

Mark Chapter 14 Third Continued

Verses 51-52: This is perhaps a reference to Mark himself. He also “fled”.

Mark 14:51 "And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about [his] naked [body]; and the young men laid hold on him:"

“A certain young man”: This perhaps was Mark himself. If the mob under Judas’ guidance had first gone to Mark’s mother’s house in search of Jesus, possibly where the last Passover was observed by Jesus and the 12, Mark could have heard the noise, suspected what was happening, and hurried to follow the multitude.

“A linen cloth”: Either a loose-fitting linen sleeping garment or a sheet Mark had hastily wrapped around himself after being roused from bed.

Mark 14:52 "And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked."

“Fled from them naked”: Mark escaped capture and ran, but in so doing his covering came off or was pulled off, and he left with nothing at all on or nothing more than undergarments.

Most theologians believe that the Passover was held at Mark's house. We can see the flight of this young follower as the same kind of circumstance the disciples would have been in, if they hadn't run.

Verses 14:53-15:15: This passage rehearses the trial of Jesus.

Mark’s account of Jesus’ trials like that of all the gospels, makes it clear that Christ was tried in two general phases: first, before the religious authorities (the Jewish Sanhedrin), and second, before the secular political authorities (Rome, represented by Governor Pontius Pilate).

Each of the phases had 3 parts: preliminary interrogation, formal arraignment, and formal sentencing. Mark, like the other gospel writers, did not include a comprehensive account of all the detail and stages. A complete picture requires the material from all 4 gospels being combined.

Mark 14:53 "And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes."

The "High Priest" was Caiaphas, who served 19 years (A.D. 18-37), in that position (see notes on Matt. 26:3, 57; John 18:24).

The “Chief priests” were those who had previously been high priests. “Elders” were representative laymen from local families of influence. “Scribes” were lawyers, experts in

questions pertaining to Old Testament Law and Jewish tradition (see note on verse 43). The entire Sanhedrin, the whole hierarchy, was out in force.

They had quickly gathered a group of priests, elders, and scribes to make quick work of this trial of Jesus.

Mark 14:54 "And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire."

“Palace of the high priest”: A quadrangle in the center of the High-Priest’s residence.

The narrative bears the stamp of Peter’s insight.

John 18:15 says, "And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and [so did] another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest."

This other disciple was commonly believed to be John. Peter stayed with the servants out in the area for the servants.

Mark 14:55 "And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none."

“Council”: The Sanhedrin (see note on Matt. 26:59).

They really had no charges at all against Jesus that would stand up in court. They wanted to kill Him, but had no grounds for killing Him. They could find no witness to anything that was punishable by death.

Mark 14:56 "For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together."

Because Jesus was innocent, the Jewish leaders could not convict Him except by relying on perjured testimony and perverted justice. The Jews were intent on doing whatever was necessary, even if they had to violate every biblical and rabbinical rule.

“Many bare false witness against him”: There was no lack of people to come forward at the Sanhedrin’s invitation to consciously present false, lying testimony.

“Agreed not together”: The testimonies were grossly inconsistent. The law however, required exact agreement between two witnesses (Deut. 17:6; 19:15).

You see, all of them were liars, because Jesus had never sinned against God or man.

Verses 57-58, “Bare false witness”: The witnesses maliciously garbled and misrepresented Jesus’ statements. Quite possibly they blended His figurative statement regarding His death and resurrection (in John 2:19-22), with His prediction of a literal destruction of the temple (in 13:2).

Their charge claimed He was disloyal to the present order of religion and worship (by replacing the current temple), and that He was blaspheming God by saying He would so quickly rebuild the temple without hands.

Mark 14:57-58 "And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying," "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands."

They did not realize that He was speaking of His body. And even in this accusation, they did not agree, as you see in the next verse.

Mark 14:59-60 "But neither so did their witness agree together." "And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what [is it which] these witness against thee?"

Caiaphas attempted to salvage the tense situation when the continued false charges were failing to establish a case or elicit a response from the Lord. The High-Priest could not understand how Jesus could remain silent and not offer any defense.

