As important as the events in the Garden of Gethsemane were, they receive very little attention in scripture. Matthew has eleven verses on it, Mark also has eleven, Luke has seven, and John tells us nothing about it at all, though he was as close as anyone to what happened. The Doctrine and Covenants has four verses about it and the Book of Mormon one.

Matthew 26:36–46

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. 37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. 38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is 39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. 40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. 41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and

Mark 14:32–42

32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. 33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; 34 And saith unto them, My soul is


39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. 40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. 41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast,
soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. 39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. 40 And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray that ye may enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. 42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. 35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. 37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour? 38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but kneeled down, and prayed, 42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. 43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. 44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. 45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, 46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and
saying, My Father, if this may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise up, let us be going: behold, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

the flesh is weak.

39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.
John 12:23–33

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. 25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. 26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. 27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. 28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. 29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. 30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. 31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. 32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. 33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.
Alma 7:13
13 Now the Spirit knoweth all things; nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh that he might take upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions according to the power of his deliverance.

D&C 19:16–19
16 For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; 17 but if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; 18 which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—19 Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.

Mosiah 3:7
7 And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people.
That is everything or almost everything that the scriptures tell us about Jesus’s experience in the Garden of Gethsemane. Why do you think they are relatively silent about such an important event?

Does that tell us anything about how we should understand what scripture is or is not? About how we should understand scripture and its relationship to latter-day revelation?

Matthew 26

Verses 36–46: The word *gethsemane* means “olive press,” so the Garden of Gethsemane was an olive grove within which, presumably, there was an olive press. Is there any symbolic connection between the events in this grove and its name?

The first part of verse 38 seems to be a loose paraphrase of Psalm 42:6. Read that psalm and consider how it is related to Jesus’s experience in the garden.

As the LDS footnotes point out, the phrase “watch with me” could also be translated “stay awake with me.” What is Jesus asking Peter, James, and John to do? Why? Why them and not all of the disciples? How will their staying awake help him?

Can we take their sleep to symbolize anything about our lives?

This is the only record we have of Jesus asking someone to help him. What does this suggest about his experience and what is to come?
In verse 39 Jesus prays, “If it is possible, let this cup pass by me.” Why a cup? What metaphor is he using? Is it related to the events of the last supper? What does he wish he could avoid?

What is Jesus’s attitude toward what is about to happen to him? Does that tell us anything about our own attitude toward suffering?

What does it mean when he adds, “Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt”? What is the import of nevertheless?

Why does Jesus want Peter, James, and John to pray?

The word translated temptation in verse 41 doesn’t mean here what temptation means for us, “to be enticed to do evil.” Instead, as in the Lord’s Prayer, it means “to encounter a difficulty that cannot be overcome.” What is Jesus admonishing the disciples to do? How is it relevant to what is happening to him in the garden?

The Bible does not use the word spirit to mean “one’s internal psyche,” or what we might call “the conscious ego,” nor does it use flesh to mean simply “the physical body.” That usage comes much later. In the Bible the spirit is the force of life. In a Jewish and Christian context, the spirit is something God-given and it has a divine impulse. (See Genesis 2:7.) The flesh, on the other hand, is our concrete existence in the world, including but not limited to the physical body. With that as background, what does “the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” mean?

Is it significant that Jesus repeats his prayer three times? What does he mean when he tells the disciples to sleep
on, especially when he immediately tells them to get up (verses 45–46)?

**Mark 14:32–42**

Compare Mark’s account with Matthew’s. Do you see any meaningful differences?


What does Luke add that in is neither Matthew nor Mark? What does he leave out? What might those differences tell us? How do these three accounts compare to John 12:23–33? Is Alma 7:11–12 about Jesus’s experience in the garden? Does D&C 19:16–19 tell us something that we don’t have in other scriptures? If so, what? If not, why was it revealed? Does Mosiah 3:7 give us information not found in the Bible?