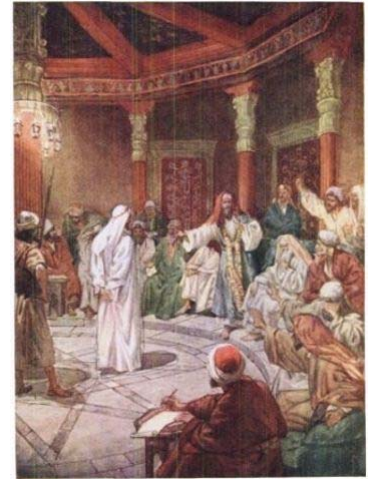


# God on Trial

[Mark 14:53-65](#)



We have seen Jesus agonizing in prayer in the [Garden of Gethsemane](#), a rare glimpse into the real humanity of the God-Man. After hours of intense prayer, He rises to go and meet the crowd coming to arrest Him. He identified Himself to them, asked who it was they sought (to arrest), and they named Him alone. Jesus then responded, ***“I am,”*** and the whole crowd fell down. It was at this crucial moment that Peter drew his sword and severed the ear of the high priest’s servant. Jesus immediately brought the situation under control by rebuking Peter and instructing him to holster his sword. Jesus was fully committed to ***“drink the cup that His Father had given Him”*** ([John 18:11](#)). Jesus was determined to be *“lifted up”* on a cross, thus providing the way of salvation that He and the prophets had promised.



***“Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me; but this has happened that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.”*** <sup>50</sup> ***And they all left Him and fled.*** (Mark 14:49-50 NASB)

Jesus is arrested, and the Apostles all left Him and fled.

***And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together.*** (Mark 14:53 NASB)

***And those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together.*** (Matthew 26:57 NASB)

***And having arrested Him, they led Him away, and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance.*** (Luke 22:54 NASB)

***So the Roman cohort and the commander, and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him,*** (John 18:12 NASB)

Here we see the religious leaders of Israel arresting Jesus and putting Him on trial. Imagine maggots setting up a court and summoning the president of the United States of America to make his appearance, and telling him that he must answer to them! Multiply by infinity, and you have only begun to grasp what is happening here. Here, in the scene of our text, we have sinful maggots passing judgment on the immense, eternal Lord of the cosmos—the one without whom was not anything made that was made. Mere mortals, sustained moment by moment by the living God, the one in whom they live and move and have their being, are putting God on trial, and they are passing judgment on Him. “What do we think of Him? What shall we do with Him? Shall He live or not?” Sinners are evaluating the thrice Holy God. They are searching for evidence with which to condemn the Ancient of Days.

Isn’t that ridiculous? As ridiculous as this sounds, it still happens every day; men sit in judgment on God. You hear it all the time. Something bad happens, and we ask, “How could God do a thing like that to me and my family?” Or, “How could God allow that to happen?” Believers as well as non-believers sit in judgment on the God who created them. The prophet Isaiah put it like this:

*You turn things around! Shall the potter be considered as equal with the clay, that what is made should say to its maker, "He did not make me"; Or what is formed say to him who formed it, "He has no understanding"?* (Isaiah 29:16 NASB)

How crazy to sit in judgment on God our Creator. What our attitude should be is:

*But now, O LORD, Thou art our Father, We are the clay, and Thou our potter; and all of us are the work of Thy hand.* (Isaiah 64:8 NASB)

In our text for this morning we see sinful humanity sitting in judgment on their Creator. We see man putting God on trial:

*And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together.* (Mark 14:53 NASB)

Notice who they take Jesus to: “**The high priest**”—we’ll discuss him in a moment. From Gethsemane to the house of the high priest would have been not more than two miles.

Notice who we also see in this verse: The “**Chief Priests**”—this group included former high priests and members of the priestly aristocracy. They were Sadducees. Then we have the “**Elders**”—which is the Greek word *presbuteros*, which sometimes refers to members of the Sanhedrin as a whole and elsewhere to a third group among the members consisting of priests and lay members of the nobility. Then we have the “**Scribes**” or “teachers of the law”; they were learned men, sometimes priests but mostly lay persons, who were entrusted with making copies of the Scripture as well as providing instruction in the *Torah*. In Jesus’ time, they drew from both the Pharisee and Sadducee parties, served as judges and theologians, and would be called upon to speak in the synagogues.

This group was known as the **Sanhedrin**:

*Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death; and they were not finding any.* (Mark 14:55 NASB)

The word “Council” here is the Greek word *sunedrion*, which means: “a sitting together.” The word here refers to the Sanhedrin, the great Council of the Jews at Jerusalem.

