

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, ὁ Ναζωραῖον λέγει

They answered **him** **Jesus** **which** **of Nazareth** **saith**
G611 G846 G2424 G3588 G3480 G3004

αὐτῶν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἐγώ εἰμι εἰστήκει δὲ καὶ

him **which** **Jesus** **I** **am** **stood** **he And** **also**
G846 G3588 G2424 G1473 G1510 G2476 G1161 G2532

Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδοὺς αὐτῶν μετ' αὐτῶν

Judas **which** **betrayed** **him** **with** **him**
G2455 G3588 G3860 G846 G3326 G846

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