

Culham / REEP Easter Calendar 2003

<http://www.reep.org/resources/easter03/>

JESUS IS ARRESTED

JUDAS KISSES JESUS

After Jesus had prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas came with a crowd of armed men. He greeted Jesus with a kiss. This was a sign showing the men who to arrest and they immediately grabbed Jesus.

MALCHUS

Matthew reports that, as Jesus was arrested, Peter drew his sword and tried to fight with the crowd. He cut off the ear of Malchus, a servant of the High Priest. Jesus told Peter off then touched the man's ear and healed the wound.

MARK

In the confusion of Jesus' arrest, the crowd tried to seize other companions of Jesus. One of these was dressed only in a linen cloth. He pulled himself free, leaving his clothes in the hands of the mob and escaped naked!

SWORDS / WEAPONS

The crowd came carrying swords and clubs – and were greeted by at least one sword in the hands of the disciples! However Jesus stopped the two groups fighting. Jesus said: *'All who draw the sword will die by the sword'* (Matthew 26:52).

.....

EXTRA INFORMATION

JUDAS KISSES JESUS

Kissing was a common form of greeting between friends – as it is in many countries today. Judas also addressed Jesus as *'Rabbi'*, which means *'teacher'*. Many of his disciples seem to have used this word when they addressed Jesus.

The crowd had been sent *'from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders'* (Mark 14:43) - the groups which made up the supreme Jewish council, called the Sanhedrin. Many powers of government had been taken from Jewish leaders by the Romans, but they still controlled some areas of life, particularly those to do with religious practice.

MALCHUS

Only John's Gospel names the disciple with the sword as Peter. Here, as elsewhere in the Easter story, Peter is shown as reckless – a person who speaks and acts on the spur of the moment; a person of passionate emotions, but who often does the wrong thing! Perhaps this is why his nick-name was *'Cephas'*, which meant *'the Rock'* (see John 1:42) Jesus may have been making a joke, a bit like Robin Hood calling his tallest gang-member *'Little'* John! It is also seen as a reference to the fact that Peter would found the church: *'You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church'*.

MARK

This vivid incident is only described in the Gospel of Mark. Mark wasn't one of the *'Twelve'* – the disciples chosen by Jesus, probably to symbolize the twelve tribes of Israel. However, Mark was clearly a friend and follower of Jesus. Some people think that his Gospel included this little incident because he himself was the disciple who fled from the scene naked – and left Jesus, as in the Garden of Gethsemane, alone.

Culham / REEP Easter Calendar 2003

<http://www.reep.org/resources/easter03/>

SWORDS / WEAPONS

'Those who live by the sword will die by the sword' has become an English proverb. It may well have been a proverb in Jesus' time, which he was simply quoting! Whatever the case, Jesus' consistently taught his followers to reject the use of violence (see, for example, Matthew 5:38-48). Most Christians though, have followed the poor example of Peter, rather than Jesus' teaching!

Jesus seems to have seen himself involved in 'spiritual' warfare, not real warfare. He asked the soldiers *'Am I leading a rebellion that you have come with swords and clubs?'* (Luke 22:52). He could also have saved himself: *'Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?'* (Matthew 26:53).

Copyright Culham Institute / REEP 2003