

# THE UNJUST TRIAL OF THE MAJESTIC LAMB

## Mark 14:53-65

### INTRODUCTION

#### READ Mark 14:53-65

**Proposition: 3 Movements** of this Narrative:

1. The **Unjust Trial**
2. The **Majestic Lamb**
3. The **Important Question**

**So That:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Movement** of this Narrative ...

#### **I. The Unjust Trial** Mark 14:53-60

Point – They want Him dead. There is a marked increase in the hostility of religious leaders against Jesus. Their prestige and power are being threatened by the power of His words. They are being exposed for who they really are. While they have been trying to maintain façade of piety, they have been plotting to kill Him. This hypocrisy is evident and at the heart of this unjust and illegal trial with false witnesses. They are liars.

This trial is like a Kangaroo Court, a mock legal proceeding that denies proper procedure. The outcome is made in advance, usually for the purpose of providing a conviction. The term originates from the California Gold Rush, not from Australia, with the first written reference (1853) from the notion of proceeding "by leaps" like a kangaroo.

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

We see in a parallel passage in Luke 22:54 – “brought Him to the house of the high priest”

- Normally trials would be held in one of the 3 market halls in Jerusalem
- here now in a private home for secrecy

“**the chief priests and the scribes and the elders**”

- Sanhedrin – 70 in total

“**the high priest**” – Caiaphus

- Annas (his father-in-law) had been high priest prior to Caiaphus
- Caiaphus was not a believer

There are 2 Trials here:

1. A trial by the religious leaders- authority of Israel
2. A trial by the political authorities (civil) – authority of Rome

There were 3 phases to each trial – all according to the Sovereign redeeming purpose of God

Jesus faced legal proceedings on six separate occasions before His crucifixion.

3 phases of religious trial

1. Jesus before **Annas** in the dark of night – (John 18:13-24)
2. Then He is brought before **Caiaphus** and Sanhedrin – still at night (**Mark 14:53-65**)
3. Finally He is brought out in public after dawn, condemned by the Sanhedrin (Mark 15:1)

3 phases of civil trial:

1. Before **Pilate**
2. Before **Herod Antipas** (Luke 23:6-12)
3. Before Pilate again

**Mark 14:54** “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.”

- Faith and failure
- Commitment and cowardice
- Peter defended because of faith
- Will deny because of fear

Peter follows at a distance because he is afraid ... but he still follows!

**Mark 14:55** “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.”

Matthew 26:59 adds – “**kept trying to obtain false testimony**”

“**kept trying**” – Mark 11:18 – “seeking how to destroy Him” - on Tuesday after He drove the moneychangers out of the Temple

Mark 14:1 – “seeking how to seize Him by stealth and kill Him”

- still searching for a capital charge that will appear legal → **Charade!**

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

“**were giving false testimony**” → false and lying testimony

- 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment → Exodus 20:16 – “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”
- God detests false testimony
- God hates lies

“**and yet their testimony was not consistent.**”

- Their testimonies contradict each other

**Mark 14:57-59** “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.’” <sup>59</sup>And not even in this respect was their testimony consistent.”

Emphatic “we” – “We, ourselves, ...”

Jesus did not predict that He would do the destroying and He was not referring to the Jerusalem temple, but to His body

- They were taking the prophecy of Jesus and twisting it

**Mark 14:60** “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?"*”

- The Sanhedrin sit in a semi-circle on elevated seats

“**the high priest**” – Caiaphus comes into the middle of the circle

- Situation has become extremely tense
- They are trying to get Jesus to say something to condemn himself
- plenty of (false!) witnesses, but don’t pass the test of Deut 17:6 – “on the evidence of two witnesses”
- Caiaphus’s piety and façade is falling apart
- He sees his evil plan unraveling.

Most judicial systems in the modern world have their foundations in the legal system of ancient Israel, which was founded on the Old Testament, under an umbrella of righteousness.

**Turn to: Deuteronomy 16:18-20**

They don’t just violate God’s law from Deuteronomy 16, they don’t even follow their man made rules!

