

NO ROOM FOR JESUS: NONE AT THE INN & NONE AT THE END!

By David Lee Burris

Archaeological Evidence in an Animal Manger Cave. *The Archaeological Study Bible* offers helpful background: “The ‘manger’ was the feeding trough of the animals. *This is the only indication that Jesus was born in a stable.* Very early tradition suggests that his birthplace was a cave, perhaps being used as a stable.”

From Reggie Braziel of Christian Hope Church of Christ: “The word ‘INN’ in Luke 2: 7 is actually translated ‘Guest Room.’ Because caravanserais or larger Inns were few and far between, most Jewish people in those days welcomed travelers into their own homes. In fact, many Jews built an ‘inn’ or ‘guest room’ on the lower level of their homes and just outside the ‘inn’ or ‘guest room’ there was some sort of stable or cave for the guests to board their animals during their stay. You notice in verse 7 there is no mention whatsoever of ‘an Innkeeper.’ So, here is probably a more accurate picture of what happened. Joseph and Mary made that 5-6 day, 100 mile journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem a number of days before Jesus was born. Their intentions were to stay in ‘the inn’ or ‘guest room’ in the home of a family member or friend in town. But when they arrived in Bethlehem they found out ‘the guest room’ had already been taken by other out-of-town relatives or friends who had returned to Bethlehem to register for the census. Because there was ‘no room in the INN or guest room,’ Joseph and Mary had to take the only accommodations available and that was the ‘stable’ or ‘cave’ outside the ‘guest room’ where the livestock were boarded.”

Archaeological Evidence in a Cliff & a Rock. Genesis 28:11 “And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and *he took of the stones (**rock**) of that place, and put [them for] his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.*”

From Nelson’s Bible Commentary: “In Matthew 8:18–20 the term *Son of Man* is very important. In the Gospel records the expression is never found on anyone’s lips but the Lord Jesus, and it was His favorite self designator (83 times). It looks back to Daniel 7:13, 14 and anticipates the reign of Christ. In Matthew 8:20 it describes the Messiah in His humiliation in His first coming. He didn’t come first to reign but to suffer. The cross was before the crown (Hebrews 12:2, 3). *Foxes and birds*: Jesus indicates, in the midst of His teaching on discipleship, that sacrifice must be undertaken, even similar to the Lord Himself, who, as a man, had no dwelling place to call His own (compare Luke 9:57–62).”

From Dwight Moody: “His neighbors didn't want him; those Nazarenes didn't want him; they would have taken him to the brow of the hill (**cliff**) and dashed him to the bottom; they would have torn him limb from limb, if they could. He went down into Capernaum; they didn't want him there.”

Archaeological Evidence in an Olive Grove Cave.

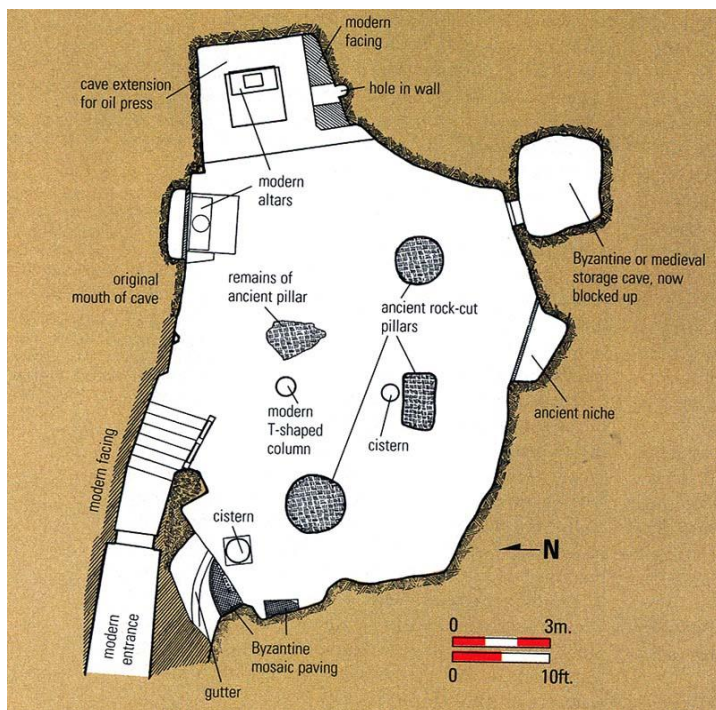
From Grover Stevens: “It was about midnight when Jesus and the disciples left the upper room. As they walked along the slopes of Mt. Zion on the crisp, moonlit night, looking down on the Garden of Gethsemane just across the brook Kedron, Jesus spoke **the parable of the Vine and the Husbandman**, taught them to abide in his love by keeping his commandments, to love one another, and promised them another Comforter (John 15). In the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of John, Christ presents the fullest treatise on the work of the Holy Spirit that is found in the Bible.

