

# Pt. 4: The Last Week of the Savior's Life

## The *Anderson Tours* Holy Land Scripture Series;

Understanding God, Scripture, & Self

### Episode 7: *Gethsemane*

“Knowledge of ‘the only true God, and Jesus Christ’ (John 17:3)  
is the most important knowledge in the Universe...”

President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency (“Except a Man Be Born Again,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 14)

#### ➤ Background... They go from the Upper Room to Gethsemane

Jesus and His Apostles go from the Upper Room across the Kedron Valley to Gethsemane (on the Mt of Olives):

[John 18:1-2](#): “When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. 2. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples” (John 18:1-2)

[Mark 14:32-36](#): “...32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. 33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; 34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. 35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.” (Mark 14:32-36)

#### ➤ Audio Clip from Rob Gardner's “*Lamb of God*” Gethsemane

#### ➤ “He Loves Us!”

“**He loves us.**” The meaning and message of Jesus’ experience in Gethsemane are that simple: he loves us—all of us. That is precisely the reason he went to Gethsemane as well as to Golgotha: **love**—love for his Father, love for his Father’s children, love for leaders in his Church, love for all his humble followers, love for the entire human family, and, indeed, love for each one of us as individuals. (p.3)” “All of our Heavenly Father’s planning and preparation, all of His interest in His children and all of His desires for them, all of His aims and goals for the entire universe came down to **a singular moment** in a specific time and place on this earth in a garden called **Gethsemane**. **Without Gethsemane in God’s eternal plan, everything else would have been a colossal waste—everything.** Without the events involving one particular Man in that olive vineyard almost two thousand years ago, God’s purposes would have been utterly frustrated . . . If Gethsemane had turned out to be a place associated with suffering and failure rather than suffering and triumph, everything that went before and everything that came afterward would have been reduced to a series of meaningless events in the eternal scheme of things, for there would be no eternal life. Deterioration, disorder, and chaos would ultimately fill the vastness of the universe; all beauty, human kindness,

refinement, and acts of goodness would be forgotten as wasted energy. **Truly, Gethsemane was the place where eternity hung in the balance."**

*(Gethsemane, pg.3, 5-6, Andrew C. Skinner, 2002)*

### ➤ **Atonement = Most Important Doctrine = HUB**

"No doctrine in the gospel is more important than *the Atonement of Jesus Christ*. If the gospel were compared to a wheel, the Atonement would be the hub and all other doctrines would be the spokes emanating from the hub. "As the Prophet Joseph Smith declared, "The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 121)."

*("The Atonement of Jesus Christ", Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual, Ch. 9)*

\*Some of the very best scholars have all commented on how they do NOT understand HOW it happened, but all testify of its power and instrumentality to God's Plan of Happiness for His children.

\*Therefore it is very difficult to share, teach, or present at this site relating to what happened in Gethsemane. Here are a few things that can be helpful to aid in understanding.

### ➤ **Gethsemane = Oil Press (Olive Press)**

**Gethsemane** = Oil Press or Olive Press (replica at the Jerusalem Center)

\*Somehow incomprehensible to us He was able to take upon Him all the sins and weaknesses of every human being in the world. Like the sun coming through a magnifying glass creating a laser beam of light that can burn. It all descended upon him... (**Alma 7:11-12**)

\***The Bible does a good job of telling us WHAT happened and the BofM does a good job of telling us WHY!** (Interesting fact: John is silent on the details of Jesus suffering in Gethsemane)

➤ **Scriptures:** Matt 26:36-46, Luke 22:39-46, Alma 7:11-12, D&C 19:16-19, 3 Nephi 9:13-14, Mark 6:56

### ➤ **WHAT He suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane...**

Notice the WHAT and the WHY provided in the BofM in Alma 7:

**Alma 7:10-14;** "...he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God. 11 And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people. 12 And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities. 13 Now the Spirit knoweth all things; nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh that he might take upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions according to the power of his deliverance; and now behold, this is the testimony which is in me. 14 Now I say unto you that ye must repent, and be born again; for the Spirit saith if ye are not born again ye cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore come and be baptized unto repentance, that ye may be washed from your

sins, that ye may have faith on the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, who is mighty to save and to cleanse from all unrighteousness..."