The high priest wanted something he could charge Jesus with. If Jesus had answered, it would have done nothing but make Him look guilty, because the accusations were so varied and without detail. The high priest could not believe that Jesus would not defend Himself.

Mark 14:61 "But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"

“Answered nothing”: The silence of innocence, integrity, and faith in God. An answer by Jesus would have given all the false testimonies and illegal proceedings an appearance of legitimacy.

“Christ”: This term refers to Jesus’ claim to be the promised Messiah (see note on Matt. 1:1).

“Son of the Blessed”: This refers to Jesus’ claim to deity. This is the only use of the expression, and it is an example of Jewish wording that avoided using God’s name (see note on John 8:58). Jews customarily avoided uttering God’s name out of reverence for Him. “Blessed” or “Blessed One” could be used instead.

Jesus acceptance of messiahship and deity (Luke 4:18-21; John 4:25-26; 5:17-18; 8:58), had always brought vigorous opposition from the Jewish leaders (John 5:19-47; 8:16-19; 10:29-39). Clearly, the High-Priest was asking this question in hopes that Jesus would affirm it and open Himself to the formal charge of blasphemy.

Now the high priest had stopped asking general questions and had hit on the question that he really wanted the answer to. This question was a real set up so that the high priest could accuse Jesus.

Mark 14:62 "And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

“I am”: An explicit, unambiguous declaration that Jesus was and is both the Messiah and the Son of God.

“Son of man” (See notes on 2:10; Matt. 8:20). Jesus used this commonly acknowledged messianic title of Himself more than 80 times in the gospels, here in a reference to (Psalm 110:1 and Dan. 7:13; 14:14).

“Right hand of power” (10:37; Acts 2:33; 7:55; Heb. 2:9; Rev. 12:5). Jesus’ glorified position is next to the throne of God (the “Power” is another reference to God).

“Clouds” (see note on 13:26; Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Luke 21:27; Acts 1:9-11; Rev. 1:7; 14:14).

Jesus claims to be both Messiah and the coming Judge.

“Power” is here another indirect reference to God (see Daniel 7:13).

Jesus' answer was straightforward, He just said, "I am". Jesus added a warning to this high priest. In a sense Jesus was saying, "It may look like you have power over me, but there will come a time when you will stand before me to be judged".

We see a prophetic statement here of when Jesus will return in the clouds for the believers.

Mark 14:63 "Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?"

“Rent his clothes”: A ceremonial, and in this case contrived, display of grief and indignation over the presumed dishonoring of God’s name by Jesus (Gen. 37:29; Lev. 10:6; Job 1:20; Acts 14:14; see note on Matt. 26:65).

“What need . . . further witnesses”: A rhetorical question that expressed relief that the tense and embarrassing situation was finally over. Because Jesus had allegedly incriminated Himself in the eyes of the Sanhedrin, they would not need to summon any more lying witnesses.

Jesus told the truth and was condemned by these evil priests and high priest. When he rent his clothes (meaning he violently tore his outer tunic off), he was showing his great displeasure in what Jesus had said.

Mark 14:64 "Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death."

“Blasphemy” (see note on 2:7; 3:29). Strictly speaking, Jesus’ words were not “blasphemy,” or defiant irreverence of God (Lev. 24:10-23), but Caiaphas regarded them as such because Jesus claimed for Himself equal power and prerogative with God.

At this point a “death” sentence is pronounced by the assembled authorities.

Since this high priest, the priests, the scribes, Pharisees, and elders were opposed to Jesus, it was no surprise that they condemned Him to be guilty of death.

Mark 14:65 "And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands."

“Spit on him ... buffet him”: For the Jews, to “spit” in another’s face was the grossest, most hateful form of personal insult (Num. 12:14; Deut. 25:9). Their brutal cruelty reached a climax and revealed the great depravity of their hearts when they “beat Him,” or hit Him with clenched fists.’

“Prophecy”: They jeeringly and disrespectfully ordered Jesus to use the prophetic powers He claimed to have, even in the frivolous manner of telling them who struck Him (Matt. 26-68).

We see here, that they slapped the Lord of all the earth and spit on Him. Isaiah had prophesied about this very thing (in Isa. 50:6).