Since the Temple was located on their way to Gethsemane it is altogether probable that this majestic, high-priestly prayer of Jesus was spoken in the great court of the temple, now flooded with moonlight and deserted at this time of night except for these twelve. It manifests an air of triumph and glory. In widening circles, Jesus prays first for himself that the divine glory may now be consummated; then for his disciples, that they may remain one in the faith through their faithfulness to the truth - his Word; then for all those who will become disciples in all future generations 'through their word' 'that they all may be one' as 'Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee' and last of all, for all the world, that it may believe in him because of the oneness and faithfulness of all who believe in him by adhering to the revelation - which was delivered to the world through the apostles by the Holy Spirit. After this prayer, they cross the brook Kedron and enter the Garden of Gethsemane at the foot of mount of Olives. Here Jesus tells the disciples to watch and pray that they enter not into temptation, while he goes aside to pray. Then ensued the awful and memorable agony."

From Joan E. Taylor: "The Gospel of John mentions something called a *kepos*. *Kepos* can be translated as 'garden,' but it is really a general term, more accurately translated as a 'cultivated tract of land.' It can refer to anything from a large orchard or plantation to a small plot. More importantly, John never calls this cultivated area (*kepos*) Gethsemane. Only by conflating this account with the stories of Mark, Matthew and Luke did later Christians formulate such an idea. John's account goes like this: 'After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out [from Jerusalem] with his disciples across the Kidron Valley to where there was a garden/cultivated area (*kepos*), into which he and his disciples entered.

Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus met there often with his disciples' (John 18: 1 – 2). John, like Luke, describes a place that Jesus frequented. Since it is nighttime, the implication is that he intended, as usual, to sleep there.

The Hebrew word *shemanim*, a plural form, is used for different kinds of oil, gifts of oil, and oil stores. So, we can assume the Hebrew name of the place was *Gat-Shemanim*, literally 'press of oils.'



There is some reason to believe that the Gethsemane cave held not one, but two olive presses. The evidence for this appears in pilgrim accounts, dating from the sixth century to the Middle Ages, which testify to the existence of four rock ledges in the cave. Each recess for an olive press requires two rock ledges to support the press's beams.

A pilgrim named Arculf reported to the abbot Adomnan of Iona (c. 680) that he saw something else in the cave that we might associate with an olive-oil press. He spied a cistern 'in the floor of the cave ... [and] it has a huge shaft sunk deep, which goes down straight.' The remains of this cistern have been discovered below an ancient hole in the cave ceiling, which was to let in air, light and (periodically) rainwater. Adomnan tells us in fact that there were two cisterns, one cut into the floor, and another that 'goes down to an untold depth below the mountain.'

All this evidence leads to the conclusion that this cave was clearly used for olive pressing and had a crushing basin near its mouth, as well as two cisterns.

Oil presses were only used in the autumn and winter, after the olive harvest; by spring, when the festival of Passover took place, caves that held olive presses were used only for storage. Therefore, when Jesus and his disciples were in Jerusalem for Passover, the cave would not have been used for oil pressing. However, it would have been an excellent place to spend the night: warm, dry, and roomy, with a cistern inside for water. The owner of the property may have been sensible enough to rent it out as an accommodation. At festival times, thousands of people came to Jerusalem, and every lodging in the city and surrounding villages was taken. Any kind of shelter would have been considered as a lodging place. This cave was close to Jerusalem and probably securely located in a pleasant, cultivated enclosure.

It was not until the 12th century that anyone thought of a Garden of Gethsemane, located adjacent to the cave... **Since archaeology shows that the cave held an olive-oil press, and the Gospels refer to a place known as Gethsemane, which most likely meant 'oil press,' we are justified in considering the cave and Gethsemane to be one and the same.** The cave is located just across the Kidron Valley, precisely where the Gospels suggest that Gethsemane was located. There is no other competing cave in the vicinity. Furthermore, Jesus and his disciples most likely did not lie down under the stars, but took shelter here during the cool spring nights. The evidence suggests that the cave of Gethsemane was the place they used as sleeping headquarters, and here – or just outside – Judas caught them unawares.”

