

The Three Jewish Trials of Jesus and What They Mean to You

- I. He is innocent though you can not be, John 18:12-24 (The trial before Annas)**
John 19:11; 21:25; Luke 23:4, 15, 22; 23:47; 1 John 2:1; Romans 8:33-34
- II. He is powerful when you can not be, Mark 14:53-65; Matthew 26:57-58 (The trial before Caiaphas)**
- A. As the Christ, Mark 14:61-62a; contrast Mark 1:44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:30; 9:9
- B. As the Son of God, Mark 14:61-62a; Matthew 26:63; John 5:18; 8:58
- C. As the coming King, Mark 14:62; Daniel 7:13-14
- D. In spite of circumstances, Matthew 26:64; 27:45, 50-54; 28:11-13; Acts 2; 4:5-22; 5:17-42 . . .
- III. He is committed to you when you are not even committed to yourself, Luke 22:66-71 (The trial before the Sanhedrin)**

Fair Trial?

“By oppression and judgment he was taken away,” Isaiah 53:8

1. Extreme measures were to be taken to prevent false testimony, Deuteronomy 19:16-19; Matthew 26:60-61.
2. Conviction was to be based on testimony of at least two reliable witnesses, Deut 19:15.
3. The defendant’s testimony was not sufficient for conviction, Matthew 26:65.
4. Prisoners were not to be mistreated, Matthew 26:67-68.
5. Capital cases were to be conducted and concluded in daylight, Matthew 26:57-68; cp. 27:1.
6. Capital trials were not to be held in the high priest’s palace, Luke 22:54.
7. Trials were not to occur on the eve of a Sabbath or festival day, John 18:28; 19:31.
8. The Sanhedrin could not initiate charges, but only consider charges brought by an outside party, Matthew 26:63; Luke 22:66-67.
9. At least one day was to pass after the verdict and before execution was to take place, Matthew 26:65-66; 27.
10. The verdict of blasphemy was changed to sedition when Jesus was brought to Pilate, Lk 23:2.

Sources:

A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, by Craig S. Keener, pp. 647-648.
“Capital Corruption: The Trial of Jesus,” by Jeff Peck in *Jubilee*, Fall 2000, p. 3.

The Lessons of the Cross

(New Testament references to specific things the Cross teaches us. Can you think of any others?)

The Cross of Jesus Christ teaches us:

To take the initiative to forgive those who have wronged us, Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13
Not to retaliate against abuse, 1 Peter 2:19-24
To trust God in the midst of suffering, 1 Peter 2:19-24
How workers are to submit to their bosses, 1 Peter 2:18-25
How husbands are to love their wives, Ephesians 5:25-33
God's love for us, John 3:16; 1 John 3:16; 4:10; Romans 5:8
God's generosity to believers, Romans 8:32
How we should love one another, by laying down our lives, 1 John 3:16; John 15:13; Eph 5:1-2
To unselfishly seek the good of others, Phil 2:1-8; Romans 15:1-3
To die to self to follow Jesus (cross-bearing), Luke 9:23-24; John 12:24-27
To seek God's priorities over our own self-interest, John 12:24-28; Luke 9:23-24
To endure trials now because of future joy, Hebrews 12:1-3
How comfort increases as our experience of suffering increases, 2 Corinthians 1:5
The evils of sin, 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24; Galatians 2:21
The believer's future deliverance from God's wrath, Romans 5:9-10
The believer's power over sin and responsibility to conquer it, Romans 6:1-13; Galatians 2:20
The believer's freedom from the law as a way of salvation, Galatians 2:21, Romans 7:4-6
The believer's freedom from the law as a way of growth, Galatians 3:1-3
The believer's freedom from the world's attraction and control, Galatians 6:14
The believer's future resurrection, Romans 6:5, 9
The world's rejection & persecution of Christians, John 15:18-16:4

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways did Jesus prove that He was without sin while on the earth?
2. Why do you suppose Scripture records seven legal trials of Jesus (three Jewish, three before Pilate, one before Herod)?
3. The accounts of Jesus' Jewish trials are interspersed with details of Peter's denials, especially in John's Gospel. See John 18:12-14 (Jesus), 15-18 (Peter), 19-24 (Jesus), 25-27 (Peter). What does John imply by this comparison?
4. Why did Jesus at times discourage people from openly proclaiming that He is the Messiah? Why did He openly and directly say He is the Messiah while on trial in Mark 14:61-62?
5. According to the message, what is significant about Jesus making essentially the same response before the Sanhedrin (third trial, Luke 22) that He had made before Caiaphas (second trial, Mark 14; Matthew 26)?
6. What circumstances in the world today might suggest to some that Jesus is not in control of the events of life? How can you respond to someone who thinks that pain and suffering in the world imply that God is not in control or does not care?
7. Is there anything going on in your life right now that might make one wonder if Jesus is really on the throne? How do you wish to respond to that situation?
8. What impresses you most about Jesus in the three Jewish trials?
9. What in the message was most helpful to you personally?
10. Of the things shared by other people in this group discussion today, what was most helpful to you personally?