### **WHAT?**

**Pains, afflictions, temptations (of every kind), sicknesses, infirmities (of the flesh) suffers, the sins of his people = WOW!**

He not only took the sins, but also "*the pains, sicknesses, & afflictions*". This is UNBELIEVABLE!

**\*Consider all of the human suffering that is taking place right now on planet earth** (each hospital by continent), also consider the sin taking place in one big city on any given weekend. He bore ALL OF IT!!!

- Because of who His mother was He was able to feel, know and understand the pains of the flesh and being human. Because of who His father was He was able to suffer more than any human could. ("...descend below them all").

As human beings we experience pain and then pass out due to the pain, but He was able to descend below all of that and experience deep pain and drink the fullness of the bitter cup.

- **Chieko Okazaki Quote:**

Well, my dear sisters, the gospel is the good news that can free us from guilt. We know that Jesus experienced the totality of mortal existence in Gethsemane. It's our faith that he experienced everything - absolutely everything. Sometimes we don't think through the implications of that belief. We talk in great generalities about the sins of all humankind, about the suffering of the entire human family. But we don't experience pain in generalities. We experience it individually. That means he knows what it felt like when your mother died of cancer—how it was for your mother, how it still is for you. He knows what it felt like to lose the student body election. He knows that moment when the brakes locked and the car started to skid. He experienced the slave ship sailing from Ghana toward Virginia. He experienced the gas chambers at Dachau. He experienced napalm in Vietnam. He knows about drug addiction and alcoholism. Let me go further. There is nothing you have experienced as a woman that he does not also know and recognize. On a profound level, he understands about the hunger to hold your baby that sustains you through pregnancy. He understands both the physical pain of giving birth and the immense joy. He knows about PMS and cramps and menopause. He understands about rape and infertility and abortion. His last recorded words to his disciples were, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:20) He understands your mother-pain when your five-year-old leaves for kindergarten, when a bully picks on your fifth-grader, when your daughter calls to say that the new baby has Down's syndrome. He knows your mother rage when a trusted babysitter sexually abuses your two year old, when someone gives your thirteen year old drugs, when someone seduces your seventeen year old. He knows the pain you live with when you come home to a quiet apartment where the only children are visitors, when you hear that your former husband and his new wife were sealed in the temple last week, when your fiftieth wedding anniversary rolls around and your husband has been dead for two years. He knows all that. He's been there. He's been lower than all that. **He's not waiting for us to be perfect. Perfect people don't need a Savior. He came to save his people in their imperfections. He is the Lord of the living, and the living make mistakes. He's not embarrassed by us, angry at us, or shocked. He wants us in our brokenness, in our unhappiness, in our guilt and our grief.** You know that people who live above a certain latitude and experience very long winter nights can become depressed and even suicidal, because something in our bodies requires whole spectrum light for a certain number of hours a day. Our spiritual requirement for light is just as desperate and as deep as our physical need for light. Jesus is the light of the world. We know that this

world is a dark place sometimes, but we need not walk in darkness. The people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, and the people who walk in darkness can have a bright companion. We need him, and He is ready to come to us, if we'll open the door and let him. (Chieko N. Okazaki, Lighten Up, Preface, p. 174)

## ➤ **WHY He suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane...**

**WHY?** "...so He may know according to the flesh how to *succor* His people". So that He can come to our aide with PERFECT empathy and understanding.

### **Dictionary definition of SUCCOR**

Definitions from Oxford Language suc·cor /'səkər/

#### **Noun:**

Assistance and support in times of hardship and distress.

Similar: aid, help, a helping hand, assistance, ministration, comfort, ease, relief, support, guidance, backing, easement,

#### **Verb:**

Give assistance or aid to,

Similar: help, aid, bring aid to, give help to, give/render assistance to, assist

## ➤ **The Good News of the Gospel...**

What does the word GOSPEL mean = GOOD NEWS!

The Good News of the Gospel...is that "*when we confess and forsake our sins, I the Lord remember them no more*" (D&C 58:42-43) AMAZING!!!