Archaeological Evidence of Rejected Royalty & Rejected Reconciliation

From *What Christians Want To Know*: “The **olive branch** has been a symbol for a very long time and not just for those in the Bible. In the fifth century BC the Greeks were already using it for a symbol of peace. In biblical accounts, extending an olive branch meant the ending of hostilities between two parties and signaled the end of the conflict. After the flood of Noah’s day, he first sent out a raven (Gen 8:6-7) but then Noah *“sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So, he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him”* (Gen 8:8-9). After another seven days, *“again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So, Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth”* (Gen 8:10-11). That was a sign of peace...God would later promise to never send another flood to destroy man and all the other creatures. The dove that returned to the ark brought for an olive leaf, signaling the earth had come back to life again. Since the earliest practices of the temple, the olive branch and olive tree have been incorporated into the temple’s interior and exterior and came to represent Israel herself. In writing about Israel, the Apostle Paul says to Gentiles (and to us), *“if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree”* (Rom 11:24) and Gentiles, being *“a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree”* (Rom 11:17), with the olive tree representing Israel.”

From *Got Bible*: “It is then not surprising that God, through the writers of the Gospel, would place olives and olive trees in the text to be used as a metaphor to explain Jesus’ suffering and ultimate redemption of mankind. Amazingly olive trees will grow where other plants will not. They thrive in *rocky and unproductive soil*. The Garden of Gethsemane was such a place. Therefore, when Jesus set out for the Garden he went to the very spot where he could look out over Jerusalem and where he would begin the process of his agony...where he would ‘pressed upon.’

Commonly referred to as **hematidrosis** or **hemohidrosis** (Allen, 1967, pp. 745-747), this condition results in the excretion of **blood or blood pigment in the sweat**. Under conditions of great emotional stress, tiny capillaries in the sweat glands can rupture (Lumpkin, 1978), thus mixing blood with perspiration. This condition has been reported in extreme instances of stress (see Sutton, 1956, pp. 1393-1394). During the waning years of the twentieth century, 76 cases of hematidrosis were studied and classified into categories according to causative factors: “Acute fear and intense mental contemplation were found to be the most frequent inciting causes” (Holoubek and Holoubek, 1996). While the extent of blood loss generally is minimal, hematidrosis also results in the skin becoming extremely tender and fragile (Barbet, 1953, pp. 74-75; Lumpkin, 1978), which would have made Christ’s pending physical insults even more painful.



Once the olives are gathered they were placed on a circular stone basin in which a millstone sat. Through the crushing process liquid begins to emerge from the fruit. Interestingly the liquid is **reddish** in hue. The book of Luke (22:34) reminds us that that *‘[Jesus’] agony became like drops of blood falling down upon the ground’* much like the drops of red liquid from the crushed fruit. Placed under pressure more liquid is pressed out of the olive paste much like the weight of our sins pressed out the very blood of our Savior that would result in eternal life for the world.”

From Bob Hutto: “Four words are used to describe Jesus’ state of mind in the Garden — *lupeo*, *ademoneo*, *ekthambeo*, and *perilupos*. The first is found in the LXX in Lamentations 1:22 where it expresses the grief of Jeremiah over the fall of Jerusalem. It is also found in Psalm 55:2 (LXX: Ps. 54) where David describes his own emotional state under the ‘pressure of the wicked’ (vv. 4-8; see also Ps. 42:5-6; 43:5. Of course, the statements of these psalms find their fullest expression in the Son of David, Jesus Christ.) The fourth word (*perilupos*), used by Jesus himself (Mark 14:34), can be understood as an intensive form *lupeo*. According to Lightfoot, *ademoneo* describes ‘the . . . restless, half-distracted state, which is produced by . . . mental distress’ (123). *Ekthambeo* ‘is to be understood as an intensive form [of *thambeo*] in the sense of *strong amazement or fear*’ (Bertram 4). In addition to these four words, Luke says that Jesus was ‘in agony’ as he prayed. One gets the feeling that no English translation does full justice to the idea conveyed by these words. In fact, the impact of these words is not adequately felt by looking at them separately, but by taking them all together as they are piled one upon another to describe Jesus’ anguish in Gethsemane.”

From Wayne Jackson: “The expression that contains the point of controversy is ‘as it were.’ Actually, there is but a solitary Greek word by which the phrase has been rendered into English.

The original says: ‘his sweat became as [hosei] great drops [thromboi—clots] of blood.’ The term *hosei* is an adverb which normally expresses a comparison. That does not mean, however, that its usage always demands a circumstance that is void of actuality.

