

**March 8, 2020**

## **Jesus in Gethsemane**

**Matthew 26:36-46**

A member of my extended family got the worst news this week. Their six-year-old daughter, “M,” has an extremely rare form of cancer in an inoperable brain tumor. This cancer is so rare that no pathology grades have been assigned and, according to the doctor, there are no known child survivors of this cancer.

Through Facebook, M’s struggles have gone beyond the family to friends of the family and friends of those friends. Complete strangers are praying for a miracle for this little girl and her family. Neighbors and local business owners are helping with all types of donations, too. In the midst of their pain, M’s parents see the hand of God, and they express deep gratitude for prayers and everything else they receive. They indeed know that they are not alone.

The student book author writes, “We are better off when we share our burdens with those who can help us shoulder the pain, or at least are able to know that we are in such pain and suffering in our lives.”<sup>1</sup> Jesus invited his closest friends into his darkest hour, asking for this comforting presence. He told them of his pain and grief and did not try to hide his anxiety and fear. Reaching out to others is sometimes the best thing we can do for ourselves when we are overwhelmed with suffering and pain.

M’s parents know the power of prayer and the power of prayer from strangers, and they are grateful. I invite you to join with this family. Pray for a miracle for M and for peace for her parents. The student book author writes, “Knowing that the Lord of the universe knows your pain doesn’t make the pain go away, but it should help us each morning as we wake to go through the next day with Jesus by our side.”<sup>2</sup> May we all pray for that day that cancer is no more. May we pray for the day that no parent has to hear, “There is nothing we can do.”

## Adult Bible Studies **Current Events Supplement**

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1. When have you avoided sharing your burden with anyone else? When have you spoken of your burden? What difference did it make to share your struggle with someone else?
2. When have you taken comfort in knowing the Lord of universe knows your pain?
3. How does your faith community proclaim the truth of Jesus' understanding of our pain?

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<sup>1</sup>From *Adult Bible Studies*, Spring 2020, by Chuck Aaron (Cokesbury, 2019); page 16.

<sup>2</sup>From *Adult Bible Studies*; page 16.