

“Falsely Accused”

John 18:1-28

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Teaching Aim: To examine the events surrounding the arrest and initial religious trials of Jesus Christ. To realize Annas was the legitimate high priest of Israel, even though Caiaphas was the appointed high priest by the Romans. To understand any of us can fall given the right circumstances, we see this happen to Simon Peter. To recognize Jesus did no wrong, yet He was born to die for the sins of His people throughout the world; it is only by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and His death on the cross that we can be forgiven and have new life in Him.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: The arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (John 18:1-11)

1. Betrayal by a friend is something none of us want to happen, but we have all been betrayed, or will be betrayed by another at some point in our life. The betrayal of Jesus is the central theme throughout **John chapter 18**, betrayal at the hands of Judas, betrayal by the Jewish religious leaders, and finally betrayal by the lips of Peter. Notice how the Apostle Paul started off his instructions for the Lord’s Supper in **1 Cor. 11:23**? What specific event did Paul point to in order to pinpoint the date?

2. What did Jesus do with His disciples once He had finished the Passover Seder and His High Priestly prayer in **John chapter 17 (vv. 1-2)**? What was the name of the garden that Jesus took His disciples to? Did Judas know where Jesus would be? If so, how?

3. Jesus poured out His heart to God the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane praying, *“Oh My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”* (See **Matthew 26:39**) The prayer of Jesus was an incredible demonstration of submission to the eternal plan of God. Who arrived in the garden just as Jesus finished praying (**vs. 3**)? How many Roman troops and Jewish officials did this individual bring along with him? (See Commentaries)

4. Why do you think the Romans sent so many weaponized troops to arrest Jesus? What had the Jewish religious leaders told the Roman officials to cause such a stir? (See **Luke 23:1-2**)

5. In **verse 4**, we get a glimpse of the deity of Jesus Christ. How so? The mob was not a surprise to Jesus, He was expecting them. What would you do under the cover of darkness if you knew that a mob was coming to crucify you? What did Jesus do?

6. How did they identify Jesus on the arrest warrant (**vs. 5**)? Why would it be natural to address Jesus by this title? How did Jesus respond to their summons? At this point we find Judas standing next to Jesus. How was Judas to point out Jesus to the Romans (See **Luke 22:47-48**)

7. How did the Jewish officials in particular respond to Jesus using the Greek phrase, "*Ego Eimi - I am He?*" Why was this so insulting to them? (See **Ex. 3:13-14**) In **verses 7-9** Jesus asked them once again, "*Whom are you seeking?*" What was the motive behind Jesus bringing out this point (**vs. 9**)? Note: Jesus had earlier prayed to the Father, "*Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.*" Did this include Judas? Was Judas one of Christ's own?

8. Peter is known for being impulsive. How do we see that impulsivity of Peter at work in **verse 10**? How will this act against the high priest's servant come back to bite Peter later? What does Luke, "*the beloved physician,*" reveal in his gospel? (See **Luke 22:50-51**)

9. How did Jesus respond to Peter's attempt to violently defend Him (**vs. 11**)? Think about it for a moment, if Peter had his way, there would be no redemption, meaning there would be no salvation; we would still be dead in our sin. So, Jesus told Peter to put away His sword into the sheath. Jesus would have to drink the cup which His Father had given Him. What was that cup? (See Commentaries) Why was this cup so difficult for Jesus to drink?

10. In theology there is a difference between "*the active obedience*" and "*passive obedience*" of Christ. What is the distinction? (Hint: Search online) What does the active obedience of Christ mean? How about passive obedience of Christ? Why is the passive obedience of Christ especially important in **John chapter 18**? (See **Isa. 53:7**)

Part II: The first religious trial before the true high priest Annas (John 18:12-18)