Mark 14:66 "And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:"

“Beneath”: The apartments around it were higher than the courtyard itself.

“One of the maids”: Female slave, or maid, in the household of the High-Priest. She might have been the same gatekeeper (John 18:15-16), who admitted Peter, and who being curious and suspicious of him, wanted a closer look.

Many people had seen Jesus and His disciples. It certainly would not be hidden for long that Peter was one of the disciples. Peter had so soon forgotten what Jesus had told him that he would do, as you see here.

Mark 14:67 "And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth."

“Of Nazareth”: Their reference to Jesus’ hometown communicates a feeling of contempt, in keeping with the views of the Jewish leaders and the poor reputation Nazareth generally had (John 1:46).

Mark 14:68 "But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew."

“The porch”: Used only here in the New Testament, this term denotes “the forecourt,” or “entryway,” a covered archway of the courtyard, opening onto the street.

Not only did Peter deny Jesus, but in so doing he was lying. Peter went out of the building to the porch then, so if they accused him again, he would have a better way to get away. Fear will make us do terrible things.

Mark 14:69-70 "And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is [one] of them." "And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art [one] of them: for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth [thereto]."

“Galilean”: Frequently used as a derisive label by people in Jerusalem toward their northern neighbors. It strongly suggested that natives of Galilee were deemed unsophisticated and uneducated (Acts 4:13).

Peter’s Galilean accent would have been conspicuous in Jerusalem.

We see here, a very frightened man. Peter had been with Jesus and seen the miracles. He was there at the transfiguration and heard the voice of the Father saying that Jesus was His Son. Fear of death had gripped Peter and caused him to doubt. Here they were really putting pressure on Peter, saying you may deny it, but you are with Him. Your speech and your nationality give you away.

Mark 14:71 "But he began to curse and to swear, [saying], I know not this man of whom ye speak."

Peter now committed another sin. He added cursing to his lying. It made him angry at them, but angrier at himself.

Mark 14:72 "And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept."

“The cock crew”: This reference brings to mind Jesus’ prediction (in verse 30; see note there), and (Matt. 26:34). Amid all the accusations being hurled at him, Peter either did not hear the rooster’s crowing, or failed to realize its significance. When the rooster crowed the second time, Jesus looked at Peter (Luke 22:61), triggering Peter’s memory and bringing conviction of his denials.

Despite this lapse, Peter will be forgiven and accepted again into His Lord’s service (16:7).

We see, here, a broken man. When the cock crew the second time, Peter immediately remembered what Jesus had said to him. Peter suddenly knew that he had failed his Lord. He wept not only because he let Jesus down, but wept because he felt Jesus would not forgive him for this. The next mention of Peter we will see him back in his boat fishing for fish again.

Mark Chapter 14 Third Continued Questions

1. What happened to the young man (who had a linen wrap on) following Jesus?
2. Who do most people believe the young man was?
3. Where did they take Jesus to be questioned?
4. Who were with him as he questioned Jesus?
5. Who, probably, was the high priest?
6. Who followed (that was named), into the palace of the high priest?
7. In John, we find that another disciple was there, who was it probably?
8. Where did Peter stay?
9. For what purpose did the chief priests and the council try to get a solid witness against Jesus?
10. Why were the false witnesses not used?
11. What did some of the witnesses say Jesus had said about the temple?
12. What had they not understood?
13. When the high priest asked why Jesus didn't answer, what was he trying to do?
14. What specific question did the high priest ask Jesus?
15. How did Jesus answer?
16. What warning to the high priest did He include when He answered him?
17. What reaction did the high priest have?
18. What did they all condemn Jesus to be?
19. What does "rent his clothes" mean?
20. What did the onlookers begin to do to Jesus?
21. Where was Peter when all of this was happening?
22. Who was the first to say that Peter had been with Jesus?

23. When she accused Peter, what answer did he give?
24. Where did Peter go after the accusation?
25. How many times did Peter deny Jesus?
26. What happened immediately after, that Jesus had told Peter would happen?
27. What had gripped Peter and caused him to deny knowing Jesus?
28. What other sin, besides lying, did Peter commit?
29. Give two reasons why Peter wept.