



In the Hands of His Enemies

Matthew 26:47-75; Mark 14:43-65;
Luke 22:47-53, 60-65; John 18:2-14, 24

Matthew 26:47-49

47 While He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people. **48** Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him.” **49** Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, “Hail, Rabbi!” and kissed Him.



Why the Kiss?

- It is important to understand exactly what Judas had bargained to do for the Sanhedrinists to help them arrest the Master; there is much confusion in this regard, and that confusion arises from a misperception of the purpose of the kiss with which Judas greeted Jesus.
- Judas had arranged a signal, as there were probably those among the soldiers, on “loan” from the Romans to the temple authorities, who would not have recognized Jesus by face.

Probably Chain of Events

1. Judas had gone to the Sanhedrin and fetched the group of Levitical guards, soldiers, Sanhedrinists, and so on who were waiting for him to take them to Jesus.
2. When they came to the upper room, they found it empty.
3. Reminded by the Sanhedrinists of his promise to betray Jesus to them, Judas decides to take the group to Gethsemane, the private garden which had been made available to Jesus, and where the Nazarene had so often repaired for a time of solitude or for a night of rest.
4. The betrayer does so, and there he and the soldiers accompanying him find Jesus as He emerges from a season of prayer in the Garden, the eleven sleeping nearby.

Jesus is Arrested (Mt 26:50-55; Lk 22:49-53)

- The disciples attempt to protect Jesus with a “sword,” and Peter smites the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear; Jesus rebukes Peter, miraculously restores the ear of the servant, and then is taken.
- Jesus goes on to make it clear that these things must happen in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

To Peter at the Arrest

- “Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?” (John 18:11)
- Now, contrast that with His prayers in the Garden (specifically the reference to a “cup”).
- What does this suggest concerning Jesus’ struggle with the temptation to turn back from the cross?

Jesus is Forsaken by the 11

“Then all the disciples left him and fled.”

(Matthew 26:56)

Only Peter and John followed afar off as the Lord was taken to the house of the High Priest, Caiaphas.

Mark 14:51-52

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

Who was this young man?

How did he come to be at this place in the middle of the night?

Jesus is Tried by the Sanhedrin

- This did not happen spontaneously; the Sanhedrin had laid careful plans and made elaborate preparation to assure that the desired result would be accomplished very quickly once Jesus of Nazareth had finally been taken.
- There were 3 stages to the trials of Jesus before the Jewish authorities.

Jewish Law

- The Hebrew nation had very well defined canons of jurisprudence, and they were proud of the justice and equity inherent in their system.
- However, the clear testimony of the Scriptural record is that all of those canons were deliberately violated in the trials of Jesus.

Peter Follows Afar Off

John 18:15 Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest, **16** but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in. **17** Then the slave-girl who kept the door said to Peter, “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.” **18** Now the slaves and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself.

This Same Peter...

- Having protested his greater allegiance to the Lord, does follow the band of soldiers and Sanhedrinists as they lead the Lord in chains back across the city and up to the home of the High Priest.
- But Peter is unable to gain entrance into the courtyard until “another disciple” speaks a word on his behalf.

Who is this unnamed disciple?

Stage 1: Jesus Before Annas

John 18:12 So the Roman cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him, **13** and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. **14** Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people.

Annas Is Not the High Priest

- But he had been for many years previously.
- In fact, he had been expelled from that office by the Romans because of the corruption and iniquity of his administration.
- However, Annas was still a very influential man in Jerusalem.

As John Says

- He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the present high priest.
- The family of Annas had occupied the office of high priest through six successive “generations,” a record unparalleled in that era of Jewish history, but a record that is “an evidence of their corruption no less than of their astuteness.”

Stage 1: John 18:19-23

19 The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. **20** Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret. **21** Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; they know what I said.” **22** When He had said this, one of the officers standing nearby struck Jesus, saying, “Is that the way You answer the high priest?” **23** Jesus answered him, “If I have spoken wrongly, testify of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?”

What Is Going On Here?

- The interrogation was a “fishing expedition” for the purpose of finding some accusation which could be made against Jesus.
- The Sanhedrinists had arrested Him, intended to turn Him over to the Romans for execution, but so far had been unable to discover any sort of indictment they might lodge against Him.

Why Go To Annas First?

- Jesus was held in Annas' chamber only until the Sanhedrin could be (illegally) convened.
- Remember this is occurring in the middle of the night in a culture that does not do things in the middle of the night.
- In replying to Annas' question, Jesus properly insisted that witnesses be brought against Him in accord with Jewish law, and for this He was severely rebuked by Annas.



**Stage 2: Caiaphas
& The Sanhedrin**

**Turn to
Matthew 26:57-68**



**What We
Have
Here Is A**

This Trial

**Was illegal by every
standard of Jewish
jurisprudence, and thus
Jesus remained silent as
accusations were hurled
against Him.**

Why Was It Illegal?

1. The trial was held in the wrong place - a private home, rather than in the temple precincts, or some public place where witnesses might be easily brought.
2. The trial was held at night, when it was difficult (if not impossible) to subpoena witnesses at that hour; in fact, there is no record that any attempt was made to hear witnesses concerning this Jesus of Nazareth, thus high-handedly violating the most basic canon of Hebrew jurisprudence.

