026.ser

The Condemnation of Christ.

Luke 14:25-35

25 Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. 27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. 28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? 29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple. 34 "Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? 35 It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Jesus was not an official Jewish Rabbi,[[1]](#footnote-1) however, there are over 100 references in the New Testament to Him being a marvellous teacher of God, however, from His own personality as the Son of God *and* the Son of man, He was the Father's image to humanity.

He taught with authority: He taught with compassion: He taught with forgiveness and above all, He taught the wonderful message of God’s love:[[2]](#footnote-2) **Immanuel**,[[3]](#footnote-3) God is with us.

God was adamant that the one condition of discipleship was a loyal commitment to Him and not be bound to anyone or anything else.[[4]](#footnote-4)

In the days of Jesus 55,000 people lived in Jerusalem, of which some 18,000[[5]](#footnote-5) were clergy, official priests[[6]](#footnote-6) and levites.[[7]](#footnote-7)

At this time, a significant problem surfaced with regards to the divisiness of the twofold Law: the **written law** of Moses and the prophets[[8]](#footnote-8) and the **oral law** of The Pharisees' who insisted on the binding force of their oral tradition.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Jesus rejected the Oral Law, called the *Mishna* which was the basis of his many disagreements with the Pharisees who regarded Jesus as being religiously dangerous.”[[10]](#footnote-10)

Jesus noted that the Pharisees, *“did all their deeds to be seen by men; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, and they love the place of honour at feasts and the best seats in the synagoges, and salutations in the market places, and being called rabbi ...”.*

Manson, in his book, The **Sayings of Jesus** wrote,[[11]](#footnote-11) *“His hearers were amazed by the authority with which He spoke. He dominated the crowds, and was easily the Master of His band of disciples and (He was), the servant of all (and) supremely the Servant of God.”*[[12]](#footnote-12)

The end of Jesus beganwith His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane[[13]](#footnote-13) and the six trials[[14]](#footnote-14) that followed before the High Priests Annas & Caiaphas,[[15]](#footnote-15) the 70 member Great Sanhedrin Council,[[16]](#footnote-16) and then, before the **Roman** trials under Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea and finally, Herod, Tetrach of Galilee.[[17]](#footnote-17)

At Gethsemane[[18]](#footnote-18) before his arrest, Jesus *‘fell on his face’* twice and prayed *‘O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will … thy will be done.”*

John writes[[19]](#footnote-19) of the *behind-the-scenes* activities[[20]](#footnote-20) that *“Judas came to the grove,*[[21]](#footnote-21) *guiding a detachment of soldiers and Levitical Police from the chief priests and Pharisees.”*[[22]](#footnote-22)

Matthew and Mark write[[23]](#footnote-23) that *“those who seized Jesus led Him away to Annas and Caiaphas the High Priests, and then before the* 70 member Sandhedrin[[24]](#footnote-24) for a trial which was held to be held at night but this was illegal.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Jesus was a regular visitor to the Temple and from age 12 he not only attended the daily lectures given, he often gave lectures himself. He took affimative action against the profiteering of those trading and overcharging for goods and services[[26]](#footnote-26) which meant He was a known trouble-maker by the authorities – especially the clergy who were benefitting! [[27]](#footnote-27) Luke[[28]](#footnote-28) writes that the Pharisees *‘were lovers of money’.*

However, the Romans would not execute Him for this[[29]](#footnote-29) ‘lesser charge’ and so, Caiaphas wanted to establish that Jesus was guilty of blasphemy **by claiming** to be the [Messiah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Messiah) as a return of the [Davidic kingship](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davidic_dynasty_in_Bible_prophecy) and therefore a **real** threat to Roman rule – for this, Jesus could be executed![[30]](#footnote-30)

Little doubt that Jesus irritated the Pharisees. He expressed His disregard for their traditions regarding to the Sabbath and spoke against their false piety[[31]](#footnote-31) and He had concerns for the financial abuses going on in the Temple.