**D&C 58:42-43:** "Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more. 43 By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them."

## ➤ **The Atonement = to hide or cover**

**Atonement** = *At-One-ment*

**Atonement** = Kaphar (Heb) = *to hide or cover*

("I the Lord remember them no more"/Harry Potter cloak)

**Atonement** = Kafat (Aramaic/Arabic) = *a close embrace* (ritual embrace for Egyptians)

\*Story of the gentleman who had a dream with everyone that meant anything to him was assembled in a room watching the movie reel of his life...He was locked out and couldn't get to the projector.

GOOD NEWS = take editing equipment to the parts we want covered!

\*Imagine a Bishop or Leader who could guarantee wipe away all sins of the week. How long of a line would there be to their office on Sundays? That is EXACTLY what our experience can and should be each week as we partake of the Sacrament. And we don't have to wait until Sunday to be forgiven and to access the Atonement! ISNT THIS GOOD NEWS!?

## ➤ **"It was a great honor"** (Eric McAllister March 2023 Holy Land Tour Participant)

## ➤ **BD Grace** (enabling power)

- **Mosiah 3:19:** “For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.”

➤ **“An Angel Strengthened Him...”**

**(Luke 22:39-42):** “And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. 40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. 41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, 42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. 43 And **there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.** 44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

“...there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.” = Male or Female?

**\*God does the same with us...sends Angels to strengthen us. He cannot remove our pains and discomforts, but He will send us help to get through it!**

**Elder Neal A. Maxwell** quote “You and I cannot really expect to glide through life . . . naively petitioning, ‘Lord, give me experience but not grief, a deeper appreciation of happiness but not deeper sorrow, joy in comfort but not in pain, more capacity to overcome but not more opposition; and please do not let me ever feel perplexed while on thy errand. Then let me come quickly and dwell with thee and fully share thy joy!’” (“Lest Ye Be Wearied and Faint in Your Minds”, Elder Neal A. Maxwell, April 1991)

➤ **“Conclusion...”**

**Isaiah 52:3-5 “Man of Sorrows”**

**Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** “However many chances you think you have missed, however many mistakes you feel you have made . . . , I testify that you have not traveled beyond the reach of divine love. It is not possible for you to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ’s Atonement shines.” (Jeffrey R. Holland, [April, 2012](#))

**Elder Boyd K. Packer:** “There is no habit, no addiction, no rebellion, no transgression, no apostasy, no crime exempted from the promise of complete forgiveness.” (“The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness” Boyd K. Packer, Oct, 1995)

**Alma 34:9-10:** “For it is expedient that an atonement should be made; for according to the great plan of the Eternal God there must be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish; yea, all are hardened; yea, all are fallen and are lost, and must perish except it be through the atonement which it is expedient should be made. 10 For it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice; but it must be an infinite and eternal sacrifice.” ([Alma 34:9-10](#))

**Article of Faith #3:** “We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.” ([Article of Faith 1:3](#))

## **Links to the Scriptures:**

### **Old Testament:**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/ot/gen/1?lang=eng>

### **New Testament:**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/nt?lang=eng>

### **Book of Mormon:**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/bofm?lang=eng>

### **Doctrine & Covenants:**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/dc-testament?lang=eng>

### **Pearl of Great Price:**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/pgp?lang=eng>

## **Quotes & Resources:**

[Holy Land Scripture Series](#) pt. 1 FOUNDATION Series; pt. 2 PROPHECIES OF THE LAST DAYS; pt.3 LIFE & MINISTRY OF CHRIST

[“None Were with Him”](#) by Elder Holland (April 2009)

[“The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness”](#) by Elder Boyd K. Packer, (Oct. 1995)

*“The Atonement of Jesus Christ”*, [Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual](#), Ch. 9

[“The Atonement”](#) by Elder Russell M. Nelson (Oct 1996)

[“The Atonement of Jesus Christ”](#) by Tad R. Callister (April 2019)

“Atonement of Jesus Christ” [Doctrinal Study](#)

“Atonement of Jesus Christ” [Gospel Study Guide](#)

