

Jesus Before the Priests (John 18:12-24)

Scripture Text:

12. So the Roman cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him,
13. and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.
14. Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people.
15. Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest,
16. but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in.
17. Then the slave-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."
18. Now the slaves and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself.
19. The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching.
20. Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret.
21. Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; they know what I said."
22. When He had said this, one of the officers standing nearby struck Jesus, saying, "Is that the way You answer the high priest?"
23. Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?"
24. So Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. (John 18:12

Outline:

- I. Jesus, Arrested, Bound and Lead to Annas (vv.12-14)
- II. Jesus Followed By Peter and Another Disciple (vv.15-18)
- III. Jesus Questioned By the High Priest (vv.19-23)
- IV. Jesus Sent Bound to Caiaphas (v.24)

Worksheet:

- I. Jesus, Arrested, Bound and Led to Annas (vv.12-14)
 - a. So the Roman cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him, (v.12)
 - i. The sons of Rome: “Roman cohort and the commander” and the sons of Aaron (Levi): (officers of the Jews) arrest and bind the Son of God.
 - ii. Was Jesus given a reason as to why He was being arrested? Was He read His Miranda Rights (probably not because they didn’t come into existence until 1966)?
 - b. and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. (v.13)
 - i. Annas held the High-Priesthood office from A.D. 6 – A.D. 15 when Valerius Gratus, Pilate’s predecessor, removed him from office.
 - ii. Even though Annas was removed from this office, he continued to wield some influence over the office, most likely because he was still regarded as the true high priest and, also because five of his sons, and his son-in-law Caiaphas, each held the position at different times.
 - iii. Two trials for Jesus occurred:
 1. **Jewish Trial:** The Jewish phase of the trial began with the informal examination by Annas (vv. 12-14, 19-23), probably giving time for the members of the Sanhedrin to hurriedly gather together. A session before the Sanhedrin was next (Matthew 26: 57-68) at which time consensus was reached to send Jesus to Pilate (Matthew 27:1, 2).
 2. **Roman Trial:** The Roman Phase began with a first examination before Pilate (vv. John 28-38a; Matthew 27:11-14) and then Herod Antipas (“the fox” - Luke 13:32) interrogated Him (Luke 23:6-12). Lastly, Jesus appeared again before Pilate (John 18:38b-19:16; Matthew 27:15-31) (John MacArthur Study Bible, 2006).
 - c. Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people. (v.14)
 - i. Caiaphas became High-Priest in A.D. 18, being appointed by the Roman Prefect, Valerius Gratus. He, as stated earlier, was the son-in-law of Annas, who had previously functioned in that same position from A.D. 7-14 before he was removed. Annas continued to exercise great influence over the office even after he had left his official position in office.
 - ii. Caiaphas retained his position until A.D. 36 when, along with Pontius Pilate, he was removed by the Romans. He took a leading part in the trial and condemnation of Jesus. In his court or palace, the chief priests (Sadducees) and Pharisees assembled “and plotted together to seize

Jesus by stealth and kill Him” (Matthew 26:3,4) (John MacArthur Study Bible, 2006).

II. Jesus Followed By Peter and Another Disciple (vv.15-18)

a. Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest, (v.15)

i. Many may be familiar with this account of scripture, but may be more familiar with the account found in Luke’s gospel. What *additional* information do we find in John’s account that we do not find in the other gospel accounts? _____

ii. What is the traditional understanding about the identity of this other disciple who was also following Jesus to the trial before the high priest? _____

iii. In John’s gospel, he never refers to himself by name when he appears in the narrative of the accounts described in this book.

1. There was reclining on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. (John 13:23 NASB)
2. So she *ran and *came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and *said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first; and stooping and looking in, he *saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in. And so Simon Peter also *came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he *saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed. (John 20:2)

iv. When looking at the parallel accounts of Peter at the trial of Jesus before the religious leaders of the Jews, what is missing from the other accounts found in the synoptic gospels? *[discussion]*

v. Do these other accounts cause a problem with biblical credibility and/or suggest that there are inconsistencies or contradictions between these biblical accounts? *[discussion]* _____

1. Those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. But Peter was following Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and sat down with the officers to see the outcome. (Matthew 26:57)
 2. They led Jesus away to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes *gathered together. Peter had followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers and warming himself at the fire. (Mark 14:53)
 3. Having arrested Him, they led Him away and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance. After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting among them. (Luke 22:54)
- vi. Where there are two disciples, there is also one disciple. On the contrary, one cannot say where there is one disciple, there is two disciples.
- b. but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in. (v.16)
- i. This other disciple (John) who was known to the high priest may have had more than just a casual acquaintance with other prominent Jews besides Nicodemus (John 3:1) and Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57; Mark 15:43; Luke 23:51; John 19:38). It would seem that John was able to use his personal relationships and familiarity with the doorkeeper to get Peter inside where the trial of Jesus was being conducted.
 - ii. The term used for “*known*” in these two verses (vv.15,16) is *gnōstos* and is a term that is often used for more than just a casual acquaintance, but instead it means *friend*.
 - iii. What can be inferred from the accounts of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea being found in the gospel of John, especially given the fact that Nicodemus is only named in the book of John? [*discussion*] _____
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- c. Then the slave-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.” (v.17)
- i. This is Peter’s first of three denials recorded in scripture. John only records one of the three denials of Peter, whereas Matthew, Mark and Luke record all three. Once again, does this show inconsistency or

contradiction between the gospel accounts? Why or why not?

