

John 18:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

Analysis

Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him (εἰδὼς οὖν Ἰησοῦς πάντα τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἐπ' αὐτόν)—This verse shatters any notion of Jesus as passive victim. Eidōs (knowing) indicates comprehensive, supernatural knowledge of His impending betrayal, trials, scourging, and crucifixion. Yet **went forth** (ἐξῆλθεν)—He deliberately stepped forward from the garden's concealment.

Whom seek ye? (Τίνα ζητεῖτε;)—Jesus seizes control of His arrest. Not Judas, not the soldiers, but the Good Shepherd orchestrates this encounter. When they answer "Jesus of Nazareth," His reply "I am" (v. 5-6, ἐγώ εἰμι) echoes Yahweh's self-designation, causing the armed mob to fall backward—a theophanic demonstration that no one takes His life; He lays it down willingly (John 10:18).

Historical Context

Roman cohorts typically numbered 600 soldiers, though a smaller detachment likely came to Gethsemane. The presence of both temple guards and Roman soldiers indicates collusion between Jewish religious authorities and Pilate's forces. Jesus's question was legally significant—identifying Himself prevented the authorities from arresting His disciples under cover of darkness.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's sovereign initiative in His arrest challenge your understanding of submission to God's will?
2. What does Christ's full knowledge of coming suffering, yet willingness to proceed, reveal about the cost of redemption?

Interlinear Text

Ἰησοῦς	οὖν	εἰδὼς	πάντα	τὰ	ἐρχόμενα	ἐπ'	αὐτοῖς
Jesus	therefore	knowing	all things	G3588	that should come	upon	him
G2424	G3767	G1492	G3956		G2064	G1909	G846
ἐξελθὼν	εἶπεν	αὐτοῖς	τίνα	ζητεῖτε			
went forth	and said	him	Whom	seek ye			
G1831	G2036	G846	G5101	G2212			

Additional Cross-References

John 13:1 (References Jesus): Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

John 18:7 (References Jesus): Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

Acts 2:28 (Parallel theme): Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

Psalms 27:3 (Parallel theme): Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.