Deuteronomy 17:6

“On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.”

More Illegalities

- False witnesses were sought and bribed.
- There was no careful warning of witnesses concerning the results of perjury.
- Attempts were made to force Jesus to bear witness against Himself.
- Jesus was not released when witnesses against Him disagreed among themselves.
- Execution was carried out immediately, without allowing time to find witnesses in support of the accused.

The Point is This:

The Sanhedrinists did not convene to try Jesus, but to condemn Him; the outcome was determined before the trial commenced.

And Even With This Mission...

**The Sanhedrinists
were unable to
construct a case
against Jesus!**

Mark 14:55-59

55 Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, and they were not finding any. **56** For many were giving false testimony against Him, but their testimony was not consistent. **57** Some stood up and began to give false testimony against Him, saying, **58** “We heard Him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.’” **59** Not even in this respect was their testimony consistent.

It Is Not Until...

- When asked under oath if He did indeed claim to be Messiah, the very God, He affirmed the charge, adding that the day would come when He would powerfully demonstrate the truth of that claim when He comes in infinite power!
- This was taken as demonstration that He deserved to be executed; He was mocked, buffeted, and taken off to a dungeon to await the dawn, when the verdict would be “validated” and the sentence executed.

There is Much to be Said

- About the dynamics of the week, about the difficulty of Jesus' claims, and about the sorry state of leadership in the Jewish nation at this time that combines to produce this travesty of justice, and it was all, of course, in the providence and purposes of God.
- But the record is clear that “by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God,” Jesus was “nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put...to death” (Acts 2:23).

What Did Jesus Really Say?

Matthew 26:64

**“You have said it
yourself;**

nevertheless I tell
you, hereafter you
will see the Son of
Man sitting at the
right hand of Power,
and coming on the
clouds of heaven.”

Mark 14:62

“I am; and you shall
see the Son of Man
sitting at the right
hand of Power, and
coming with the
clouds of heaven.”

When Jesus

Was finally (and illegally) required to testify against Himself, He openly confessed to the charge that He had made a two-fold claim concerning Himself.

What was that two-fold claim that Jesus made in Matthew 26:64?

He was “the Christ, the Son of God.”

After Jesus Is Condemned

By the Sanhedrin, as they waited for the dawn, when they could convene officially and endorse this decision, the Lord was mocked and beaten.

Matthew 26:67 Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him, 68 and said, “Prophecy to us, You Christ; who is the one who hit You?”

The Abuse Described Here

Is sub-human and offensive.

Under Roman rule, the Jewish leadership was given significant authority to arrest, try and even punish criminals, but the Romans did not allow them arms.

Therefore, in all of those efforts the Jewish leaders would depend upon what Roman soldiers “loaned” them for the effort, which in this case were guards.

It Is Likely

- That most of these abuses were perpetrated by those Roman mercenaries, caught up in the crescendo of hatred and anger which was in fact very much a part of this scene.
- Mark 14:65 speaks of the “officers” (*hypēretēs*), and Luke 22:63 specifies “the men who were holding Jesus in custody” as the perpetrators of these abuses.

Isaiah 50:6 Fulfilled

“I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.”

David Smith, *The Days of His Flesh*

“It was...required that after condemning a criminal to death the Sanhedrin should mourn and fast all that day; but no sooner was Jesus condemned than those grave counselors, the custodians of Israel’s law and faith, arose from their seats and compassed Him with contumely. They spat on His face, they buffeted Him, they blindfolded Him and, striking Him, challenged Him, as He was a prophet, to divine who smote Him. And the officers of the court abetted their superiors in the brutal sport. The conduct of the Sanhedrin on that woeful morning imprinted on the reputation of the august court an indelible stain which by and by the Jews would fain have obliterated. Vainly seeking to rewrite history, they told how for forty days Jesus was led through the city, and a herald went before Him, proclaiming that He had been sentenced to stoning, as a deceiver of the people, and inviting any who could attest His innocence to come forward and do so.”

The Proceedings Thus Far

- Trial #1: The House of Annas
 - John 18:13-14, 19-24
- Trial #2: The House of Caiaphas
 - Matthew 26:59-66; Mark 14:55-64
- After the Sanhedrin had condemned Jesus, as they waited for the dawn, the members of the Sanhedrin mocked and buffeted the Lord
 - Matthew 26:67-68; Mark 14:65

The Plan

- The Sanhedrinists knew that the trial held in the middle of the night was illegal and that it likely would not pass muster with the Roman procurator.
- So they intended to bring Jesus back into the chambers at the first blush of dawn for a brief “post-sunup” hearing, get him to confess to His claims once again, and then take Him to Pilate.

Meanwhile in the Courtyard



Matthew 26:69-75

69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant-girl came to him and said, “You too were with Jesus the Galilean.” **70** But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about.” **71** When he had gone out to the gateway, another servant-girl saw him and said to those who were there, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” **72** And again he denied it with an oath, “I do not know the man.” **73** A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Surely you too are one of them; for even the way you talk gives you away.” **74** Then he began to curse and swear, “I do not know the man!” And immediately a rooster crowed. **75** And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, “Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.

Luke 22:60-62

60 But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. **61** The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, “Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.” **62** And he went out and wept bitterly.

Next Week:

The Dawn of the Darkest Day



