

Lighthouse Bible Church

September 14th, 2014

John 18: 12 27 *Scripture Reading: Matthew 26: 57 - 68*

'Jesus' Trials and Peter's denials'

Stand – Read – Pray

Last week we saw Jesus and His disciples on the Mount of Olives in the Garden of Gethsemane being confronted by Judas and between 500 and 1000 Roman soldiers and Jewish leaders with clubs and swords.

This was the time predicted in scripture that Judas would betray Jesus into the hands of sinful mankind and Jesus knew it and made it easy for them to do so by being in the garden.

We saw as they approached Jesus that He asked them whom they were seeking and when He said Jesus of Nazareth He said I am *He* and all of the soldiers and people fell to the ground. Judas, indwelt by Satan fell back, the Roman soldiers fell back, the representatives of the Sanhedrin fell back, by merely the spoken word of Jesus.

When they asked again, Jesus said I am *He* and demanded that they not take any of the Apostles, only Him. And the reason He demanded that is because He had told His disciples earlier that 'of those whom You gave Me I have lost none'. He would not lose them physically, yet, and He would not lose them spiritually ever.

We ended last time by seeing Peter trying to defend Jesus and Jesus telling Him to stop because 'the cup which My Father has given Me' He is about to drink. We saw that the cup represents the wrath and judgment of God poured out on Jesus.

So we are going to pick it up in Verse 12 and see Jesus taken away and what happens to Him and what happens with Peter.

And all of this time, John is presenting Jesus as God in human form, God in control of all that is taking place. He is presenting Jesus and all the glories surrounded in His moving toward the cross.

Verse 12: then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him.

Something they had wanted to do for a long time but were not able to because His hour had not yet come and because they feared the people. Now there are no people around and Jesus is in a place where He can be arrested, but as we have seen before, He didn't try to hide, He gave Himself over to them.

Then John lists those who take Jesus into custody. **The detachment, the captain and the officers.** The captain of the detachment is the commander of them and his title in the Greek is *chilarchos* which means 'commander of a thousand'. So there may have been that many there.

Then you have the **officers of the Jews**, they were the temple police. So you have Jews and Gentiles coming to arrest Jesus and probably such a large amount because just days earlier He was hailed by many as the Messiah and maybe they thought that they need that many to fight against an angry crowd. Then they **bound Him** and took Him away. No official charges, no reason stated, they just take Him away; lead as a lamb to the slaughter. And like **Luke 22: 53** where Jesus says **but his is your hour and the power of darkness.**

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

Jesus would have two different hearings; one a religious hearing before the Jewish leaders and the other a secular hearing before the Roman government.

Both the religious and secular hearings would involve 3 different hearings, 3 with the Jews and 3 with the Romans. Part of the reason is, is because the Jews could not put anyone to death according to Roman law, they had to appeal to the Roman government to execute someone.

The 3 religious hearings, of which John only records two, involved Annas, then Caiaphas and the scribes and elders, according to **Matthew 26: 57**, that took place in the middle of the night, and then again with Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin in the morning **Mark 15: 1** says.

The 3 Roman hearings, of which John only records two, involved Pilate, then before Herod **Luke 23: 6** says and then again with Pilate.

Jesus is taken to **Annas** first, who is **the father-in-law of Caiaphas** who was the current high priest. Annas was formerly a high priest from AD 6 – 15 and apparently still had a lot of influence and control even though his son-in-law was the current high priest. According to **Numbers 35: 25** you stayed a high priest until death so that is maybe why he still has such influence now. **Luke 3: 2** lists both Annas and Caiaphas as high priests.

Let me tell you a little something about Annas. In addition to manipulating the system into allowing some of his children and grandchildren to be high priests, he also ran the temple exams of the animals and the money exchange. *Explain.*

The Jews themselves hated him and as a matter of fact wrote in the Jewish Talmud "Woe to the house of Annas. Woe to their serpent's hiss. They are high priests. Their sons are keepers of the treasury. Their sons-in-law guardians of the temple and their servants beat the people with staves". He and his family had a monopoly in the temple.

