

The Man Who Is God

"The Man And The Sanhedrin"

VPB 05/20/12

Primary Matthew 26:57-68 **Also:** Mk 14: 53-65 & Luke 22:54, 63-65, 66-71

Sources: Alfred Edersheim "The Life And Times Of Jesus The Messiah", John MacArthur "Commentary on Matthew Ch.'s. 24-28, Jim Gables "Ex. of Isaiah Ch. 53", Jim Gunn "Ex. of Gospel of John"

Sermon Point: *To examine the accounts of the trial of Jesus before the Jewish leaders and the Sanhedrin. To follow the timeline of events after His being taken in the garden and prior to His delivery to the Roman Procurator Pontus Pilate. To see the injustice upon the Savior and His reaction to the events of the night of His arrest into the morning of his execution.*

Our Lord has already faced one accuser in the man Annas and has at this point already suffered physical abuse at the hands of those who were around Him before Annas.

And as we saw last time it gave the abuser great joy to be able to slap Jesus as he asked Him "is this how you speak to the High Priest"? (Slap = "To give a gift".

So the assumption of authority is in minds of those who now have control over our Lord and who intend to ultimately rid themselves of Him. Or at least that is their ultimate goal.

And I emphasize the word "assumption" because that is what is in their minds but as the Scriptures tell us the control of our Lord was granted to these by God's eternal plan.

In the narrative in Matthew Ch. 26:57 he says that "those who had seized" Jesus.

Seized (krat-eh'-o) = Not only means to "grab ahold" but to have power over someone.

But we also know the words of our Lord in

Jn. 19: 11 (with Pilate) "you would have no authority over Me unless it had been given to you from above".

Mt. 26: 53 (to Peter) "do you not think that I cannot appeal to My Father and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?"

So these people here on this night assumed that they had control over our Lord but it was not their control or their wills but it was the providence and plan of God for salvation that had "given" them the ability to control Jesus.

You know a lot of people think they have control over God and what He does. These people here did. However while they were doing exactly what they wanted they were accomplishing God's plan and would do so until His work was completed.

Acts 2:22 “Men of Israel, listen to these words, Jesus the Nazarene a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know, this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, YOU nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death”.

O, beloved men think they have control over God but it is God who has control over them. Even in their sinful hearts as they do exactly as they please, God is accomplishing His eternal will.

“It is not what you will do with Christ. No, that is not the question! The question is what will Christ do with you!” *(Jim Gables)*

Annas thought he had control over Jesus and as we saw at the end of our sermon last time he sent Him bound to Caiaphas. Caiaphas is going to think the same thing as is Pilate.

But take notice here beloved what your Lord is doing for you! He is here so we won't face the eternal damnation of God for sin that we so surly deserve. I include all of us here because I know that those of you who know the Lord feel the same way.

See your Lord as He suffers in your place, as He gives Himself to the hands of sinful men, as he suffers patiently.

Now Jesus has been sent to Caiaphas and He will now face the ruling body of the Jews, the Sanhedrin.

Now not to go over too much from last time however I do want to remind us of what the Sanhedrin is.

The word Sanhedrin simply means to “sit together”.

There was also the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem that was made up of 70 Chief Priests, Elders, and Scribes and one High Priest which made up a total of 71 members to prevent a tie vote on any issue.

When a person was accused of a crime they had the right to a defense council, a public trial, and conviction was only possible with the testimony of two reliable witnesses whose testimony was from experience and not based on hearsay.

It was supposed to be a procedure that followed proper protocol and adhered to the strict rules of the law, but not in this case.

However here on this night the high court of Judaism was illegally convened, at night, to illegally try a Man who had not even been indicted of a crime.

None of the rules of the law and the Sanhedrin were given to Jesus on this night. His “trial” was conducted against every rule that the Sanhedrin were supposed to follow.

But then it wasn't supposed to be fair to Him. This kangaroo court if you will was assembled for one purpose and one purpose only and that was to see to it that a false case can be made against Jesus and that the outcome would result in His execution.

The synoptic writers; Matthew, Mark, and Luke are our sources of information about Jesus before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin. John mentions Caiaphas but does not give an account of the Sanhedrin assembly.