Furthermore, many Priests who were members of the Great Sanhedrin were known to have *“gained large profits by exchanging the money of the (pilgrims)”* and selling sacrificial animals for profit until Jesus drove them from the *Temple.”* [[32]](#footnote-32) Jesus put a stop to this at a time when large profits[[33]](#footnote-33) were being made and which doubtless angered Annas and Caiaphas and those of the priesthood involved in the profiteering.[[34]](#footnote-34)

After His arrest and interregation the night before,[[35]](#footnote-35) Jesus was placed before the Sanhedrin the next morning[[36]](#footnote-36) for a decision on His fate - it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

The challenge now for Caiaphas was the question, *‘Are you the Christ …?’* [[37]](#footnote-37) which drew from Jesus the affirmative reply, *‘I am’.*[[38]](#footnote-38) Caiaphas was quick to seize onto this as overt blasphemy – the time had come to place Jesus before the Romans and seal his fate![[39]](#footnote-39)

Importantly, from his birth Jesus was widely referred to as the *‘King of the Jews’* [[40]](#footnote-40) and during His ministry as Rabbi[[41]](#footnote-41) by his disciples and many followers who were amazed at his teaching and healing ministries, *“for he taught them as one having authority, and* ***not as the scribes****.”* [[42]](#footnote-42)

During His Galilaean Ministry at Capernaum Jesus was well received as a good teacher at the Synagogue there and for *‘spreading the good news’ however* the popular title for Him there was **‘the Healer’**.[[43]](#footnote-43) He healed many.[[44]](#footnote-44)

The Pharisees visiting from Jerusalem took issue with Jesus and His disciples in their failure to wash their hands for ceremonial reasons…. not for hygeine but 100% liturgical – Jesus explained this to them on three occasions.[[45]](#footnote-45)

Little doubt it was reported back to Jerusalem that Jesus was acting subversively.[[46]](#footnote-46)

On the other hand, **John’s gospel** emphasises the seven miracles of Jesus as messianic signs[[47]](#footnote-47) – the greatest of which was the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead and that countless people turned from Judaism to a *‘living faith in God’* and, later on, as Jesus entered Jerusalem for the final time, He was surrounded by crowds of followers for *‘Palm Sunday’*, His crucifixion, resurrection and ascension and history ever since.

At this *‘preliminary investigation’* by the Sanhedrin, they *denied* [[48]](#footnote-48)Jesus any sense of justice as they were compelled to do by the law of Moses: instead, they accused Him of violating sabbath laws, threatening to destroy the Jewish Temple, practising sorcery and exorcising people by the power of demons.

George A Barton[[49]](#footnote-49) writes that Judas appears to have revealed the plan of Jesus to buy a paschal lamb[[50]](#footnote-50) for the Passover and this gave the High Priest(s) an opportunity to arrest Jesus at prayer one evening to interrogate Him, and to condemn Him early the next day at daylight.

According to Overman,[[51]](#footnote-51) “the fact that High ranking members of the judicial Sanhedrin became involved with local officials hostile to the *‘Jesus movement’*, highlights the encroachment of Rome in their ever-expanding colonial rule.”[[52]](#footnote-52) Jesus put forward His own defence,[[53]](#footnote-53) *“if I have spoken wrongly, testify with reference to the wrong, but if rightly, why do you ignore me?”*[[54]](#footnote-54) [[55]](#footnote-55)

The Sanhedrin did not respond to this.[[56]](#footnote-56) However, as T Alec Burkill mentions, “the Messiah’s humiliation and glorification are synthesised in the unity of a single conception.”[[57]](#footnote-57)

The Bible has 672 verses confirming what **Mark** writes that *“evil comes from within”*.[[58]](#footnote-58) God does not punish wrong-doing by sending evil upon the wrong-doer but the opposite – He removes His protective hand from the wrong-doer and then the previous *enlightenment* is overtaken by darkness.[[59]](#footnote-59)

However, with Christ’s victory on the Cross, Satan loses his right of accusation in respect of humanity and the universe. All judgment is now committed to Christ.

**Paul** puts it this way, *“do evil (and) be afraid (of the consequences)… hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good.”*[[60]](#footnote-60)

The reason is *“evil”* [[61]](#footnote-61) has a much broader meaning than just *“sin”* [[62]](#footnote-62) *it is a red light warning of danger. A sign warning to* **STOP** here and now *…*

Paul in his first letter to Timothy[[63]](#footnote-63) speaks of the human conscience being *‘seared’* in those who *‘depart from the faith’*, who *‘give in to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons’*, who *‘forbid marriage’* and so on.

