

Sunday, June 10, 2012—Mark Dispensationally Considered—Mark 14:53-65: The Trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin

Mark 14:53-65

- **53) And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.**
- 54) And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.**
- 55) And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.**
- 56) For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.**
- 57) And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,**
- 58) We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.**
- 59) But neither so did their witness agree together.**
- 60) And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what [is it which] these witness against thee?**
- 61) But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?**
- 62) And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.**
- 63) Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?**
- 64) Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.**
- 65) And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.**
- Mark 14:53-54—after being arrested in verses 43-52, Jesus was led away to stand before high priest, chief priests, elders, and scribes i.e., the Jewish Sanhedrin. Peter followed from a distance and sat with the servants around the fire.
 - Matthew 26:57-58—Caiaphas was the name of the high priest.
 - John 18:12-14—tells us that before Jesus was taken to the palace of Caiaphas he was taken to “Annas first.”
 - Luke 3:2—according to Charles F. Baker author of *Understanding the Gospels: A Different Approach*, “Annas had been appointed high priest by Quirinius, governor of Syria, in 7 A.D. and was deposed by Valerius Gratus in 15 A.D. Although deposed he continued to have great power as seen by the fact his five of his sons and his son-in-law, Caiaphas, held the high-priesthood in almost unbroken succession.” (269)

- Mark 14:55-56—the council sought witness against Jesus that they might put him to death but could not find any. Even those who bear false witness could not get their stories straight.
 - Matthew 26:59-60—many false witnesses came yet they could find no reason to put Jesus to death. Finally two false witnesses came that would offer the ultimately damning piece of testimony.
- Mark 14:57-59—these two witnesses offer Jesus’ remarks regarding the destruction of “this temple” and “within three days I will build another made without hands,” as testimony against him. It is important to notice that not even their witnesses agreed together.
 - Matthew 26:61
 - John 2:19-22
- Mark 14:60-62—after hearing the testimony of these false witnesses, Caiaphas asks Jesus directly about why he will not answer the witness against him. In verse 61 Jesus held his peace and does not answer the high priest. Caiaphas then asks Jesus a direct question, “Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” In other words, Caiaphas is asking Jesus whether or not he is the Messiah, the Son of God? According to verse 62 Jesus responds by simply saying, “I am.” Jesus by his own admissions claimed to be “the Christ, the Son of the Blessed.”
 - Matthew 26:62-64—“Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said:” Once again Jesus admits to being the Christ, the Son of God.”
- Mark 14:63-65—after hearing Christ’s admission, Caiaphas rent his clothes and exclaimed, “What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?” The response from the council was unanimous Jesus was guilty and was therefore worthy of death. According to Mark, after hearing the sentence from the council some spit on, buffet, taunt, and strike the Lord.
 - Matthew 26:65-68
- Before we discuss the implications of Christ’s admission we need to piece together a few things from the chronology.
 - Luke 22:63-65—reports that Jesus was mocked, smote, blindfolded and struck, and taunted to prophesy before he stood before the council.
 - Luke 22:66-71—reports that Jesus stood before the council “as soon as it was day,” indicating that it was not till morning that his trial before the Sanhedrin was conducted. Verses 67-68 go straight to their questions of “Art thou the Christ?” Luke then reports that Christ responded by saying, ‘If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask you,

ye will not answer me, nor let me go.” In Luke’s account the statement regarding to Son of Man is said before the admission in verse 70.

- John 18:19-24—from the flow of the context the most natural reading of this passage is that this exchange occurs while Jesus is still before Annas. This would explain how Jesus was mocked, buffeted, and taunted prior to standing before the full council.
- Jesus was taken first to house of Annas the father in law of Caiaphas the active high priest (John 18:12-14). While standing before Annas, Jesus answers his questions while being mocked and smited (John 18:19-23). After questioning Jesus, Annas send him bound to Caiaphas the active high priest (John 18:24). In the morning, around day break Jesus stood before Caiaphas and the complete Jewish high council (Luke 22:66). It is here that false witnesses are brought forward and Jesus condemns himself out of his own mouth and is therefore sentenced to death. (Luke 22:67-71, Mark 14:53-65, Matt. 26:57-68)

Jesus Claims to be God

- Not one recognized religious leader, not Moses, Paul, Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, etc., has ever claimed to be God; with the exception of Jesus Christ.
- Christ is the only religious leader who has ever claimed to be deity and the only individual ever who has convinced a great portion of the world’s population that He is God.
- Equality With the Father:
 - John 10:25-33
 - John 5:17-18
- “I Am”
 - John 8:58
- Jesus is Due the Same Honor as that Given to God:
 - John 5:23-24
- “He Who Has Seen Me”
 - John 14:8-9
- Jesus Received Worship as God and Accepted It
 - John 9:35-39, Matthew 8:2, Matthew 14:33
- Jesus Contrasted with Others

- Acts 10:25-26, Revelation 19:10

The Trial of Jesus

- Mark 14:61-64—Jesus of Nazareth was condemned to death, not upon the statements of His accusers, but upon the admission extorted from Him under oath.
- It is perfectly clear then that this is the testimony that Jesus wanted to bear of Himself. We also see that the Jews must have understood His reply as a claim to His being God.
- There are two alternatives to be faced then; that his assertions were pure blasphemy or that He was God.
- So every person must answer the question: Is His claim to deity true or false? Jesus' claim to be God must be either true or false. If Jesus claims are true, then He is God, and we must either accept or reject his deity.

Three Important Options

Option 1: Jesus Was a Liar

- If, when Jesus made His claims, He knew He was not God, then He was lying.
- But if he was a liar, then He was also a hypocrite, because He told others to honest, whatever the cost, while He, at the same time, was teaching a colossal lie.
- Last, He would also be a fool, because it was His claims to deity that led to His crucifixion.
- Someone who lived as Jesus lived, taught as Jesus taught, and died as Jesus died could not have been a liar.

Option 2: Jesus Was a Lunatic

- If it is inconceivable for Jesus to have been a liar, then could He have thought He was God but have been mistaken? It is possible to be both sincere and wrong.
- For someone to think he was God, especially in a culture that was fiercely monotheistic, and then to tell others that their eternal destiny depends on believing in him, was no slight of fantasy but the thought of a lunatic in the fullest sense.
- Was Jesus Christ such a person?

Option 3: Jesus Was God

- If Jesus of Nazareth is not a liar or a lunatic, then He must be the Lord.

- Other self-proclaimed gods and saviors have come and gone upon history's stage, but Jesus is still here, standing head-and-shoulders above them all.
- Who you decide Jesus Christ is must not be an idle intellectual exercise. You cannot put Him on the shelf as a great moral teacher.
- That is not a valid option. He is either a liar, a lunatic, or the Lord. You must make a choice.
- Read from page 157 of *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*