There were, during the time of Jesus, three Sanhedrins: 1) a three-judge panel; 2) a 23-member judicial Sanhedrin; and 3) a full 71-member religious Sanhedrin. Only the 23-member Sanhedrin was qualified to try criminal cases. Those accused of capital crimes were brought before this court. The *Mishnah* states, “*Cases involving the death penalty are judged before twenty-three [judges]*” (Sanhedrin 1:4a).

The Great Sanhedrin (sometimes called the *Great Beth Din*) was a tribunal body consisting of three chambers: the Chamber of the Chief Priests; the Chamber of the Scribes; and the Chamber of the Elders (sometimes called counselors). These three chambers were divided into 23 members each, which when combined, constituted a body of 69 members. Added to this were the two high priests: the *nasi* and the *ab bet din*, making a total of 71 members in all. This legislative unit was responsible only for the administration of the temple.

In order to understand what is happening here, we must compare all four Gospels. Mark simply tells us they took Jesus to the high priest, but Matthew adds that they led Jesus away to **Caiaphas**, the high priest:

*And those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. (Matthew 26:57 NASB)*

In the Fourth Gospel, Lazarus, who apparently knows some members of the high priest's family, fills us in on some details:

*So the Roman cohort and the commander, and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him,<sup>13</sup> and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. (John 18:12-13 NASB)*

The Fourth Gospel is unique in recording our Lord's "hearing" before Annas, former high priest, and the real power behind Caiaphas. Lazarus' mention of "*the high priest that year*" gives us a clue about the state of the high priesthood. Rather than being selected for life as before, since Herod the Great, secular rulers have taken upon themselves the prerogative of selecting the high priest who serves for a year at a time. Generally, these are selected from a small group of highly placed priestly families from the party of the Saducees.

I believe that Lazarus dwells on [Annas](#) because he is the real power, the driving force, behind the condemnation of Jesus. Annas was not the high priest at this time; Caiaphas was. Annas had been the high priest from A.D. 6 to A.D. 15. He was then deposed by the Roman prefect [Valerius Gratus](#), according to Josephus.

In our study of Mark 11, I said that the Court of the Gentiles became host to what was called, "[The Bazaars of Annas](#)." The well-known high priest granted permission to family members to begin what looked like a flea market in the area reserved for Gentiles to seek the Lord and worship Him. Noisy animals, bargain hunters, and crass merchants crowded the area that should have provided dignity and quiet contemplation for worshipers. Kickbacks and fees for the priestly family kept the bazaar in full swing, to the total neglect of why the temple existed at all. Now if the tables in the temple that Jesus had overturned really were the property of Annas and his family, no doubt Annas used his position to arrange that Jesus should be brought to him first, so that he might gloat over the downfall of the presumptuous Galilean.

Only after Annas interrogates Jesus (John 18:19-23), does he send Him off to Caiaphas:

*Annas therefore sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. (John 18:24 NASB)*

The transfer of Jesus from Annas to Caiaphas is significant in the Fourth Gospel simply because Peter is seen to be warming himself both before and after Annas' meeting and doesn't appear to change his location when the trial begins before Caiaphas. It shows the reader that the likelihood is that the two residencies couldn't have been very far apart, and, if it's presumed that the structure of the houses was similar to a lot of places during the first century, the buildings would have surrounded an open courtyard where Peter stood. So Jesus is moved simply from Annas' quarters to those of Caiaphas—from one side of the square to the other.

So Jesus is questioned by Annas, then Caiaphas, and then finally He was brought before the "full" Sanhedrin:

***And early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes, and the whole Council, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away, and delivered Him up to Pilate. (Mark 15:1 NASB)***

Luke gives us details of a third hearing that took place in the morning, presumably when the sun had risen ([Luke 22:66-71](#)), while the other two writers mention it only in passing. This would be the only official trial, but by then the issue had really been decided.

Mark concentrates on the appearance at the house of Caiaphas, which was a pre-trial judicial examination, although not the official meeting of the Sanhedrin, which had to take place in daylight.

***And 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 14:54 NASB)***

Remember verse 50, ***“And they all left Him and fled.”*** The ALL would have included Peter, but now, after running away to save his own skin, he comes back to follow at a distance.

Do you see anything in this verse that raises questions? Is there any problem with Peter going into the courtyard of the high priest? No layman was allowed to enter into the *Great Beth Din*, especially during feast days when there was a danger of defilement. Any *priest* could come and go as he so chose, but no laymen could enter.

