

John 18:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

Analysis

I am he (ἐγώ εἰμι, ego eimi)—Jesus responds to the arresting party with the very name of Yahweh from Exodus 3:14, causing them to fall backward (verse 6). This is no mere identification but a theophanic self-revelation of divine majesty. The phrase echoes Jesus's seven absolute 'I AM' statements in John's Gospel, each unveiling His deity.

Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them—The tragic positioning: the betrayer stands with Christ's enemies, not His disciples. John emphasizes παραδιδόντα (paradidonta, 'the one betraying'), using the present participle to stress the ongoing nature of Judas's treachery. Yet even facing arrest, Jesus sovereignly controls the encounter, asking 'Whom seek ye?' though He already knew (18:4). The Shepherd protects His sheep even as He lays down His life willingly (10:11, 18).

Historical Context

This occurred in Gethsemane across the Kidron Valley (18:1), likely Thursday evening before Passover, AD 30 or 33. The arresting party included Roman soldiers (σπεῖρα, speira—a cohort of 600 men), temple guards, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees. Their torches and weapons contrast sharply with Jesus's divine authority.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. When Jesus speaks His divine name causing enemies to fall, what does this reveal about His voluntary submission to arrest?
2. How does Judas's physical position 'with them' illustrate the spiritual reality of choosing sides in relation to Christ?

Interlinear Text

ἀπεκρίθησαν	αὐτῶν	Ἰησοῦς,	ὃ	Ναζωραῖον	λέγει		
They answered	him	Jesus	which	of Nazareth	saith		
G611	G846	G2424	G3588	G3480	G3004		
αὐτῶν	ὃ	Ἰησοῦς,	Ἐγώ	εἰμι	εἰστήκει	δὲ	καὶ
him	which	Jesus	I	am	stood	he And	also
G846	G3588	G2424	G1473	G1510	G2476	G1161	G2532
Ἰούδας	ὃ	παραδιδούς	αὐτῶν	μετ'	αὐτῶν		
Judas	which	betrayed	him	with	him		
G2455	G3588	G3860	G846	G3326	G846		

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