**James** points to the tongue in particular, it *“is a fire … an unrighteous world … staining the whole body … set on fire by hell.”*[[64]](#footnote-64) *And means suffering ‘within’ as much, if not, more than external suffering.*

Historically, theSanhedrin had 70 elders appointed to assist Moses[[65]](#footnote-65) and this continued under the rule of both Persian[[66]](#footnote-66) and the Greeks[[67]](#footnote-67) until Roman rule in 27BC.[[68]](#footnote-68)

In a sentence of death by stoning, those who condemned the person were obligated to ‘*throw the first stone’*,[[69]](#footnote-69) however, only after a night of meditation and prayer.[[70]](#footnote-70)

For the first thirty-five years of Roman rule, the High Priests came to be the preserve of a small number of **wealthy priestly families** who were adherents of the Sadducees who were anxious not to allow anything which might compromise them in the eyes of Rome.[[71]](#footnote-71) [[72]](#footnote-72)

And so, unfortunately, no materials survive from the Sadducees themselves – our only source is the NT itself and none of our sources actually link the Sadducees with the priesthood to verify them – not that it matters for God knows them.[[73]](#footnote-73)

We know for certain that the one group which showed direct hostility towards christians was the Sadducean party, especially the chief priests and the Temple authorities.[[74]](#footnote-74) They could boast they were not narrow-minded and strait-laced like their brethren the Pharisees.[[75]](#footnote-75)

**Annas**, father-in-law of **Caiphas** played a key role in the act of placing Jesus before Pilate’[[76]](#footnote-76) and Caiphas [[77]](#footnote-77) was the unquestionable representative of the Emperor of Rome.

Herod Antipas was King but only by favor of the Romans. The Jews hated him and resented strongly that they had this Roman puppets sitting in power over them. However, they needed him on this occasion and their hatred was noticeably supressed.

Matthew writes, *"Now the Chief Priests and the elders persuaded the people to ask for Barabas and destroy Jesus"*, and, when Pilate asked on what grounds was he to be condemned, "they shouted all the more*, `Let him be crucified'*" and they did.

And the one group that showed direct hostility to the new community of christians was the Sadducean party, especially the chief priests and Temple authorities.

CONCLUSION

It is a known that anxiety is the main component of irrationallity. John Macquarrie[[78]](#footnote-78) writes, *“The researches of Freud in particular have made clear the almost frightening extent to which our lives are ruled by dark irrational forces.”*

In AD30, having had the last supper the night before, Jesus does not partake of the Passover meal but is sentenced and crucified while it was still being prepared. In John, Passover day fell on a **Saturday**, thereby coinciding with the weekly Sabbath.[[79]](#footnote-79)

Jesus, despite all the injustices, never thought of himself as a victim. Even before the first trial, Jesus had said, *"I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord."*

George A Barton[[80]](#footnote-80) writes, “The great misfortune of the members of the Sadducean priesthood of the year 30AD is that they happened to judge the most illustrious and the holiest Prisoner of all time and tried to exterminate Him.

But one day soon, He is coming back again and be with us forever and forever. Amen