ii. What might be inferred from the question of the doorkeeper (slave-girl) who asked Peter, "You are not **also** one of this man's disciples, are you?"

iii. What can we assume to be Peter's reason for denying to be one of Jesus' disciples when asked by the servant girl?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

iv. If not to support and defend Christ, why would Peter want to be at the illegal trial of Jesus held in the cold and darkness of night, having only the fire of Jesus' accusers to warm him? *[discussion]*

v. How can this be related to Christians today who are content to be nothing more than **onlookers** and **spectators** within the context of their daily walk with Christ? Are they *following* Jesus the same way that Peter was *following* Jesus in verse 15? *[discussion]* _____

d. Now the slaves and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself. (v.18)

i. Peter was standing with the _____ and the _____ warming himself by the charcoal of their fire. It would seem that Peter was trying to _____ in with the crowd that he was in, so as not to be _____ as one of Christ's disciples.

ii. How are some ways in which Christians today can "warm themselves" by the fire of a world that is hostile towards God and His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, Savior of the world?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

iii. If Christians (lights in the world) want to be blessed of God, they must not find themselves in this situation, many times a situation that they have willfully or haphazardly entered by themselves.

1. How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! (Psalms 1:1 NASB)
2. “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.
(Matthew 5:13)

III. Jesus Questioned By the High Priest (vv.19-23)

- a. The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. (v.19)
 - i. The high priest had identified _____ things that were threatening the power, wealth and influence that was amassed by them over many decades. The high priest asked questions about these three things that would help them to maintain their _____, _____ and _____ in Jewish society.
 - ii. What were the three major threats identified by the high priest that needed to be done away with by their estimation according to verse 19?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
- b. Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret. (v.20)
 - i. Jesus here appeals to the Jewish law that stated that matters such as this (death penalty cases) required 2 or 3 witnesses to decide guilt or innocence (Deuteronomy 17:6, 19:15).
 - ii. Jesus is basically saying that there are more than enough *witnesses* that can answer to whatever charges they (the Sanhedrin) have against Him, because His entire ministry of teaching has been in the open for all to see and hear.
- c. Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; they know what I said.” (v.21)
 - i. Jesus here reminds them that according to their law, a man cannot be a witness for himself and therefore they should seek witnesses (2 or 3) that can testify concerning his teachings. (John 5:31,32)

- ii. Jesus, in a way, is trying to help the so called “experts” and “doctors of the law” to abide by the very law that they are charged to uphold in an effort to legitimize their otherwise illegitimate court proceedings.
 - d. When He had said this, one of the officers standing nearby struck Jesus, saying, “Is that the way You answer the high priest?” (v.22)
 - i. Often times when truth and reason are offered to people who don’t know, recognize or want the truth, they sometimes will lash out with physical violence, because truth, and in particular the word of God, cuts and therefore hurts their pride. (Hebrews 4:12,13)
 - ii. The officer, in this case physically _____ Christ, because he felt that Christ had culturally _____ the high priest.
 - e. Jesus answered him, “If I have spoken wrongly, testify of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?” (v.23)
 - i. Once again Jesus reverts back to _____ terms appropriate for the setting that He, the high priest and the officer are in during this illegal trial.
 - ii. Jesus gives the officer an opportunity to justify his physical _____ against Him by asking the officer to “testify of the wrong” that He is supposedly guilty.
 - iii. Jesus gives this officer of the court some things to think about:
 1. Either I have spoken “wrongly” or “rightly”.
 2. If I have spoken “wrongly”, tell me what I said that was wrong.
 3. If I have spoken “rightly”, tell me why you struck Me.
 - iv. Notice that the officer gave no answer.
- IV. Jesus Sent Bound to Caiaphas (v.24)
 - a. So Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. (v.24)
 - i. Even though Annas was very influential in the Sanhedrin, he was not the _____ high priest and therefore he could not be the one to bring official charges against Jesus before Pilate on behalf of the Sanhedrin.
 - ii. Annas had to bring Jesus to Caiaphas the _____ high priest who was recognized by Roman at the time and thus able to bring official charges against Jesus before Pilate on behalf of the Sanhedrin.

References:

- John MacArthur Study Bible. (2006). John MacArthur Study Bible. Study Notes for Annas: John 18:13, p.1587
- John MacArthur Study Bible. (2006). John MacArthur Study Bible. Study Notes for Caiaphas: John 11:49, p.1573-74