

Matthew 26:57-68
"Jesus Found Guilty in Court"

Introduction

We are studying the gospel of Matthew, during the final week of Jesus' earthly ministry. He has been in Jerusalem for a couple of days, and has just finished giving an end-times overview to His disciples on the Mount of Olives (Matthew 24).

- Last supper
- Garden of Gethsemane
- Jesus prayed
- Jesus Arrested

As we finish up the book of Matthew we are going to see 3 different situations of Jesus, our Savior, and our Messiah:

1. His Trial
2. His Death
3. His Resurrection

Today we are going to begin to look at Jesus on trial, or should I say, "trials" plural.

As we look at Jesus on trial we will see some interesting characters and learn from them.

Each week we will look at different groups of people and/or individual persons that we will contrast Jesus with:

1. Sanhedrin (who is the Jewish high council) and Caiaphas the High Priest
2. Take a look once again at Peter during this trial time
3. Pilate
4. Herod
5. Pilate again
6. Barabbas

What will become clear is that Jesus stands out among all men as a unique individual.

Jesus is whom He claims to be – God; the Son of God in particular; the Messiah/Christ; the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (Including you who hear this message today).

Let me say it clearly, Jesus died on the cross paying for all your sins, and you are hearing this message today because He wants you too, by faith, to receive this gift of salvation, right now!

The trial before the Sanhedrin.

26:57-61 In violation of their own laws and customs, Jesus is tried before the Sanhedrin, the high court among the Jews.

Matt 26:57-61

And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end.

59 Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death,

60 but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward

61 and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'"

A. led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest

He was not led to the temple area or a court room setting but to the actual house of the High Priest.

No doubt it was a gated community for the rich religious class of Jews.

Caiaphas had taken over as High Priest from his Father-in-law, Annas (The Roman's had made him give up the High Priesthood; normally a High Priest remain High Priest until death)

This would have been after the most important spiritual celebration of the year, the Passover".

The hearing would have been at night-time, which would have been strictly forbidden according to the law.

Note:

If you have read this account in all 4 gospels:

-One would have noticed in the Gospel of John that they first took him to the dethroned High Priest, Annas' (Caiaphas's Father-in-law) house.

John 18:13

13 And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year.

-No doubt some still saw Annas as the real High Priest.

-Compare all 4 gospels. Jesus was being slapped, hit, spit on and mocked almost the entire time after his arrest in the garden. This tells us, that they saw Jesus as guilty before any trial or witness would come forward.

-Jesus would be sent to Pilate, to Herod, and back to Pilate.

But, **by day break**, Jesus would have several illegal trials (in the midst of all this Pilate declares Jesus innocent), and then be sentenced to death.

B. Where the scribes and the elders were assembled:

This would be the Sanhedrin- very liberal, rich, and a politically powerful group of men.

C. Peter followed Him (Jesus) at a distance:

Peter followed Jesus into the actual courtyard of the High Priest and he sat with the servants.

This is a quick side-note – we will look more on the rest of the story about Peter later on.

D. Two False witnesses:

In vs. 59-60 it tells us that they were trying to find 2 witnesses with the same story, and that story would be used to find Jesus guilty and worthy of the death-penalty.

But they were repeatedly unsuccessful.

Finally, they got 2 guys to agree on one trivial point about Jesus saying He would destroy the temple but in 3 days rebuild it right back the way it was.

Jesus did not say He would destroy the temple in **John 2:19**, Jesus said, to those who were hating on Him, "YOU" will destroy this building (later the disciples figured it out that Jesus was referring to His body), but I will raise it back up in 3 days.

But these false witnesses said, "that Jesus talked about destroying the temple"- trying to make Jesus look like a terrorist.

But either way, even if this accusation was true, it did not amount to a death sentence.

Deut 19:16-19 (If caught perjurying - same sentence on that liar)

16 "If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing,

17 "then both men in the controversy shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who serve in those days.