By the way, Annas hated Jesus and you want to know why? Who was it that went into the temple on two occasions and cleansed it? Jesus! He disrupted Anna's money making schemes. So why not bring Jesus to him first? Then we are introduced to Caiaphas who Verse 13 says **is the son-in-law of Annas**. Then ..

Verse 14: Now it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Caiaphas has hated Jesus for a long time, as a matter of fact back in **John 11: 47 – 52** *Read*. Caiaphas was afraid of losing his position, prestige and having everyone follow after Jesus and not him. Then the scene suddenly shifts to Peter; look at it in Verses 15 – 16.

Verses 15 – 16: *Read*

Simon Peter begins following Jesus **Mark 14: 54** records **at a distance**. He doesn't want to get too close. And **another disciple that was known to the high priest was** following along with him. Now this unnamed disciple some think was Joseph of Arimathea or Nicodemus or some other unknown disciple. We don't know for sure, but the most likely candidate is the Apostle John, the writer of the book of John.

The reason being is that John never mentions his own name when he refers to himself. He always says 'the disciple whom Jesus loved', referring to himself. And in this case, he calls himself **the other disciple**. The only other time that phrase **other disciple** is used in John is in **John 20: 2,3,4,8:** and they are all John referring to himself. So He may be the other disciple but we don't know for sure.

Now this disciple knew the high priest and others well enough that he was able to go into **the courtyard** area of Caiaphas' house.

Peter **stood outside** and then the other disciple **spoke to the servant girl at the door** and Peter was let inside to the courtyard area as well. Then Verse 17 says..

Verse 17: then the servant 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’.

Peter was there following Jesus and he had told Jesus earlier that he would go and die with Him. He stood up to the 1000 people with one little dagger. He seems to have confident courage as he watches from a short distance away what is happening to Jesus. And then this little girl asks him the question ‘your not one of His disciples are you?’

And it seems like without even thinking, Peter says ‘I am not’. All the courage, all the confidence that takes him to this place is suddenly shattered by the question of one little girl and his answer to her. But isn’t that the way it is with us sometimes, in our confidence, in our over confidence, Satan comes along and throws something at us and we say or do something that we regret.

One writer said “the tragic story of Peter’s multiple denials is a warning to all who would claim self-confidently that they would follow Jesus wherever He leads them. Boasting of our abilities is an invitation to failure”. *Geralf L Borchert John Commentary pg 230.*

Peter lied and now he has to live with it. For whatever reason, probably self preservation at any cost, he felt compelled to lie about being a disciple of Jesus. Then in Verse 18

Verse 18: now the servants and officers who had made a fire of coals stood there for it was cold and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself.

Peter leaves the servant girl and sees some **servants and officers warming themselves by a fire**. So Peter goes over and **stands with them and warms himself**.

He is taking a big chance. He just denied Jesus to this servant girl and now he is around other servants and officers, some who may have been at the arrest of Jesus as John 18: 3 indicates, and what happens if they recognize him or ask him, being a stranger, if he was with Jesus. Well, that is exactly what happened as we shall see in a minute.

An interesting analogy in this is that in **John 18: 5 Judas**, it says, **stood with them** with the enemy of Christ. And now Peter, Verse 18 says, **stood with them**, the enemies of Christ. The difference being that Peter loved Jesus even in his sin of temporarily denying Him, where Judas denied Him from a heart of unbelief. Peter belonged to Jesus, Judas belonged to the evil one. And now, all of a sudden, the scene shifts back to Jesus and His trial before Annas and Caiaphas.

Verse 19: the high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine.

Jesus had been taken to Annas and Caiaphas' house; and we already know from what was leading up to this that the Jewish religious leaders wanted Jesus dead, they just needed to find a legal reason to kill Him. Remember back in **John 11: 47 – 48 the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council together**, one of which was **Caiaphas**, and then it says in **Verse 53: from that day on they plotted to put Jesus to death.**

So the high priest questions Jesus about **His disciples and His doctrine** trying to gather evidence together to carry out what they had already planned to do. This is an illegal and unjust trial of Jesus. The only thing is, Jewish law did not allow someone to testify against themselves, there had to be witnesses against Him.

