



Lesson 64 – Before Annas and Caiaphas

Based on Matthew 26:57-27:1; Mark 14:53-15:1; Luke 22:54-71; John 18:13-27.

After a long night and a frightful time in Gethsemane, Jesus had just been arrested and was being led into Jerusalem.

1) What does the Bible record for us?

Matthew 26:57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the _____ and the _____ were assembled.

Over the brook Kedron, past gardens and olive groves, and through the hushed streets of the sleeping city, they hurried Jesus. It was past midnight, and the cries of the hooting mob that followed Him broke sharply upon the still air.

2) Where did they stop off first?

John 18:12-13 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and _____ him, And led him away to _____ first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.

Annas was the head of the officiating priestly family, and in deference to his age he was recognized by the people as high priest. His counsel was sought and carried out as the voice of God. He must first see Jesus a captive to priestly power. He must be present at the examination of the prisoner, for fear that the less experienced Caiaphas might fail of securing the object for which they were working. His artifice, cunning, and subtlety must be used on this occasion; for, at all events, Christ's condemnation must be secured.

3) What was an important rule at the Sanhedrin?

John 7:51 Doth our law judge any man, before it _____ him, and _____ what he doeth?

Under the Roman rule the Sanhedrin could not execute the sentence of death. They could only examine a prisoner, and pass judgment, to be ratified by the Roman authorities. It was therefore necessary to bring against Christ charges that would be regarded as criminal by the Romans. An accusation must also be found which would condemn Him in the eyes of the Jews. Not a few among the priests and rulers had been convicted by Christ's teaching, and only fear of excommunication prevented them from confessing Him.

4) What was brought forward against Jesus at this meeting?

Mark 14:56-58 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness _____ not together. And there arose certain, and bare _____ witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will _____ another made without hands.

5) What else did they try to corner Jesus with?

John 18:19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his _____, and of his _____.

6) How did Jesus reply?

John 18:20-21 Jesus answered him, I _____ openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which _____ me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

Annas was silenced by the decision of the answer. Fearing that Christ would say something regarding his course of action that he would prefer to keep covered up, he said nothing more to Him at this time.



7) What did one of the court officers do?

John 18:22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by _____ Jesus with the _____ of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

8) How did Jesus respond?

John 18:23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken _____, bear _____ of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

Christ suffered keenly under abuse and insult. At the hands of the beings whom He had created, and for whom He was making an infinite sacrifice, He received every indignity. And He suffered in proportion to the perfection of His holiness and His hatred of sin. His trial by men who acted as fiends was to Him a perpetual sacrifice. To be surrounded by human beings under the control of Satan was revolting to Him. And He knew that in a moment, by the flashing forth of His divine power, He could lay His cruel tormentors in the dust. This made the trial the harder to bear.

Jesus was then taken to the judgement hall where Caiaphas took his seat as presiding officer. On either side were the judges, and those specially interested in the trial. The Roman soldiers were stationed on the platform below the throne. At the foot of the throne stood Jesus. Upon Him the gaze of the whole multitude was fixed. The excitement was intense. Of all the throng He alone was calm and serene. The very atmosphere surrounding Him seemed pervaded by a holy influence.

9) What did Caiaphas ask Jesus?

Matthew 26:59-63 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought _____ against Jesus, to put him to death; But found _____: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, _____ thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the _____, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

10) How did Jesus respond to Caiaphas?

Matthew 26:64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the _____ of _____, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

The enemies of Jesus were in great perplexity. They were bent on securing His condemnation, but how to accomplish this they knew not. There was abundant evidence that Jesus had disregarded the traditions of the Jews and had spoken irreverently of many of their ordinances; but in regard to tradition the Pharisees and Sadducees were at swords' points; and this evidence also would have no weight with the Romans.

11) What had Christ said early in His ministry?

John 2:19-21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this _____, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his _____.

12) What did the false witness SAY He said?

Matthew 26:61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the _____ of God, and to build it in three days.

Christ's words were misstated. If they had been reported exactly as He spoke them, they would not have secured His condemnation even by the Sanhedrin. Had Jesus been a mere man, as the Jews claimed, His declaration would only have indicated an unreasonable, boastful spirit, but could not have been construed into blasphemy. Even as misrepresented by the false witnesses, His words contained nothing which would be regarded by the Romans as a crime worthy of death.



13) What had Isaiah prophesied about Messiah?

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is _____, so he openeth not his mouth.

14) Finally, what did Caiaphas ask Jesus?

Matthew 26:63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I _____ thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

To this appeal Christ could not remain silent. There was a time to be silent, and a time to speak. He had not spoken until directly questioned. He knew that to answer now would make His death certain. But the appeal was made by the highest acknowledged authority of the nation, and in the name of the Most High. Christ would not fail to show proper respect for the law. More than this, His own relation to the Father was called in question. He must plainly declare His character and mission.

15) What had Jesus taught His Disciples?

Matthew 10:32-33 Whosoever therefore shall _____ me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall _____ me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

16) What was Jesus' response to Caiaphas?

Matthew 26:64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the _____ of _____.

For a moment the divinity of Christ flashed through His guise of humanity. The high priest quailed before the penetrating eyes of the Saviour. That look seemed to read his hidden thoughts and burn into his heart. Never in afterlife did he forget that searching glance of the persecuted Son of God.

