter word in the Greek text will bring the same joy to our hearts. For without that one word all the other frequently used words would have very little real meaning. As we travel the Road to Easter, let’s walk along those same twisting trails in the Garden where He was crushed, and hear Him say again, *“Nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will,”* knowing that He alone paid the price that we might have eternal *peace, joy, happiness, love, mercy and grace*. That one word has become the Legacy of the Garden for us, delivering us from a life of sinfulness to a life of triumphant, overcoming victory.

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