Not only that, they were not allowed to intimidate or strike or evoke emotion in front of the judge, they violated that. They had to wait at least 2 days from the trial to the execution and they didn't. They also could not hold a trial at night and they did. This was all a sham trial, they wanted Him dead, they just had to find a way to justify doing it.

So they ask Jesus about His doctrine, His teaching and about His followers. They don't accuse Him of a crime, they don't have any witnesses to testify against Him. They just want Him to tell them something that would incriminate Himself or that they can use against Him. If He tells them about His teaching they could say that He is teaching heresy, against the law of Moses. If He tells them about His disciples, they could say that He was starting a revolution. Jesus answers;

Verses 20 - 22: I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said.

They are trying to indict Jesus and He turns it around and begins to indict them. He says I have had no secret agenda, no secret teaching, not plot in secret to overthrow any government. So why are you asking Me these questions. Where are your witnesses? You can **ask those who have heard Me**, bring them and see what they have to say. They will verify that I have been teaching about the kingdom of heaven and God's plan of salvation and the need to repent and believe.

Annas wanted to get the trial over with in the middle of the night when there were no witnesses around and Jesus says, in essence, ask those witnesses about Me...O you don't have any? You are violating the Jewish law because you have no accusers and you have not told Me of a crime that I have committed.

They tried to find some witnesses to testify against Him later but they couldn't. In **Matthew 26: 59 – 60** it says **now the chief priests, the elders and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward.**

Did Jesus think that He would get a fair trial? No! But in Him holding the chief priests and the rest accountable for falsely accusing, trying and eventually killing Jesus, they will know the full guilt of that when they understand that they are fulfilling the prophecy that we say earlier in **John 15: 25** **they hated Me without a cause** taken from the Psalms. Then look what happens in Verse 22

Verse 22: **and when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand saying 'do you answer the high priest like that?**

One of the officers there knew that Jesus had backed the high priest into a corner with his illegal trial, with no crime articulated and no witnesses and so he **strikes Jesus with the palm of his hand and says do you answer the high priest like that?** Don't talk to him that way, you are the prisoner, he is the high priest.

There is something interesting here. In Thayer's Greek dictionary the phrase **with the palm of his hand** is one word in the Greek. It is the word *rhapisma*. And it can be used of striking with the palm or striking with a rod or a stick. Since the temple officers carried clubs or sticks, he may have struck Jesus across the face with it. If he did it would be a fulfillment of **Micah 5: 1** which says **..they will strike the judge of Israel with the rod on the cheek.**

Again, this would have been an illegal act, to strike a prisoner according to Jewish law, not to mention how painful that would be, but the beauty of that is a great fulfillment of prophecy. Interesting that Annas is sitting as a judge against Jesus and doesn't even know that Jesus is the real judge.

A similar thing happened to the Apostle Paul years later. Look at **Acts 23: 1 – 3**. So how does Jesus respond to this strike? Look at Verse 23.

Verse 23: Jesus answered him ‘If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why do you strike Me?’

The way Jesus handled this suffering and reviling, like He did every time He suffered and was reviled, had a profound impact on Peter because he wrote about it later in **1st Peter 2: 23** when he said **Jesus, who, when He was reviled did not revile in return, when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges justly.**

Jesus responds by saying ‘if I said something wrong about this trial and its process not being legal, let Me know, correct My error. If I have said something wrong or evil, where are the witnesses to **bear witness of the evil**. And ‘if I didn’t say anything wrong, **why did you hit Me then?** As calm as could be, Jesus back them into a corner again. Well, Annas couldn’t handle Him any longer so He sends Him away. Look at Verse 24.

Verse 24: then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. According to **Matthew 26: 57** while Jesus was with Annas, Caiaphas was gathering the scribes and elders of the Sanhedrin together. Which, was also illegal for them to convene at night for a trial. But they wanted this done before morning, before anyone found out, so they could turn Him over to the Romans for crucifixion.

