The Arraignment of Jesus

John 18.13-40

Introduction:

I. Before the Priests – 18:13-27

A. The Tribunal – 18:13-14

“First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year.”

According to Jewish law, the High Priest was appointed for life. Annas was appointed High Priest in A.D. 6 But, The Romans knew that “time in office” increased power. So they appointed a new High Priest frequently. Annas was succeeded by five of his sons, a grandson and, currently, by his son-in-law Caiaphas.

They took Jesus to Annas because, to the Jews, no matter what Rome says, Annas was the real High Priest. “Caiaphas who was the high priest that year.” does not mean that it was only for that year, but “at that time.” The high priest was not appointed every year.

“Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.”

John reminds us that Caiaphas had already made up his mind: Jesus’ crime was that He claimed to be a King. Jesus had to die so that Rome would not punish the whole nation for rebellion against Rome.

B. The Trial – 18:15-27

1. The Disciples – 18:15-18

a. The Disciple of Position – 18:15

“And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did ﻿﻿another ﻿﻿disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest.”

The Disciples scattered, but Peter and another disciple followed, at a distance, the Soldiers who took Jesus. I believe that the other disciple was John, or it might have been Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathaea.

b. The Disciple Out of Place – 18:16

“but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in.”

c. Peter’s False Profession {The First Denial} – 18:17

“The woman said to Peter, “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.”

In the text, the negative is the first word in the question and it expects a negative answer. No, I am not. This is his first denial, which He swore he would not do. (13:37)

d. Peter’s False Position – 18:18

“Now the slaves and the officers had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.”

He was warming at the enemies’ fire. He had forgotten Psalm 1:

“Blessed ﻿﻿is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ﻿﻿ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful;”

2. The Defense – 18:19-24

a. Asked – 18:19

“Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching.

What did he want to know?” How many followers? There weren’t many. What kind of threat? None.

b. Answered – 18:20-24

1). Rebuttal – 18:20-21

“Jesus answered, “I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet. I have said nothing in secret.”

There is no cult or organization. Then he said,

“Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.”

This is a preliminary hearing, but where are the witnesses? They need at least two or three according to Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15. He is innocent until proven guilty.

2). Reaction – 18:22

“When he had said this, one of the officers standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, “Is that how you answer the high priest?”

Jesus did not say anything wrong, unlike Paul in Acts 23:2-5

“Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, “Men and brethren, ﻿﻿I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.” And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him ﻿﻿to strike him on the mouth.”

Paul’s old nature came out and he said:

“God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and ﻿﻿do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?” Then, he learn something: And those who stood by said, “Do you revile God’s high priest?”

Then, Paul apologized,

“I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, ﻿﻿‘You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.’”

Jesus did not have to apologize; He did nothing wrong. He just pointed out the inconsistency in Annas’ question.

3). Response – 18:23-24

“Jesus answered, “If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?” Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.”

No further questions!

3. Denial – 18:25-27

a. Where Peter stood - 18:25a

“Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself.”

Peter was warming himself at the enemy’s fire. They asked him, “You are not also one of his disciples, are you?”

b. What Peter said {Denial #2} – 18:25b

“He denied it and said, “I am not.”

c. What Peter Saw – 18:26

“One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?”

d. When Peter Sinned {Denial #3} – 18:27

“Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed. After Peter had said, I will ﻿﻿lay down my life for Your sake.”

Jesus predicted that Peter would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed. (John 13:36) Inevitably but regrettably the prediction had come to pass.

Conclusion:

It would be easy, even after Peter’s example, to say, “I wouldn’t do that.” That’s what Peter said.

* Why did God allow that to happen?
  + Why did God allow it to be recorded?

First, Peter was not forced against his will. Jesus prediction did not make it happened; it simply stated that it would happen.

Second, the Bible is a book of truth. It shows mankind, warts, wrinkles and all.

Also, there is a Divine purpose in the recording of this event. There are many lessons to be learned, even 2,000 years later:

* It shows that the believer, in himself, is weak as kitten. Less than two hours ago Jesus had washed Peter’s feet, ministered the Lord’s Supper to him, (Ch.13) told him about the Holy Spirit he was going to send, Prayed the greatest prayer ever prayed, gave him the plainest warning possible, yet he fell.
* It shows us the danger of pride. (“I will never deny you.”) Pride goes before a fall (Prov. 16:18).
* It shows the importance of prayer. If Peter had watched and prayed in Gethsemane when Jesus told him to, he would have found grace to help in time of need. (Heb. 4:16)
* It shows the dangers of association with the wicked. It does not mean go into a monastery and avoid all contact with unbelievers. We can associate and speak with our lives. The question we have to ask constantly is, “Who is influencing whom.
* It shows that we should not fear men. The fear of man brings a snare. Proverbs 29:25. That will make us fear the face of those we can see more than the eye of the One we cannot see.
* It should prepare us against surprise when our close friends fail us at a crucial time – God can permit this to cast us more on to Himself.

* One mistake does not mean that God is finished with him. The same Savior Who predicted Peter fall also predicted that he would return to Jesus and be fruitful ﻿and strength hisbrothers.

“And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, ﻿﻿Satan has asked for you, that he may ﻿﻿sift you as wheat. But ﻿﻿I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me,﻿﻿strengthen your brethren.” (Luke 22:31)

“That can be, should be﻿﻿ and by God’s grace will be if we follow Peter’s example – return to God in confession and repentance.” (Luke 22:62)