**#1** – Tradition of prohibition of capital punishment trials at night

**#2** – Tradition of prohibition of capital punishment trials on Sabbath or feast days

**#3** – a public trial - rabbinical requirements guarantee an accused criminal the right to a public trial

**#4** – to defense counsel,

**#5** – A defendant couldn’t be forced to testify against himself

**#6** – This is also the result of a bribe (blood money)

**#7** – Rabbinical law required that a sentence of death could not be carried out until the third day after it was rendered. The delay of execution also provided additional time for evidence or testimony to be discovered in the defendant’s behalf.

**#8** – During the intervening day the members of the court were supposed to fast.

➔ They don’t even follow their own manmade tradition

The Sanhedrin violated virtually every principle of God’s system and its own system. He was tried at night on a Feast day, in private, no defense was permitted Him, and the witnesses against Him were proven liars and had been bribed. He was executed on the same day He was sentenced, and the judges did not fast on the intervening day. Nor is the house of the high priest a proper place for a trial.

At the heart of this trail ➔ Hypocrisy.

**Illustration** – Justice – **Micah 3:1, 8, 9**

**3:1** – The judges and the magistrates – they are the very ones who should know/understand justice –

**3:2-3** – God compares to brutal cannibals – tear, eat, strip off, break, chop – instead of shepherding, they lead to slaughter

**3:8-11** – “abhor” – loathsome, detestable – hate good and love evil

- “twist” –the perversion and twisted nature of sin.

In the history of unjust trials, of mockeries of justice, none is more shocking, none more perverted, than this trial of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Turn to: Deuteronomy 19:16–19** → God demanded that a person who knowingly gives false testimony must suffer the punishment the accused would suffer if found guilty. A person who gives false testimony in a trial that involves capital punishment is put to death.

**Application** – would be kind of nice to export this Old Covenant law into our court system?

**Application** – It is harder to agree on a consistent lie than to tell the simple truth. If you tell the truth, you don’t have to remember

**Application** – Don’t play church. Don’t mess with the Truth.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Movement** of this Narrative ...

**III. The Majestic Lamb**

**Mark 14:61-62**

Point – His Majesty in silence. His Majesty in His answer.

**A. Majestic when He is Silent**

**Mark 14:61a** “**But He kept silent, and made no answer.**”

He could have simply spoken the truth to defend Himself ... yet He doesn’t. He stays silent.

- They are violating their own rules against self-incrimination
- He didn’t dignify all of their false accusations
- They will fall apart on their own

The Silent Lamb

Isaiah 53:7 – “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.”

**Application** – as believers, we must learn two things about our tongue:

1. how to **use it**
2. how to **hold it!**

- The discipline of speech and the more difficult discipline of silence
- Wise men think without talking.
- Fools talk without thinking.

**Illustration** – Pastor D.M. Sterns. He preached a sermon and a man came up after his sermon, "Mr. Sterns, I don't like your preaching. I don't care for the cross. I think that instead of preaching the death on the cross it would be far better to preach Jesus the teacher and example." "Would you be willing to follow him if I preached Christ the example?" Mr. Sterns said. "I would," replied the stranger. "I will follow in his steps," little realizing of course that he was making a statement that is almost precisely what Peter writes about and 1 Peter chapter 2. And then Pastor Sterns said, "Well, then let us take the first step and the first step is the clause immediately after that fact that we are following in his steps 'who did no sin'. Can you take that step?" "No, the man replied. I do sin and I acknowledge it." "**Well then,**" said the gospel preacher, "**your first need of Christ is not as an example but as a Savior.**"

## B. Majestic when He Answers

**Mark 14:61b** –

**“Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed *One*?"**

- important titles brought together on the lips of an enemy
- Messiah, Humanity, Deity

**Turn to: John 18:19-23** (before Annas)

Point – Bold Affirmation! (before Caiaphus)

- He does not defend → that could lead to pardon
- He does affirm → that will lead to execution!

When He answers, He speaks 3 Truths of:

- 1. His Identity**
- 2. His Authority**
- 3. His Victory**

The time to make the clearest statement is here – before the highest authorities of the nation of Israel.

**Mark 14:62** – **“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."”**

**1<sup>st</sup> Truth** He Speaks ...

### A. His Identity

Point –

**“I am”** – *ego eimi* – the Messianic Secret is over! His time is here!

- Points to the Covenant name of God in the Old Testament

**14:41** – “the hour has come”

- 1) Testimony not coming from demons
- 2) The Law 1<sup>st</sup> – healed leper
- 3) Not stir up political movement

false hopes among those who want restoration without repentance

- 4) The Apostles are not yet ready!