[“Images of Christ in Latter-day Saint Visual Culture, 1900–1999”](#), (*BYU Studies* by Noel A. Carmack, 2000, 39:3)

**The Serenity Prayer:** “God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference.”

**Quote by Elder Neal A. Maxwell**

“Mortal experience points evermore to the Atonement of Jesus Christ as the central act of all human history. The more I learn and experience, the more unselfish, stunning, and encompassing His Atonement becomes!” ([“From Whom All Blessings Flow”](#) by Neal A. Maxwell)

**Quote from “Gethsemane” book - Skinner:**

“Thus, the atonement connects people and planets in a seamless web of creation and redemption.” (Gethsemane, Skinner, pg. 10)

**The Weight of the Atonement - Callister**

“What weight is thrown on the scales of pain when calculating the hurt of innumerable patients in countless hospitals? Now, add to that the loneliness of the elderly who are forgotten in the rest homes of society, desperately yearning for a card, a visit, a call--just some recognition from the outside world. Keep on adding the hurt of hungry children, the suffering caused by famine, drought, and pestilence. Pile on the heartache of parents who tearfully plead on a daily basis for a wayward son or daughter to come back home. Factor in the trauma of every divorce and the tragedy of every abortion. Add the remorse that comes with each child lost in the dawn of life, each spouse taken in the prime of marriage. Compound that with the misery of overflowing prisons, bulging halfway houses and institutions for the mentally disadvantaged. Multiply all this by century after century of history, and creation after creation without end. Such is but an awful glimpse of the Savior’s load. Who can bear such a burden or scale such a mountain as this? No one, absolutely no one, save Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of us all.”  
(Elder Tad R. Callister, *The Infinite Atonement*, 2000)

**Quote on Christ’s Suffering from “Jesus the Christ” – Talmage**

“Christ’s agony in the garden is unfathomable by the finite mind, both as to intensity and cause. The thought that he suffered through fear of death is untenable. Death to Him was preliminary to resurrection and triumphal return to the Father from whom He had come, and to a state of glory even beyond what He had before possessed; and, moreover, it was within His power to lay down His life voluntarily.



He struggled and groaned under a burden such as no other being who has lived on earth might even conceive as possible. It was not a physical pain, nor mental anguish alone, that caused Him to suffer such torture as to produce an extrusion of blood from every pore; but a spiritual agony of soul such as only God was capable of experiencing. No other man, however great his powers of physical or mental endurance, could have suffered so; for his human organism would have succumbed, and syncope would have produced unconsciousness and welcome oblivion.

In that hour of anguish Christ met and overcame all the horrors that Satan, "the prince of this world" could inflict...In some manner, actual and terribly real though to man incomprehensible, the Savior took upon Himself the burden of the sins of mankind from Adam to the end of the world...The further tragedy of the night, and the cruel inflictions that awaited Him on the morrow, to culminate in the frightful tortures of the cross, could not exceed the bitter anguish through which he had successfully passed. (**James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd, pp. 613-14)**)

### **Chieko Okazaki Quote; Atonement**

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seventeen year old. He knows the pain you live with when you come home to a quiet apartment where the only children are visitors, when you hear that your former husband and his new wife were sealed in the temple last week, when your fiftieth wedding anniversary rolls around and your husband has been dead for two years. He knows all that. He's been there. He's been lower than all that. **He's not waiting for us to be perfect. Perfect people don't need a Savior. He came to save his people in their imperfections. He is the Lord of the living, and the living make mistakes. He's not embarrassed by us, angry at us, or shocked. He wants us in our brokenness, in our unhappiness, in our guilt and our grief.** You know that people who live above a certain latitude and experience very long winter nights can become depressed and even suicidal, because something in our bodies requires whole spectrum light for a certain number of hours a day. Our spiritual requirement for light is just as desperate and as deep as our physical need for light. Jesus is the light of the world. We know that this world is a dark place sometimes, but we need not walk in darkness. The people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, and the people who walk in darkness can have a bright companion. We need him, and He is ready to come to us, if we'll open the door and let him.

(Chieko N. Okazaki, *Lighten Up*, Preface, p. 174)