So our Lord wasn't even given the same courtesies as would have been afforded to the most violent of offenders.

Remember beloved He is the Man who is God. And I hope we can in some small way relate to some of the things that Jesus is experiencing.

By now He's tired.

He's probably thirsty.

He's suffering physical pain. His face hurts where He was slapped.

He's dirty and hasn't been allowed to clean Himself up any.

His hands are tied so He can't wipe the sweat from His face or the blood from His mouth.

He's not been allowed the opportunity to go to the bathroom.

He's alone with no one to come to His defense.

His feelings are hurt and His heart is broken.

He's in a totally hopeless situation with no chance of pardon.

He's suffering as a man.

He used no Divine powers to lessen His suffering.

He invokes no special privilege as would be His right.

He offers no defense for Himself even though He's completely innocent from the purest point.

He's bound like a common criminal and taken to Caiaphas and the court.

Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin:

When the scene opens up we see that they are hurriedly trying to find witnesses who can testify against Jesus.

1) IT INVOLVES THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE WHOLE COUNCIL:

But obviously some did not hold to what was going on. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea are two who come to mind.

Mk. 15:43 (After the death of Jesus) Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.

John 19:38-39 (Again after the death of Jesus) After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus ; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body. **39** Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight.

John 7:50-51 Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them *The Counsel*) said to them, **51** "Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?"

So we see that Joseph and Nicodemus did not approve of the proceedings against Jesus but they were either not present at this time or they were silenced by the other members. The text does not tell us which but clearly they were believers in the Lord.

Nicodemus actually defended the proper protocol in John 7. This is when the officers were sent to bring Jesus before the Counsel and they had returned without Him stating "Never has a man spoken the way this Man speaks".

2) *THE FALSE WITNESSES:*

Now witnesses were a very important part of the judicial proceeding of the Counsel. So important were they and so vital to the proceedings that two witnesses had to be produced who's testimony was based completely on a firsthand account and never could it be based on hearsay or secondhand information.

The Counsel was hurriedly trying to find false witnesses for the specific reason that they could have Jesus put to death. **(Mt 26:59)**

Not to make sure He was guilty or that He had a proper hearing but they wanted Him dead and they were trying to find witnesses who could bring a substantiated charge against Jesus, but none were found. Even though many came forward none were found to even be consistent enough to be used by this illegal court. **(Mt 26:60)**

****Note:** *Remember from our last study that if a witness gave false testimony in a trial and was found out their punishment would be the same as the person convicted.*

Nothing proper was followed this night. And justice was the farthest thing from the minds of the Jewish rulers. Jesus' death had to occur no matter how perverted the proceedings had to be.

These are the very people who were trusted by the Jewish people to safeguard their rights and lives, to save and not destroy life. However they are themselves found to be corrupt and untrustworthy. *(Similar to some of our politicians of today)*

Deuteronomy 16:19-20

19 "You shall not distort justice; you shall not be partial, and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous. **20** "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue, that you may live and possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

But later on (don't know how much later) two witnesses were found who seemed to substantiate legitimate charges against Jesus. Of course they were both liars as well.

Mark says that even in this their testimony was inconsistent. (Mk. 14:59) "Not even in this respect was their testimony consistent".

Here's why:

Mt. 26:61 "This man stated, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days.'

Mk. 14:58 "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'

What did Jesus actually say? When He said this it was within the context of the first temple cleansing that is recorded in John Ch. 2.

John 2:18-22 18 The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?" **19** Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." **20** The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" **21** But He was speaking of the temple of His body. **22** So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

Blindness and ignorance of Spiritual truth leads to distortion and perversion of that truth.

2 Timothy 2:15 NAS

15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

KJV

15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

These people here should have been diligent for the truth but they were not. They only wanted to outcome to be the death of the Lord Jesus.

All people are looking for is an excuse. It doesn't matter if it's accurate or not just as long as it can be used to justify their point.

And isn't that so true even in our time today. Guard yourselves believers with the truth, because your adversary the devil walks around seeking whom he may devour.