1. . John 7.14f, he was popularly known as Rabbi – Mark 9.5, 11.21 and John 3.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. . According to the World Christian Encyclopedia, **2.7** million convert to Christianity. It also states that Christianity ranks at first place in net gains through religious conversion. According to scholar Mark Juergensmeyer of University of California, Berkeley, in the modern world, the global Christian population increased at an average annual rate of 2.3% per annum. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. . Immanuel is the Hebrew name that appears in the Book of Isaiah 7:14 as a sign that God will protect the House of David. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. . Greek  (Luke 14.26) does not mean a literal ‘hate’ but to a ***disowning and renunciation*** of anything that would come between a believer and Christ so that they are so committed to Him, they cannot be “controlled” by anyone or anything else. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. . Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, High Priests and Levites and so on, these were Holy men of God and at the same time representing God through their lifestyles. As Exodus 19.5-6 states that “the fundamental design of Israel itself was to be unto Jehovah ‘a kingdom of priests and an holy nation.” Exodus 19.5-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. . High priests, Pharisees, Sadducees, Rabbis and Essenes were the main groups. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. . The child has always been of paramount importance in Judaism, as the Mishnah and Talmud clearly show in several passages. Three events stand out in the history of Jewish Education. Ezra, Simon ben-Shetah and Joshua ben-Gamala. These men developed scripture and made the synagogue a place of instruction by teachers. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. . The Torah is from the first five books of the Hebrew Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy – the first five books of Moses - known in the Jewish tradition as the Written Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. . According to Rabbinic tradition, the Oral Torah was passed down orally in an unbroken chain from generation to generation until its contents were finally committed to writing following the destruction of the [Second Temple](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Temple) in 70 CE, when Jewish civilization was faced with an existential threat, by virtue of the dispersion of the Jewish people. When the Mishna (the first constituent part of the Talmud) was compiled about 200AD, it incorporated the teachings of the Pharisees on Jewish law. It is strongly argued that God’s ideals are set out in the opening chapters of Genesis, where man was created in God’s image and therefore expected to imitate Him. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. . George A Barton, Journal of Biblical Literature, 1922, Vol. 41. No.3-4 writes that it should be borne in mind that in 30AD the development of the Oral Law was in its infancy and that many of the Sanhedrin were Pharisees and regarded Jesus as religiously dangerous. Harvie Branscomb, SBL Press Vol. 47 (1928) suggests that Jesus was wary of both the Oral Law and the misuse of the Mosaic law. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. . Thomas W Manson, The Saying of Jesus, SCM, London, 1949, p344-345. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. . Origen was right when he called Jesus *autobasileia* – the Kingdom itself. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. . Judas, the betrayer, knew this garden as a place Jesus had often gone with all His disciples and now, leads a group of soldiers there to capture Jesus – John 18.1-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. . These six trials by the High Priests, the Sanhedrin and the Romans took between 10 to 20 hours of interrogations and blame before a decision was reached. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. . Annas and Caiaphas were both High Priests and were related through marriage. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. . Which had an official membership of 71 members – including the High Priest. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. . The Sanhedrin held two meetings, one on the night of the arrest of Jesus and the other the next morning which was a requirement of the Sanhedrin rules. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. . According to the Eastern Orthodox Church tradition, Gethsemane is the garden where the Virgin Mary was buried and was assumed into heaven after her dormition on Mount Zion. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. . John 18.12-14. So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews seized Jesus and bound him. First, they led him to Annas; for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had given counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. . Alfred Edersheim, The Temple, Hendrickson Publ., 1994, p55 Peabody, USA. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. . A grove is a small group of trees with minimal or no undergrowth. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. . Alfred Edersheim, op.cit., p193 says it also included Levitical Police from the Temple according to Jeremias. op.cit. p210. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. . Matthew 26.57-75, Mark 14.53-65 and John 18.12-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. . They wanted to be free of Jesus, however, there were serious concerns about the Roman rule and the insurgent Zealots wanting to rebel against the Roman Empire and expel it from the Holy Land by force of arms, most notably during the First Jewish–Roman War which took place in 66AD. They opposed paying tax to Rome [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. . However, a capital trial at night was illegal. Mishnah Sanhedrin 4.1 confirms the illegality of a capital trial at night, assuming that the law stated in the Mishnah existed in 30 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. . Alfred Edersheim, The Temple, Hendrickson, op.cit., 1994, p55. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. .Jesus often clashed with the Jewish religious leaders. They were the leading citizens – yet Jesus criticised them and exposed their hypocrisy. This is in contrast to his treatment of women, tax collectors and leprosy sufferers. These people were often regarded as second class citizens, but Jesus makes a point of treating them as equals. Paul the apostle writes to the Corinthians, “Five times I received from the Jews forty lashes minus one. 2 Corinthians 11.24 cf Deuteronomy 25.2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. . Luke 16.14 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. . The Halakhanot only guides religious practices and beliefs, it also guides numerous aspects of day-to-day life. Historically, in the Jewish diaspora, halakha served many Jewish communities as an enforceable avenue of law – both civil and religious, since no differentiation of them existed in classical Judaism. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. 30. [Christians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christians) refer to [Jesus of Nazareth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_of_Nazareth) as either the "Christ" or the "Messiah", believing that the messianic prophecies were fulfilled in the [mission](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Jesus), [death](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crucifixion_of_Jesus), and [resurrection](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resurrection_of_Jesus) of Jesus and that he will [return](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_coming) to fulfill the rest of the messianic prophecies. Moreover, unlike the Judaic concept of the Messiah, [Jesus Christ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_Christ) is additionally considered by Christians to be the [Son of God](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Son_of_God_%28Christianity%29). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. . Matthew outlines in chapter 23 of his gospel the condemnation of the Scribes and Pharisees by Jesus who states that they “preach, but do not practice”. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. . Barton writes, “This interupption of their traffic at a time so near the festival, when large profits could be made, doubtless angered Annas and Caiaphas and the whole priesthood … for now, they were powerless to avenge themselves.” p208 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. . When Jews travelled to Jerusalem from other lands, they brought money for room, board, food and souvenirs. They were required to pay the annual half-shekel tribute to the Temple. The money changers converted foreign money to the local currency for a fee or commission – there were kick-backs behind-the-scenes. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. . The ‘cleansing of the Temple’ is of [Jesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus) expelling the merchants and the [money changers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Money_changer) from the [Temple](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Temple), and is recounted in all four [canonical gospels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canonical_gospels). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. . FW Grosheide, Kommmentaar op het Nieuwe Testament, Vol II, p449 as recorded by William Hendriksen, New Testament Commentary on John, Banner of Truth, London, 1954, p385. This is also the position of A Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah, Volume II, p548. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. . Decisions of the Sanhedrin could not be made after dark and certain sentences had to be made after being ‘heard’ twice over two days. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. . This phrase means, ‘Son of the blessed, virgin Mary’. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. . Mark 14.62 the high priest Caiaphas broke Jewish customs to hold a hearing and decide Jesus's fate. When Jesus was arrested, he was taken to the high priest's house for a hearing that would lead to his crucifixion by the Romans. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. . Vincent Taylor (1887-1968) states, ‘It was not blasphemy to claim to be the Messiah, but to speak with assurance of sharing the throne of God and of the fulfilment of Daniel’s vision in himself and his community was blasphemy indeed.’ Vincent Taylor was a [Methodist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methodist) [biblical scholar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_scholar) and [theologian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theologian). He was elected to the Fellowship of the British Academy in 1954, specializing in theology. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. . In John 19.3 [Jesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus) is referred to as the King of the Jews both at the beginning of his life and at the end. This leads to dramatic results: in the account of the [nativity of Jesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nativity_of_Jesus) the Magi who come from the east call Jesus by this title which then causes [Herod the Great](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herod_the_Great) to order the [Massacre of the Innocents](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massacre_of_the_Innocents). Towards the end of the accounts of all four [canonical Gospels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canonical_Gospel), in the narrative of the [Passion of Jesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passion_of_Jesus), the title "King of the Jews" leads to charges against Jesus that result in [his crucifixion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crucifixion_of_Jesus). [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. . In a sense, Jesus avoided the title of Rabbi due to some of its negative history as Matthew writes (23.7) that men loved this title for the wrong reasons, however, as Jeremiah points out “Jesus of Nazareth had gone through the regular course of education for ordination” and entitled to be called Rabbi. He was a Galilean Jew who underwent circumcision, was baptised by John the Baptist, began his own ministry, was often referred to as ‘Rabbi’ and Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin mentioned in three places in the Gospel of John calls him a Pharisee. Also, Peter Mark 9.5, 11,21 and Judas Mark 14.45, Nathanael, John 1.45 and the gospel of John in 4.31, 6.25, 9.2 and 11.8 all call Him Rabbi. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. . See also Matthew 1.18-23, 7.28-29, Isaiah 9.6, Micah 5.2 and Matthew 2:4-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. . Mark, Tyndale Commentary by Alan Cole. Tyndale, London, 1961, p117. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. . According to the **Jesus Seminar**, Jesus probably cured some sick people, but described Jesus' healings in modern terms, relating them to "psychosomatic maladies." They found six of the **nineteen** healings to be "probably reliable". The **Jesus Seminar** was a group of about 50 critical biblical scholars and 100 laymen founded in 1985 by Robert Funk that originated under the auspices of the Westar Institute. The seminar was very active through the 1980s and 1990s in particular. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. . In Mark’s gospel chapter 7, Jesus explained to them three times that “nothing going into the mouth can defile a person” It is likely this was reported back to the Jerusalem Sanhedrin which was officially appointed to investigate such matters. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. . Nicodemus was an early follower of Christ as uniquely mentioned in the Gospel of John. Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish Council) in Jerusalem at the time of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. He had sought to help Jesus by approaching Him under the cover of night. (John 3.1ff) [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. . These were 7 miracles as divine acts and profound teaching, the value of faith and the power of the law of love. Christians believed that, in Christ, God had been at work in new and astonishing ways and they had the evidence of their own eyes to support their faith. Luke in particular writes of the miraculous elements in his narrative. Saint Luke Pelican Commentary, G B Caird.1965, p29. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. . There were correct times and places for meetings of the Sanhedrin. In capital punishment cases the arguments for acquittal were presented first and then those for conviction. If a person spoke for acquittal he could not reverse his opinion, but if he spoke for condemnation he could later change his vote. Students could speak in favour of acquittal but not for condemnation. Acquital might be declared on the day of the trial, but condemnation must wait until the following day. For acquitals a simple majority sufficed whereas for condemnation a two-thirds majority was required. If twelve of the twenty-three judges necessary for a quorum voted for acquittal, and eleven for conviction, the prisoner was discharged. If twelve voted for conviction, and eleven against, the number of judges had to be increased by two, and this was repeated up to a total of seventy-one, or until acquittal was achieved. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. . According to Barton, op.cit., p206. This was required by Sanhedrin Law. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. . According to Barton, op.cit., p209. Easy to call upon a quorum at short notice. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. . J Andrew Overman, Sanhedrin, The Oxford Companion to the Bible, Oxford University Press, New York, 1993 p677. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. . The Jerusalem Jews were willing to use the *power of Rome* to achieve their agenda and Rome willing to use the *agenda of the Jerusalem Jews* for subjugation.