The words of Christ startled the high priest. The thought that there was to be a resurrection of the dead, when all would stand at the bar of God, to be rewarded according to their works, was a thought of terror to Caiaphas. He did not wish to believe that in future he would receive sentence according to his works. There rushed before his mind as a panorama the scenes of the final judgment. For a moment he saw the fearful spectacle of the graves giving up their dead, with the secrets he had hoped were forever hidden. For a moment he felt as if standing before the eternal Judge, whose eye, which sees all things, was reading his soul, bringing to light mysteries supposed to be hidden with the dead.

17) What did the High Priest do at the answer of Jesus?

Matthew 26:65-66 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his _____. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of _____.

Now he was maddened by satanic fury. Was this man, a prisoner before him, to assail his most cherished theories? Rending his robe, that the people might see his pretended horror, he demanded that without further preliminaries the prisoner be condemned for blasphemy.

18) What was one of the laws referring to the High Priest?

Leviticus 10:6 And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither _____ your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.



This act was deeply significant. Little did Caiaphas realize its meaning. In this act, done to influence the judges and secure Christ's condemnation, the high priest had condemned himself. By the law of God he was disqualified for the priesthood. He had pronounced upon himself the death sentence.

By those beautiful official garments was represented the character of the great antitype, Jesus Christ. Nothing but perfection, in dress and attitude, in word and spirit, could be acceptable to God. He is holy, and His glory and perfection must be represented by the earthly service. Nothing but perfection could properly represent the sacredness of the heavenly service. Finite man might rend his own heart by showing a contrite and humble spirit. This God would discern. But no rent must be made in the priestly robes, for this would mar the representation of heavenly things.

19) What warning was given about Christ in the days of Moses?

Exodus 23:20-22 Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. _____ of him, and _____ his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an _____ unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.

Each action of the high priest was watched with interest by the people; and Caiaphas thought for effect to display his piety. But in this act, designed as an accusation against Christ, he was reviling the One of whom God had said, "**My name is in Him.**" Well might Caiaphas then rend his official robes, which signified that he claimed to be a representative of the great High Priest; for no longer had they any meaning for him or for the people. Well might the high priest rend his robes in horror for himself and for the nation.

20) While this was happening, where was Peter?

Matthew 26:58 But Peter _____ him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

In the court a fire had been kindled; for it was the coldest hour of the night, being just before the dawn. A company drew about the fire, and Peter presumptuously took his place with them. He did not wish to be recognized as a disciple of Jesus. By mingling carelessly with the crowd, he hoped to be taken for one of those who had brought Jesus to the hall.

21) Did they recognize him?

Luke 22:56-57 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also _____. And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

In assuming an air of indifference he had placed himself on the enemy's ground, and he became an easy prey to temptation. If he had been called to fight for his Master, he would have been a courageous soldier; but when the finger of scorn was pointed at him, he proved himself a coward. Many who do not shrink from active warfare for their Lord are driven by ridicule to deny their faith.

In order to conceal his true feelings, he endeavored to join with the persecutors of Jesus in their untimely jests. But his appearance was unnatural. He was acting a lie, and while seeking to talk unconcernedly he could not restrain expressions of indignation at the abuse heaped upon his Master.

22) What happened the third time he was asked if he was one of the Disciples?

Luke 22:60-62 And Peter said, Man, I _____ what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and _____ upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and _____ bitterly.



While the degrading oaths were fresh upon Peter's lips, and the shrill crowing of the cock was still ringing in his ears, the Saviour turned from the frowning judges and looked full upon His poor disciple. At the same time Peter's eyes were drawn to his Master. In that gentle countenance he read deep pity and sorrow, but there was no anger there.

23) What had Jesus told him earlier?

Luke 22:31-32 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may _____ you as _____: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

The sight of that pale, suffering face, those quivering lips, that look of compassion and forgiveness, pierced his heart like an arrow. Conscience was aroused. Memory was active. Peter called to mind his promise of a few short hours before that he would go with his Lord to prison and to death.

24) Peter went back to Gethsemane, What Words came to him?

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

The scene of a few hours before came vividly to his mind. The suffering face of his Lord, stained with bloody sweat and convulsed with anguish, rose before him. He remembered with bitter remorse that Jesus had wept and agonized in prayer alone, while those who should have united with Him in that trying hour were sleeping. He remembered His solemn charge.

On the very spot where Jesus had poured out His soul in agony to His Father, Peter fell upon his face, and wished that he might die.

25) What happened at daybreak?

Luke 22:66-69 And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their _____, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask you, ye will _____ answer me, nor let me go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

As soon as it was day, the Sanhedrin again assembled, and again Jesus was brought into the council room. He had declared Himself the Son of God, and they had construed His words into a charge against Him. But they could not condemn Him on this, for many of them had not been present at the night session, and they had not heard His words. And they knew that the Roman tribunal would find in them nothing worthy of death. But if from His own lips they could all hear those words repeated, their object might be gained. His claim to the Messiahship they might construe into a seditious political claim.

When the condemnation of Jesus was pronounced by the judges, a satanic fury took possession of the people. The roar of voices was like that of wild beasts. The crowd made a rush toward Jesus, crying, He is guilty, put Him to death! Had it not been for the Roman soldiers, Jesus would not have lived to be nailed to the cross of Calvary. He would have been torn in pieces before His judges, had not Roman authority interfered, and by force of arms restrained the violence of the mob.

26) How was Christ treated at this point?

Matthew 26:67-68 Then did they spit in his face, and _____ him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, Saying, _____ unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

The angels of God faithfully recorded every insulting look, word, and act against their beloved Commander. One day the base men who scorned and spat upon the calm, pale face of Christ will look upon it in its glory, shining brighter than the sun.