One last thing on the witnesses:

The fact that not one single witness could substantiate wrongdoing against our Lord is one of the greatest arguments in Scripture of His perfection and Divinity.

Remember these people had followed Him every day of His ministry and were constantly looking for some reason to accuse Him of wrong doing. However with all the effort of the Jewish leaders no one could be found to accuse Jesus of wrongdoing. (*Similar to your current day news media*)

This one fact beloved even in secular circles lays all the blame for what transpires from this point on squarely on the shoulders of the Sanhedrin and the Jewish leaders as a whole.

3) CAIAPHAS ADDRESSES JESUS:

Caiaphas now looks at Jesus and asked Him, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" (**Mt. 26:62**)

See Jesus' reaction here....silence

Isa. 53:7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth ; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.

This is the silence of the Messiah.

This is the silence of innocence, the silence of dignity, the silence of integrity, of infinite trust. The silence of the Righteous Judge, as He stands before the unrighteous judge.

Kind of makes us wonder how we should react when falsely accused?

So with His silence Caiaphas, I would imagine becoming very infuriated, makes one of the most profound statements in the entire NT.

Mt 26: 63 And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God."

Adjure (ex-or-kid'-zo) = To force an oath. (only time used in the NT)

Two root words = to force something out of someone.

Similar to: "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you God?"

Now in making this statement Caiaphas himself does more to prove that the Sovereignty of God in salvation is Biblical truth.

For here he and the whole of the Counsel stand before the Living God and they have no idea that He is the Living God.

But then that happens even in our day beloved. How many people in our own country have not heard the Gospel at least one time? Millions hear it and walk away never recognizing it and look straight at the truth of God and never know it.

O I say that without the Sovereign Lord opening the dead eyes and hearts of men and women we'd all end up in hell!

And there is no better proof of it than what we see right here with the group.

What did Jesus call them in Matthew Ch. 23? Blind men, blind guides, fools and blind men.....
(They had watched Jesus for three years and yet they did not see)

4) JESUS ANSWERS CAIAPHAS:

Jesus had never flaunted His Messiahship but He had made several remarks about it during His Ministry.

Luke 4:21 after reading the passage from Isaiah Jesus said, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." *They at that point tried to throw Him off a cliff.*

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." *The picked up stones to stone Him.*

There are other incidents where He affirmed His Deity and in most cases in infuriated the Pharisees who were present.

And here He answers Caiaphas' question. One of the few times that He speaks during all this.

Mt. 26: 64 Jesus said to him, "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 gives a more direct response:

Mk. 14:62 Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."

Luke 22:67-68 Jesus said "If I tell you, you will not believe and if I ask you a question you will not answer".

So Jesus' response was the sum of the whole: "If I tell you, you will not believe and if I ask you a question you will not answer. You have said it yourself, I am, 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."

(Now this is my construction of the statements and it's it not inspired but it is the sum of the whole statement that Jesus made).

And again as we have seen throughout the ministry of Jesus His statements infuriate the Counsel but more than that **He finally gives them something they want!**

This is what they have been waiting for!

5) QUESTIONING IS DIFFERENT:

Now I want to kind of backup a little before we proceed and bring something out.

Did you notice that the questioning before the Counsel was different that it was before Annas?

Remember Annas and that he had control over the financial proceedings at the Temple? It is thought that he received a cut of the selling of sacrifice animals? We mentioned this in the last study.

Here though before the Counsel the questions were from a theological angle. Did you notice that?

Annas wanted to know what Jesus taught and who His disciples were. He was a threat to the financial wellbeing of Annas and if he could destroy the message he would preserve his illegal enterprise.

On the other hand Caiaphas and the Counsel saw Jesus as a treat to their perverted theology in which the controlled the Jewish people.

There is no greater threat to the false gospel than the true Gospel. And those who preach and teach the false gospel cannot stand to stay in a place where the truth is proclaimed because it exposes the lies and distortion that they speak. And eventually gets in their pockets if you will and stops their unjust financial gain.

Like we see in men like Joel Osteen; one of the most popular "preachers" in America yet one who teaches lies and a distortion of the true Gospel. Should we mention false teachers by name?