**2<sup>nd</sup> Truth** He Speaks ...

### B. His Authority

Point – The accused becomes the Accuser. The judges will be judged.

**“and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power,”**

**“the Son of Man”** – All 3 Passion Predictions: **8:31; 9:31; 10:33**

- you will see Me glorified with My Father in heaven and returning to earth as your Judge

Revelation 1:7 – “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.”

**3<sup>rd</sup> Truth** He Speaks ...

**C. His Victory**

Point –

“**and coming with the clouds of heaven.**”

- Jesus is speaking to these evil men, to His believers, and to Himself about His
- Jesus looks past His Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension, to His Coming in glory!

**Mark 8:38; 13:26**

1<sup>st</sup> I must suffer and die. Then I will rise! Then I will come again!

**Application** → Call to Repentance! – **Acts 17:30**

**Illustration** – The centurion in **15:39!**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Movement** of this Narrative ...

**III. The Important Question**

**Mark 14:63-65**

Point – Life’s Most Important Question!

**14:63-65** – “**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.**” <sup>65</sup>“**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.***”

hypocrite – this is the exact answer for which he is hoping!  
– which is a joke because the witnesses were bogus anyway!

This supreme court of Israel degenerates into a crude, mindless rabble.

All restraint is broken down – full display of their depravity as they spit, mocked and beat Him

“**spit**” – 10:34; 15:19

“**blindfold**” – intensifies the mocking. He doesn’t know what is coming.

“**beat**”

“**say**” – **Matt 26:68** – “**Prophecy to us, You Christ; who is the one who hit You?**” – mocking Him

Luke 22:65 – “**And they were saying many other things against Him, blaspheming.**”

- the true blasphemers
- They accuse Him of blasphemy
- God accuses them of blasphemy!

He already prophesied! **Mark 10:34!** And these mockers are fulfilling!

Someone may say “this is terrible”

Every person who is not worshipping Jesus as Lord and Savior:

- Judges Jesus
- Condemns Jesus
- Spits in His face
- Blindfolds Him
- Mocks Him
- Beats Him
- and is guilty of blasphemy against God who sent His Son to save man from sin.

**Illustration** – There was a man who dreamed he saw Jesus tied to the scourging-post, the soldier was scourging Him. He sees the whip in the soldier’s hand, with its thick lashes studded with bones and lead and sharp rocks. As the soldier brings the whip down on the bare back of Jesus, the dreamer shudders when he sees the marks and bloodstains it leaves behind, the shredded flesh. When the soldier raises his hand to strike again the dreamer rushes forward to stop him. The soldier turns around and the dreamer recognizes himself holding the blood-stained whip.

Every second you are not worshipping Jesus as Lord and Savior, you have the scourging whip in hand, your voice cries out with the Sanhedrin “Condemn Him!”

→ **“How does it seem to you?”** → Life’s Most Important Question!!

**Mark 8:29** – **“Who do you say that I am?”**

**Application** – easy to read and judge Caiaphus, etc.

- Everyone who rejects Christ is right here.
- Right now. → **“all condemned Him”** – that includes you if you are not bowing your knee to Jesus as Lord and Savior

**Illustration** – Once when Calvin Coolidge was Vice President and presiding over the Senate, two Senators were fighting. Tempers flared, and one Senator told the other to go to hell. The offended Senator stormed from his seat, marched down the aisle and stood before Mr. Coolidge, who was silently leafing through a book.

“Mr. Vice President,” he said, “did you hear what he said to me?” Coolidge looked up from his book and said calmly, “You know, I have been looking through the book. You don’t have to go.”

**“How does it seem to you?”** → Life’s Most Important Question!!

## **CONCLUSION**

This is His divinely-appointed time. He gladly faces hell’s moment of seeming victory. He does not turn from suffering and death, because:

**1 Pet 2:24** – **“He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness”**

→ Are you dying to sin and living to righteousness?

How does it seem to you?  
Who do you say that He is?  
What does your life say that He is?

10/30/11