So how does Peter get in?

***And 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 in Peter. (John 18:15-16 NASB)***

This “other disciple” was ***“known to the High Priest,”*** and he was the one who got Peter in. If you read John 20, you will see that the “other disciple” is “the disciple whom Jesus loved”:

***And 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.” (John 20:2 NASB)***

As we have seen in the study, [“The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved,”](#) this disciple was not the Apostle John, the son of Zebedee, but was Lazarus whom Jesus rose from the dead.

So how did Lazarus get in to the court of the high priest? Lazarus is the Greek rendering of the name *Eleazar*. *Eleazar* is a name found *only* in priestly lineages. I believe that Lazarus was a priest (we’ll discuss this further next week). As a “priest,” he would be able to enter into the *Beth Din*, while Peter, who was a laymen, was required to remain “outside.”

So how did Lazarus get Peter in if no laymen were allowed? There was an exception to a layman not being able to enter the court of the high priest—that exception was made in the case of a witness. There were certain requirements that witnesses had to meet in order to attain entrance into the court area. It must have

been first determined whether or not he might be *qualified* to give testimony. An entire section of the *Mishnah* is devoted to the qualifications of witnesses. So Lazarus ***“spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in.”*** I think he told the doorkeeper that Peter was a witness.

Notice what Jesus says:

***“Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; behold, these know what I said.” (John 18:21 NASB)***

During His trial, Jesus says, ***“Question those who have heard what I spoke to them.”*** Jesus could have been referring to two eyewitnesses who had been with Him when He made the statement regarding the "Temple," and who would have been able to describe and explain the events of that day in detail. Peter and *Yohanan* (John) *Eleazar* would have been two witnesses who could have given the most reliable testimony of all.

So I think that the only reason that Peter got into the court of the high priest was because he was attempting to help his Rabbi, the Lord Jesus:

***And 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 14:54 NASB)***

The notion of “following,” in Mark’s Gospel, almost always means more than merely walking behind someone. It suggests loyalty and allegiance. But that “following” is qualified. The adverb translated ***“at a distance”*** is the Greek adverb *makrothen*: *“from far away, from a distance.”* Yes, he follows, but he doesn’t follow up close for fear of arrest. For the moment, he is a “closet disciple,” afraid to disclose his true identity.

I think that little phrase, ***“And he followed Him at a distance,”*** is a description of many Christians today. How would you like that on your tombstone? They followed Christ, their Lord, their Savior, but there was always a distance, not wanting to get too close, not wanting to be identified in such close association with Him. How about you? Are you following at a distance, or do you make sure that everyone knows that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ?

Before we’re too hard on Peter, let’s remember that Peter didn’t have to be here in the high priest’s house on this evening. Jesus had told him that He would meet them in Galilee. Peter could have just taken off and hid until after the resurrection, but he didn’t; he risked his life seeking to help his Rabbi.

***Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death; and they were not finding any. (Mark 14:55 NASB)***

Two witnesses were required for capital punishment, according to Numbers 35:30 and:

***“On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. (Deuteronomy 17:6 NASB)***

The procedure for examining more than one witness is laid out in *Sanhedrin* 3:6 where it clearly shows that the witnesses which were to follow were not allowed to hear the testimony of the former people who

were to testify, and that only if their testimony agreed, could the judges discuss the matter to the end of pronouncing the verdict.

“**They were not finding any**”— they were unable to find two of them who agreed with one another and didn’t contradict:

***For many were giving false testimony against Him, and yet their testimony was not consistent.***  
**(Mark 14:56 NASB)**

That they were false witnesses does not mean that the Sanhedrin had put up false witnesses deliberately. They were false witnesses, because what they testified about Jesus was, as Mark knew, not wholly true. This is clear evidence that reasonably correct procedures were being followed, and had to be, because it was demanded by many of those present.

Mark tells us: Though many bore false witness against Him, the witnesses did not agree. As these witnesses, one by one, would recount even the same event, there was such a discrepancy that it was obvious that they either were telling a lie or had not been there or that something was seriously wrong in their testimony:

***And some stood up and began to give false testimony against Him, saying, <sup>58</sup> "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'" And not even in this respect was their testimony consistent.*** **(Mark 14:57-59 NASB)**

To speak against the temple was a very serious offense in the time of Jesus. To desecrate the temple in any way was regarded as sacrilege, a crime carrying the death sentence. Signs warning Gentiles not to enter the sacred area explicitly stated that doing so would subject the transgressor to execution. Jeremiah's experience clearly demonstrates that speaking against the temple was also considered a crime worthy of death.

