

## LESSON 5



## JESUS BEFORE THE HIGH PRIEST

*Scripture Text: Mark 14:43-72*

It is good to compare this Scripture reading with Matthew 26:47-75. Jesus and eleven of the disciples were in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus had prayed, gained the victory over His fleshly nature, and made the final decision to suffer for the sins of the world. The high priest asked Jesus, **Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?** In Matthew 22:42 Jesus asked, **What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?** If His Father was God, then Christ is God. This is the vital point in all of His work and teaching. This is where He received His authority and power to do what He claimed. The charge against Jesus was false. This is still a vital point to each of us. Read Isaiah, Chapter 53.

**MEMORY VERSE:** *Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.* *Psalm 41:9*

### Judas Betrays Jesus

**Mark 14:43-46** Judas had gone from the upper room to meet Christ's enemies and to carry out their evil plan. Now he came bringing a large mob **with swords and staves**. Judas, now demon-possessed and forgetting that Jesus sees hearts (how quickly one forgets the truth he has learned when he leaves Christ and sells out to the world), pointed Jesus out to the mob by kissing Him. This was false and hypocritical. **Master, master**—but Jesus was no longer his master; he had cast off His rule. The religious leaders had sent this rough mob. To what depths religionists can sink when they turn down Jesus in their inward spirit and emphasize outward form (Matthew 26:47-50). When Jesus acknowledged His identity, all the men **went backward, and fell to the ground** (John 18:5-6). This alone should have been proof to all that He was God, but it was not. Sin blinds. **They . . . took him.**

### Peter's Defense

**Mark 14:47-52** The disciples were startled at what they saw. Impulsive Peter, forgetting all Jesus had taught them about Christian weapons, struck with his sword and cut off the ear of one of the high priest's servants. Jesus immediately healed it—once again a show of miracle power and love that should have turned His enemies into friends, but did not (Luke 22:51). Jesus, calling attention to the cowardice of taking Him like this, forbade further resistance. **Put up again thy sword . . .** (Matthew 26:52). This was God's will. He must accept the suffering. And they all **forsook him, and fled**. This was fulfillment of Scripture (Matthew 26:54-56).

### Jesus Falsely Accused

**Mark 14:53-59** **And they led Jesus away . . .** They led Him bound to the high priest (John 18:24). With him were the chief priests, elders, and scribes who long had wanted to kill Jesus. This was the Sanhedrin—the supreme court of the Jews. **Peter followed him afar off**—a most dangerous place to be found. This is one of the first steps to backsliding. **Council sought for witness** against Jesus . . . found none. Witnesses were necessary. Many were

brought, but no two agreed. They lied and misquoted Jesus' claim to raise His body temple in three days (John 2:18-22).

### Jesus Condemned

**Mark 14:60-65 The high priest stood up**—no doubt angered by failure—and asked the reason for Jesus' silence. Then, **Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?** The name of God, the sacred office of the high priest, and the vital truth in question combined to bring Jesus' willing answer, **I am**, adding, **ye shall see the Son . . . coming in the clouds of heaven**—at the end of the world (Revelation 1:7). **The high priest rent his clothes**, showing sorrow. He realized that he had taken hold of a problem much too large for him to handle. But for a high priest to rend his clothes was against God's law (Leviticus 21:10). Caiaphas quickly judged Jesus guilty of blasphemy for His claim.

**All condemned him to be guilty of death.** Without any attempt to investigate the truth of Jesus' claim, Caiaphas dishonored his office further by allowing any who wished to pour upon Jesus insults, mockery, and taunts to do so. They were so contemptible as to spit upon, strike, and blaspheme Him. His captors mockingly challenged Him to prove His deity by identifying who struck Him. Even the servants slapped Him. And this under the hands of the highest religious leaders of the nation! The charges against Him were false. He was the Son of God and had authority to do what He claimed. This is still the vital point to each of us. Whom do you accept Him to be? (John 8:24). Violence is always the tool of an evil cause. What tools can a righteous cause depend upon? Truth, reason, justice, investigation, patience, and trust in God. This an evil cause cannot do. One tool used by the enemy in our day is the use of terms such as "extremist," "fanatic," or "narrow-minded." They attempt to throw a scare into the camp of the saints. Jesus' trial was unjust, but a just one could never have condemned Him (Matthew 26:53, 54).

### Peter's Denial

**Mark 14:66-72 And as Peter was beneath . . . warming himself** at the enemies' fire. Just a short time ago Peter was following **afar off**. Now we find him warming at the enemies' fire. Oh, how quickly the enemy of our souls can pull us down! These final verses allow us to see how some small thing can quickly bring us down into sin. When we spend our time with bad company—people who are enemies to Jesus—we show another sign of backsliding. In this case, it was only a maid. Peter fell; he fell fast and hit hard. He now used the language of those away from God who were deep in sin. **He began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man . . .** He lied about his friendship with Jesus.

Friend, is this great Savior yours? Are you ashamed of Him?

### JUST A THOUGHT

**The harder the fall, the higher the bounce—if you  
are made of the right material.**

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