For example, at his baptism, the Gospel writers declare that Christ saw ‘the Spirit of God descending as a dove’ (see Mt. 3:16; cf. Mk. 1:10; Jn. 1:32). Though the writers suggest that the Spirit came down ‘as a dove,’ it is clear, especially from Luke’s account, that an actual dove appeared.

He says that 'the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him' (3:22). The grammar does not, therefore, absolutely exclude the idea that Jesus literally sweated blood.

Scholars are divided concerning the significance of Luke's language in this text. Many allege that only a simile is involved. A recent writer notes: 'The sweating was apparently so profuse that it looked like blood dripping from a wound' (Liefeld, 1032).

Some are rather adamant regarding this view. Geldenhuys, quoting Zahn, declares:

'As Luke, by the use of *hosei*, says plainly enough that he is using a simile, and is speaking neither of a change of sweat into drops of blood nor of a mixture of sweat with blood, his meaning cannot be that in these words he is describing something physically miraculous' (577).

A 'miracle' is not alleged by those who contend for actual blood.

In contrast, Godet says:

'The words, as it were drops, express more than a simple comparison between the density of the sweat and that of blood. The words denote that the sweat itself resembled blood. Phenomena of frequent occurrence demonstrate how immediately the blood, the seat of life, is under the empire of moral impressions. Does not a feeling of shame cause the blood to rise to the face?' (quoted by Oesterley, 215).

Alford thinks that the figurative approach nullifies the force of the sentence (432)."

From *Never Ending Word*: "God sends an angel who appeared to Him strengthening Him and yet He was in agony but still remained in prayer '*more earnestly*' the Scripture says. By this time, He was hard pressed between a hard place and a rock in the olive press of prayer that His, '*sweat became like great drops of blood.*' (Luke 22:39-45;

Mark 14:32-42). We can almost visualize the dark of the night, the surrounding oil presses in the garden and the shadows of the oil trees. The olive oil in the holy anointing oil has the voice of the future of many upcoming events. This night was the night of all nights; it was the Passover of the Lamb. The body of Jesus would be beaten, bruised, and crushed even as the oil takes on the same beating to pour forth as *'golden liquid oil'* in the preparation of the holy anointing oil. Jesus the Messiah our Anointed One was bruised and beaten, crushed into an unrecognizable bloody mess. He would be to the world the anointed oil of death, burial, resurrection and ascension that would latter turn the world upside down by His followers. But think of the many purposes that the olive has hidden in it. It is not just an olive it is *'golden liquid oil.'* Once prepared and liquefied it is used for lamps, preparing foods, anointing of the tabernacle, ark of Testimony, table, all the utensils, lamp stands, the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt offering."

From *Love Israel*: "The first pressing of the olives produces 'extra virgin' olive oil, and was used to light Golden Menorah in the temple, the second press made 'virgin' oil that was used for medicinal and ritual purposes (James 5:14, 'Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.'), the third press had more remains of olives and was used for food and cleaning purposes." (The remainder of the paste and liquid was used to make soap. The soap can be compared to the love Jesus had for mankind that washes away their sins.)

From Pliny the Elder: "The more bitter the olive, Cato says, the better the oil; but they should be gathered from the ground the very moment they fall, and washed if they are dirty. **He says that three days will be quite sufficient for drying them,** and that if it is frosty weather, they should be pressed on the fourth, care being taken to sprinkle them with salt."

Archaeological Evidence of Anguish & Anticipation Linking Luke 13: 34

Ogden's *The Avenqing of the Apostles & Prophets* @Revelation 11: 3 - 4:

And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred, and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of earth.

“The mighty angel who held universal sway continued talking with John. He said, ‘I will give power unto my two witnesses.’ These witnesses had already prophesied and were to continue 1,260 days clothed in sackcloth. Twelve-hundred sixty days equal 42 months. The symbolic significance is that these two witnesses were to continue prophesying during the 42 months of the war clothed in garments of mourning.

Who were these two witnesses? Many explanations have been given, but none can rival the explanation of John. They ‘are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks, standing before the God of earth.’ (cf. Zech. 4: 1 – 14). The olive tree was the source of oil for the candlestick. The two witnesses were the sources of oil from whence the nation of Israel drew her light. The Law and the Prophets were the sources of light to the Jews (cf. Matthew 5: 17, 7: 12, 11: 13, 22: 40; Luke 16: 16, 29: 31; John 1: 45; Acts 24: 14, 26: 22, 28: 23; Romans 3: 21). The Law and the Prophets continued to be esteemed by the Jews, and were practiced in the temple until the sacrifices ceased just days before the temple was destroyed.”