Those who accused Jesus of claiming He would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days were perhaps misunderstanding Jesus’ statement in:

***Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."***  
**(John 2:19 NASB)**

Then you add to that what Jesus said in:

***And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another which will not be torn down."*** **(Mark 13:2 NASB)**

It was probably this, or something like it, that was being remembered. But as is clear from an examination of that statement in [John 2:19](#), Jesus did not there say that He would destroy the temple. And the witnesses could not agree what He did say. The idea, however, became lodged in some of their minds for they produced it against Him at the cross:

***And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, <sup>30</sup> save Yourself, and come***

*down from the cross!"* (Mark 15:29-30 NASB)

*for we have heard him say that this Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place and alter the customs which Moses handed down to us."* (Acts 6:14 NASB)

Such a statement that He would destroy the temple would, indeed, probably have been looked on as blasphemy in itself, and the idea that He would destroy it and then rebuild it in three days could be seen as a Messianic claim:

*"Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD. (Zechariah 6:12 NASB)*

The prophet, Zechariah, announced concerning Joshua, the current high priest: *"He will build the temple of the LORD."* This, as Edersheim points out in one of his appendices, *"...is universally admitted to be Messianic"* (Appendix nine - "List of OT passages Messianically applied in Ancient Rabbinic writings").

Although they understood that Jesus had said something about the destroying of a temple and its rebuilding, none of the witnesses could agree.

Jewish law opposed false witnesses. The Biblical penalty for false witnesses in a capital case was execution (Deut. 19:16-21). Cross-examination of witnesses was standard in Jewish law (as in *Susanna* 48-62; *m. 'Abot* 1:9), and apparently the examiners did their job well enough here to produce contradictions they did not expect.

*And the high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, "Do You make no answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" 61 But He kept silent, and made no answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"* (Mark 14:60-61 NASB)

*"He kept silent"*– Jesus is being falsely accused; He doesn't say a word. Isaiah had prophesied:

*He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.* (Isaiah 53:7 NASB)

Again, we see that the Scriptures are being fulfilled. God's plan of redemption is unfolding just as He said it would.

*"Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, 'Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?'"* Matthew's account of this is much stronger:

*But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God."* (Matthew 26:63 NASB)

The High Priest says, *"I adjure you by the living God."* This was requiring testimony from the prisoner under an oath before God.

*'Now if a person sins, after he hears a public adjuration to testify, when he is a witness, whether he has seen or otherwise known, if he does not tell it, then he will bear his guilt. (Leviticus 5:1 NASB)*

Under Jewish Law, Jesus had to respond to Caiaphas' question, and He was obliged to tell the truth. While the inquisitor had the right to adjure witnesses in this way, who were then bound to reply and tell the truth under threat of severe penalty, it is very questionable whether it was legal to do the same to make a man incriminate himself.

*"Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"* Jesus' accusers ask what they perceive as a political question: Do you come as the Messiah who is expected to overthrow the Roman oppressors and make Israel free again as it was in the days of David? But Jesus responds that He is heir to a much more comprehensive Kingdom than David ever imagined:

*And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." (Mark 14:62 NASB)*

This was more than a claim to be an earthly Messiah. Jesus is claiming to be God's heir in a unique way—blasphemous if it were not, in fact, true.

**THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER**—the wording of this passage refers us back to the expression, *"The Son of Man,"* found in [Daniel 7:13](#), where we see Jesus, the Son of Man, coming to the Ancient of Days and receiving His everlasting Kingdom. This prophecy of Daniel was fulfilled at the Ascension (see [Acts 2:30-36](#)). The kingdom was given to Christ at His ascension, and this was made manifest to all Israel in the [destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70](#). Jerusalem's destruction was a sign that Jesus Christ was the Messiah of God.

*And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." (Mark 14:62 NASB)*

Notice the similarities between Jesus' answer to Caiaphas, and what He said in:

*"And then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory. (Mark 13:26 NASB)*

Jesus told Caiaphas, *"You will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven."* He told His disciples, *"They will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory."* It is obviously the same event in both passages. Notice Caiaphas' response to Jesus' statement:

*And tearing his clothes, the high priest said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? <sup>64</sup> "You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. (Mark 14:63-64 NASB)*

What did Jesus say that was blasphemy? Caiaphas understood that Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah.



In order to understand what Jesus is saying, we need to understand the idea that is behind “coming in the clouds.”

