

Who was the young man wearing the linen sheet in Gethsemane?

www.makinglifecount.net

Question: When Jesus was betrayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, the disciples left Him and fled. Who was the young man in Mark 14:51-52 wearing the linen sheet?

Answer: This incident is only recorded in the Book of Mark and isn't mentioned in the other gospels:

A certain young man was following Him, wearing nothing but a linen sheet over his naked body; and they seized him. But he pulled free of the linen sheet and escaped naked. (Mark 14:51-52).



Mark 14:50 says all the disciples fled but this passage focuses on someone who was not one of the eleven but was also present and fled. **Ordinarily the outer garment was made of wool, so the linen garment** suggests that the owner was a young man **from a wealthy family**. The absence of an undergarment suggests that he **dressed hastily** to go to the garden.

Several of the early Church fathers conjectured that the young man was Mark himself, who is known to have been a resident in Jerusalem (Acts 12:12). This theory says that the Passover Meal (Last Supper) was observed inside the house of Mark's parents. After Jesus and the disciples went to Gethsemane, Mark went to bed. When Mark received word that Judas and the army were in Gethsemane to arrest Him, he jumped out of bed and wrapped himself with a linen sheet.

However, this theory is based on a number of assumptions.

- Assumes that the Last Supper occurred in the house of Mark's family.
- Assumes that Mark went to sleep after this.
- Assumes that Mark's house was near the Garden of Gethsemane.
- Assumes that he got news of the arrest.
- Assumes that he wore the linen sheet because he had slept under it.

The temple police let the disciples go without attempting to arrest them. However, they did attempt to seize this young man who was dressed in a linen sheet, which would seem to show that he wasn't with the other disciples. Why would they seize him? Apparently he stood out and was near enough for them to assume he was associated with them. The linen sheet explains how he was able to escape their grasp.

This theory is an attempt to supply the name that Mark wanted to omit. Could it have been Saul, who was also called "a young man" in Acts 7:58? Could it have been another future apostle? Or perhaps he was simply an innocent bystander and that's why he was unnamed. The fact is, we just don't know the identity of the young man and anything else is speculation.

Making Life Count Ministries
P.O. Box 680174
Prattville, Alabama 36068
www.makinglifecount.net