That is the same passage in **Matthew 26: 59 – 61** where they brought several false witnesses to testify against Him. As a matter of fact **Mark 14: 55 – 56** says **the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death but found none. For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.** They could not find any to accuse Him of anything. So look what happens in **Matthew 26: 63 – 68**.

In the meantime, we go back to what was happening with Peter in...

Verse 25: Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Therefore they said to him, you are not also one of His disciples are you? He denied it and said ‘I am not’.

While Peter is warming himself, the light of the fire illuminates him enough for someone to see him and thinks He recognizes Him. And by the way, historians say that it was a full moon that night as well, so he could have been easily seen.

All of what had just happened to Jesus probably did not affect Him as much as what Peter was again about to say in denying Jesus. Someone said to him **you are not also one of His disciples are you?** Well, here is Peter’s chance to redeem himself by telling them the truth and standing up for Jesus.

But Peter’s response was one of denial, just as Jesus predicted it would be. Peter says **I am not.** Then in **Verse 26 one of the servant of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter cut off said, ‘did I not see you in the garden with Him’.**

Of all the people to come up to Peter, it is a relative of the guy whose ear he cut off in the garden. And he says **‘did I not see you in the garden with Him’.** Look what Peter says in **Verse 27: Peter then denied again** and **Matthew 26: 73** says he denies Jesus by **cursing and swearing**, calling on God as his witness that he was not there and doesn’t know Jesus, **saying I don’t know the Man.**

and then notice and the end of Verse 27 **and immediately a rooster crowed.** Not only did the rooster crow but **Luke 22: 61** says at that very moment **the Lord turned and looked at Peter.** Jesus made direct eye contact with Peter at the moment when Peter denied Him and the rooster crowed.

The **Luke 22: 61 – 62** records that **Peter then remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him ‘before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times. So Peter went out and wept bitterly.** Remember He said the same thing to Peter in **John 13: 38** as well.

Just as a side note, the rooster crowing, according to **Mark 13: 35** would be around 3:00 in the morning. And on the second crowing **Mark 14: 72** is when Jesus looked at Peter after he denied Him.

Just think about the omniscience of Jesus, the all knowing power of Jesus as God in human form. He knew Peter would deny Him and how many times He would deny Him. He knew that a rooster would crow twice in conjunction with His denials. He knew that Peter would have to be in a place where such a denial would be possible. He knew that He would be in a mock trial in the middle of the night because that is when the rooster crows. Incredible!

Peter went out and wept bitterly over his sin of denying Christ, 3 times. He was overwhelmed with guilt and shame for what he had said and done. Have you ever been in that place. Our sin ought to cause us to weep, especially when by our words or actions we deny Christ, or when we commit any sin against Him for which He died.

The good news is that, as we shall see, Peter will be forgiven and used by Jesus in great ways to further His kingdom. He will be the rock, God intended him to be. When we weep over our sin and confess it and repent of it, He can use us and restore us as well, not matter what we have done.

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Introduction and Review:

Verse 12:

Luke 22: 53

Verse 13:

Matthew 26: 57, Mark 15: 1, Luke 23: 6
Numbers 35: 25, Luke 3: 2

Verses 14 – 16:

John 11: 47 – 52, Mark 14: 54, John 20: 2,3,4,8

Verse 17 – 19:

John 18: 5, John 11: 47 – 48, 53

Verses 20 – 22:

Matthew 26: 59 – 60, John 15: 25, Micah 5: 1
Acts 23: 1 – 3

Verses 23 – 25:

1st Peter 2: 23, Matthew 26: 57, 59 – 61, 63-68
Mark 14: 55 – 56

Verses 26 – 27:

Matthew 26: 73, Luke 22: 61 – 62, John 13: 38
Mark 13: 35, Mark 14: 72

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Mark 14: 55 – 56

Verses 26 – 27:

Matthew 26: 73, Luke 22: 61 – 62, John 13: 38
Mark 13: 35, Mark 14: 72