1. How did the arresting party treat the very one who came into the world to make peace between God and man? (See **Phil. 2:5-11; Romans 5:1**)
2. The Jewish religious leaders had apparently convinced the Romans that Jesus was an insurrectionist trying to overthrow the Rome's control of the Promised Land. Furthermore, Jesus Himself claimed to be a King. Was this true? We hear a lot from the secular media today about "insurrection" involving one individual from a particular political party, but are there two sides to every story? Is it possible there is a political spin to the reporting? What is the definition of the word "insurrection?" (See Dictionary) Do you find it odd that the religious leaders chose to stand with Rome, and in this case, accuse Jesus of insurrection?
3. It would take a civil matter, not religious, to condemn Jesus to death. How do you see the political spin at work in **Luke 23:1-2**?
4. To whom did the Jewish officials bring Jesus to first (**vs. 13**)? Why did they bring Him to Annas and not to the Roman appointed high priest Caiaphas? (See Commentaries) What prophecy had Caiaphas made about Jesus in **John 11:49-51**? What can we learn about the fairness of Jesus' trial from **John 18:13-14**?
5. The Reformation Study Bible tells us that the religious trial was illegal in several ways: *1. "The Sanhedrin was not supposed to meet at night; 2. The death penalty could not be declared on the day of the trial; 3. There was false evidence presented; 4. False witnesses were used; 5. Jesus was exposed to blows from the attendants during the trial; and 6. It was illegal for the Sanhedrin to meet for a capital case on the eve of a Sabbath or a feast day."* How do all of these abuses point to the fact that Jesus was being railroaded toward the death penalty?
6. Which two disciples followed Jesus to the house of Annas? (See Commentaries) What can we learn about the Apostle John from **verse 15**? The Apostle John was allowed in, but where was Peter at the time (**vs. 16**)? How did Peter get into the courtyard? What caused the servant girl to recognize Peter (**vs. 17**)? (See **John 18:10**) Is it likely that additional servants of the high priest witnessed the events in the Garden of Gethsemane?

7. How did the burley fisherman Peter react under the questioning of a mere servant girl (**vs. 17**)? Peter wanted to slip into the crowd and not be noticed, but the later it got, the colder it became. What is the elevation of Jerusalem? Who did Peter join to warm himself (**vs. 18**)? Why was this an especially dangerous move for Peter (**vs. 10**)? Note: William MacDonald writes, *“Peter now mingled with the enemies of his Lord and tried to conceal his identity. Like many another disciple, he warmed himself at the world’s fire.”*

Part III: The questioning of Jesus by Annas (John 18:19-24)

1. What did the high priest Annas question Jesus about in **verse 19**? Why? What was his goal? The high priest was supposed to begin the proceeding by calling witnesses to bring their charges against Jesus. Annas did not because there were no witnesses, Jesus lived His entire life without sinning. How did Jesus respond to the break in legal protocol (**vv. 20-21**)?
2. One of the officers standing nearby felt Jesus was being disrespectful to the high priest. How did the officer respond (**vs. 22**)? Did Jesus confess to making a mistake like the Apostle did? (See **Acts 23:1-5**) Why? How did Jesus respond (**vs. 23**)? Note: Once again, Jesus instructed the high priest to follow the proper protocol for the legal proceedings.
3. Interestingly, the Apostle John does not talk about the trial of Jesus before Caiaphas, he only briefly mentions it. (For this trial see **Matt. 26:57-68**) How did the false witnesses twist the words of Jesus in **Matt. 26:59-61** from what He actually said in **John 2:18-21**? How did they change the meaning? Have you ever been falsely accused by someone? How did it feel? How did you get over such a hurtful time?
4. What happened in **verse 25** as Peter stood near the burning coals in the courtyard warming himself? Jesus answered the question of those who came with His arrest warrant by using the words, *“Ego Eimi – I Am He.”* How did Peter respond to his accusers in **verse 25**?
5. Why was one of the high priests’ servants so persistent that Peter had been with Jesus (**vs. 26**)? Do things become more personal to you when one of your family members is hurt? How low did Peter go as his desperation grew? (See **Matt. 26:69-75**)

6. Under the pressure of an angry relative Peter denied Jesus for the third time (**vs. 27**). What dramatic scene takes place in **Luke 22:60-62**? Peter buckled under the pressure. Are you sure that you won't buckle under the pressure when your time comes? Jesus was first betrayed by Judas, then by Peter, and at times He is still betrayed by us today.

7. Where was Jesus taken to once Caiaphas was done with Him? What is the Praetorium? (See Commentaries) What event of cosmic proportions was about to take place in the next few hours?

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- The Garden of Gethsemane is located on the western slopes of the Mount Olives just east of the temple mount in Jerusalem.
- Somewhere around 600 Roman soldiers and Jewish officials came to the garden that night carrying lanterns and weapons as they prepared to snuff out "*The Light of the World.*"
- When Jesus said, "*I am He,*" He acknowledged His deity to the Jewish officials.
- Peter tried to defend Jesus and cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant Malchus; Jesus rebuked Peter and healed the ear, it was for this reason that Jesus had been born.
- If Peter had succeeded in his desire to stop the crucifixion, there would be no salvation.
- Annas questioned Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine in search of something that would warrant the death penalty; the decision was in even before the trial began.
- Peter denied Jesus that evening three times, teaching us that even we can fall under the right circumstances if we are not prepared spiritually for the battle.