God’s **“coming on the clouds of heaven”** is a symbolic way of speaking of His **presence, judgment, and salvation**. All through the Scriptures, God was coming “on clouds” in salvation of His people and judgment of His enemies:

***The oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud, and is about to come to Egypt; The idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, And the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them. (Isaiah 19:1 NASB)***

We know from chapter 20 that God used the Assyrians as instruments of His wrath on Egypt, yet it says, **“The LORD is riding on a swift cloud...Egypt will tremble at His presence.”** God came to Egypt in judgment. His presence was made known in judgment. But it was the Assyrians who were literally present.

When Jesus said He would come on the clouds, He was using the [apocalyptic language](#) of the prophets to identify Himself as the Messiah, the Judge. Caiaphas reacted the way he did because he knew that only God came on clouds; that was a claim to deity. He knew that Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah of Daniel 7:

***And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." (Mark 14:62 NASB)***

This “coming with the clouds” is clearly Second Coming language:

***BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen. (Revelation 1:7 NASB)***

Notice that in our text Jesus uses the personal pronoun "you":

***And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." (Mark 14:62 NASB)***

Who is He talking to? Caiaphas. Caiaphas asked Jesus if He is the Son of God, the Messiah. Jesus answered Caiaphas by saying that he will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the “clouds of heaven.” Jesus says specifically that the high priest would see both the “sitting” and the “coming.” It must be referring to something that was to take place for Caiaphas (and probably those present) to witness.

Our text says that Caiaphas will see Him **“coming with the clouds of heaven”** while He is **“sitting at the right hand of the Power.”** Which means that can’t be referring to a literal, bodily coming; how could He do both at the same time? This is clearly apocalyptic language. His coming with the clouds is proof of His sitting on the right hand of power.

*And tearing his clothes, the high priest said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? <sup>64</sup> "You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. (Mark 14:63-64 NASB)*

Here we have Jesus and Caiaphas standing face to face—representing two high priests. Caiaphas was a fleshly high priest; Jesus, on the other hand, was high priest according to the Spirit of God ([Heb 5:5](#)) and His promise ([Psalm 110:4](#) shows that YHWH had given the priesthood to David's Lord by a promise that would not be revoked). The high priest's robe was specifically constructed so that it could not be torn ([Ex 28:31-32, 39:23](#)), and Aaron and successive high priests were commanded not to tear their garments ([Lev 21:10](#)). Even when Aaron's sons died before YHWH, he was forbidden to show his grief in this manner ([Lev 10:6](#)) for the robe and the symbol of His calling to the priesthood had to be kept in tact.

When Caiaphas tore his robe, he tore the priesthood away from himself and all those who were to follow, violating the covenant with God. *"And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death"*—Note the phraseology, *"to be deserving of death."* It was a recommendation, not a sentence. This was an inquiry, not a trial. Its view would have to be ratified by the official Sanhedrin meeting by daylight.

*And some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, "Prophecy!" And the officers received Him with slaps in the face. (Mark 14:65 NASB)*

They began to vent their hatred upon Jesus and pour out in venomous abuse all the pent-up jealousy and hatred they had gathered against Him. They began to spit on Him—that is the ultimate form of insult. They spat upon Him; they beat Him; they covered His face with a garment, and while His face was hidden, they hit Him, and they said, "Prophecy! Tell us who hit you."

By ridiculing Jesus' prophet status, His opponents may imply that they have condemned Him as a false prophet according to the rules of [Deuteronomy 18:20](#). His very condemnation and likely imminent execution disproved for them His prophecies about the temple and His own imminent enthronement. But we know that Jesus predicted accurately both His mistreatment and the temple's destruction; and we see Jesus as the truest prophet of all.

They mocked Him, and scorned Him, and insulted Him. Seven hundred and fifty years before this, Isaiah had spoken the words that Jesus must indeed have been thinking:

*I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting. (Isaiah 50:6 NASB)*

Outside, Peter was watching this, and he never forgot it. In his first letter, he tells us that we are to remember that scene and take heed to it, for Christ was our example:

*and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; (1 Peter 2:23 NASB)*

This is how Christians are to respond when they are falsely accused, when they are unjustly vilified and abused. Instead of retorting and trying to justify ourselves, Peter says: We are to return good for evil, revile not in return, but commit ourselves to Him who is able to judge things justly—God himself.

Throughout this night the Lord Jesus endured deceit, humiliation, physical abuse, slander, vindictiveness; and He did it for us:

***"Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13 NASB)***

Jesus loves us; do you love Him?

***"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. (John 14:15 NASB)***

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Chesapeake, VA 23322