(Reference Jim Gables "Death In The Pot", "Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds") 2 Timothy 4:14

It's our job beloved not only to preach, teach, and testify to the truth of the Gospel but to defend it against those who pervert it!

On the other side the truth frees people from the strong handed control that some have over people with fear and intimidation.

Why am I bringing all this up? Because this is still going on in our time today.

Religion is one of the best sources for money making and there are many, I'm so sorry to say, that work to make it the center for financial gain rather than the truth that saves the souls of the lost.

Whether it is control through the promise of Health, Wealth, Success, and Popularity.

Whichever way these people saw Jesus they saw Him as a threat! And He had to be stopped!

They knew that if the truth took hold it would destroy their schemes and reveal them as the hucksters that they were.

This is the motivation behind what is happening here to our Lord. Pure and simple He was a threat to them and if it took perverting the judicial system to stop Him that is what they would do.

Because you see a true Christian doesn't have to be controlled by fear and intimidation. They are controlled by the Spirit of God and are like minded as other Christians. "You will know the truth and the truth will set you free."

6) THE ANSWER THAT JESUS GAVE ENRAGED THE COUNSEL:

They had Him! He'd finally given them what they wanted!

They had what they wanted because they had so closed their minds to the truth that no amount of evidence to the contrary would sway them.

If you don't know Christ today be very careful about closing your mind to the truth of the Gospel! The heart can be so hardened that there comes a point where the truth can no longer penetrate it.

That's where these men are.

Mt 26: 65 Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses?"

I want to read to you what MacArthur says about this:

“Although Leviticus 21:10 strictly forbade the high priest’s tearing his garments, the Talmud held that judges who witnessed blasphemy had a right to tear their robes if they later sewed them up. By his traditional and theatrical display, Caiaphas dramatically gave the appearance of defending God’s name, but inwardly he gloated over the illegal, unjust, and devilish victory he imagined he had just won.”

John MacArthur New Testament Commentary, “Matthew 24-28” © 1989 The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.

Remember these men are not interested in the truth. They just wanted to have a reason to put Jesus to death.

Also notice the statement of Caiaphas; “What further need do we have of witnesses?”

After all the trouble they had gone through to obtain the “witnesses” they no longer needed them and actually never mentioned their statements again.

7) THE ABUSE OF JESUS BEGINS IN FULL FORCE:

Now their rage against Jesus comes out. And this time, unlike previous attempts, they are not stopped from abusing Him.

Mt. 26:66-68 what do you think?" They answered, "He deserves death!" **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?"

Prophecy (Prof-ate-yoo'-o) = To speak about future events. Also a thing which can only be known by Divine revelation.

IOW, “Okay, You’re the Christ so tell us!” (*He could have. He not only knew but He knew their hearts to*)

Not only physical abuse but blasphemy of the sweet Lord Jesus!
(*Lk. 22:65 “And they were saying many other things against Him, blaspheming.”*)

Mark and Luke state that they blindfolded Him and began to beat Him in the head.

(Luke says that the abuse and blindfolding began prior to the questions being asked.)

So it could be possible that the Lord Jesus was blindfolded throughout the whole ordeal?

Also being blindfolded He could not even brace Himself when the blows came!

This becomes a “feeding frenzy”! Years of frustration by these men who desperately wanted to rid themselves of Jesus. A picture of man’s hatred of God! Would still happen today!

8) THE MAJESTY AND GLORY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:

Enough about these men. Look beloved at your Lord.

- 1) He suffers silently and patiently with no rebukes or insults.
- 2) He quietly and slowly drinks the cup His Father has given Him.
- 3) He did not hold back His face from abuse nor did He cry out for mercy.
- 4) He uttered no threats of retaliation and did not complain of His mistreatment.
- 5) He was not defenseless but neither did He defend.
- 6) He was suffering the curse of humanity to relieve the curse of humanity.
- 7) He is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Alpha & Omega, the I Am, the Bright and Morning Star, Emanuel – God with us.

By this time the Lord Jesus would have been in very bad physical condition. And yet the worse was to come!

Do you know Him?

Seek Him!

-Amen