18 "And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother,

19 "then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother; so you shall put away the evil from among you.

26:62-64 Jesus testifies at His trial.

Matt 26:62-64

62 And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?" 63 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

64 Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

A. The high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?"

The High Priest was to be like a Judge in a courtroom and remain neutral and make sure that there is a fair trial.

This once again shows the motives and the illegal nature of this trial.

B. Do you answer nothing?

Just like in our court system, the person on trial is never to be compelled to speak. Another serious breach of these sham hearings.

C. Jesus kept silent:

Most of the time Jesus said nothing, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 53:

Isa 53:7

7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

Psalms 38:12-14

12 Those also who seek my life lay snares for me;
Those who seek my hurt speak of destruction,
And plan deception all the day long.
13 But I, **like a deaf man, do not hear;**
And **I am like a mute who does not open his mouth.**
14 Thus **I am like a man who does not hear,**
And in whose mouth is no response.

D. the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

The High Priest now really oversteps his bounds- emotionally screaming at Jesus to Speak!

E. It is as you said:

Jesus stayed primarily silent.

You can tell how frustrating that was by Caiaphas' rant.

So this silent lamb finally opens His mouth.

And Jesus simply said, "true". Referring to all that they had said, that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of God".

In the Gospel of **Mark 14:62**, Jesus says, "I AM". That title of God from the burning bush story. Jesus testifies many times through the gospels that He is God, the Son of God and Son of Man. He clearly is stating that He is God. Often these same leaders were angry at Jesus and wanted to kill Him, but the Bible says, "they couldn't because it was not yet the time". But now, they were asking Jesus in a court of Law to say what they had heard Him say, and claimed many times before.

And then Jesus quotes a scripture out of **Daniel 7**.

F. You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven:

Jesus quotes this wonderful Messianic Prophecy of when the Messiah will rule and reign on the earth.

The day will come when you will see Me, but not as you see Me now, but you will see Me as I really am in glory.

In essences Jesus is saying, "it is true and one day you will see it for yourselves, but it will do you no good".

Phil 2:9-11

9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Let me read the entire glorious prophecy of Daniel in full:

Dan 7:13-14

13 "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

26:65-68 The Sanhedrin reacts with horror and brutality.

Matt 26:65-68

65 Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy!

66 What do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death."

67 Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, 68 saying, "Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?"

A. He (Jesus) has spoken blasphemy!

Let's first make it clear, that those at the trial believed He claimed to be God.

Remember the question, "Are you the Christ, the Son of God?". Yes He said, "I Am", and they said, no witness necessary because He, without question, claimed to be God".

So, those people that say, "no where in the Bible does Jesus claim Himself to be God", have not read this.

B. He (Jesus) is deserving of death:

They were right about Jesus speaking blasphemy, unless, He really is God!!!!

If Jesus really is the Son of God, then who is really the guilty party at this hearing?

C. They spat in His face and beat Him:

Isa 50:6

6 I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

Luke 22:63-65

63 Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him.

64 And having **blindfolded Him**, they **struck Him on the face** and asked Him, saying, "Prophecy! Who is the one who struck You?"

65 And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him.

Isa 52:14

14 Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

Conclusion

Many people ask the question:

“Why do bad things happen to good people?”

In reality that only happened once, and He volunteered.

There are no good people, except one, and that is JESUS.

Isa 53:3-6

3 He is **despised and rejected by men,**
A **Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.**

And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;

He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

4 Surely He has borne our griefs

And carried our sorrows;

Yet we esteemed Him stricken,

Smitten by God, and afflicted.

5 But **He was wounded for our transgressions,**

He was **bruised for our iniquities;**

The **chastisement for our peace was upon Him,**

And by His stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray;

We have turned, every one, to his own way;

And **the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

Eph 1:7

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

Heb 10:4

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

Heb 10:9-10

9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Heb 10:14

14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.