49. When Herod became King of the Jews, high priest and Sanhedrin alike, lost most of their authority, but the popular prestige of the Pharisees increased – partly because [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. – when the occcasion seemed to demand it, they did not shrink from opposing Herod publicly. F F Bruce, New Testament History, Oliphants, 1969, p73. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. . Jesus is generally quiet, does not defend himself, rarely responds to the accusations, and is found guilty of: violating the Sabbath law (by healing on the Sabbath); threatening to destroy the [Jewish Temple](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Temple); practicing [sorcery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witchcraft), exorcising people by the power of demons and; claiming to be the [Messiah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Messiah_in_Judaism). He is then taken to [Pontius Pilate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pontius_Pilate), the governor of [Roman Judaea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Judaea) to be tried for claiming to be the [King of the Jews](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus%2C_King_of_the_Jews) for which He is condemned to death [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. . Of some interest is that Jesus’ statement refers back to Exodus 22:2-3 and the subject of ‘bloodguilt’ (or justifiable homicide) for the killing or injuring a thief who is caught breaking into one’s property during the night compared with this happening during the daylight. At night, in the darkness, the intentions of the thief could not be easily established whereas in the daylight his intentions could be determined more easily and therefore bloodguilt might be justified. Jesus is hereby challenging their “bloodguilt” as in a justifiable death for speaking as a teacher. Hyatt p237 New Century Commentary Oliphants 1971 p237; Alan Cole Tyndale 1973, p171. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. . Jesus pin-pointed the problem and said, *“when I was with you day after day in the Temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the* *“power of darkness.”* Luke 22.53. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. . T Alec Burkill, The Trial of Jesus, Journal of Biblical Literature. 1958, p1. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. . Mark 7.23. Evil comes from within. See also 1 Peter 3.17. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. . The Greek word skotos means ‘obscurity/darkness’ and is written 46 times in the NT – in the male sense ‘evil abhors the light’ and in the feminine sense is ‘hell’. The epistles are full of warnings and exhortations in the struggle against Satan – Romans 16.20; 1 Corinthians 7.5; 2 Corinthians 2.11; 1 Thess 2.18; Ephesians 4.27; 6.11; 6.16; 1 Timothy 3.6f; 5.15; 2 Timothy 2.26; James 4.7 and 1 Peter 5.8. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. . The Hebrew word comes from a root meaning “to spoil”, “to break to pieces” and to be so broken as to be made worthless and therefore what is essentially unpleasant, disagreeable and offensive – the loss can be considerable. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. . In the New Testament the Greek words *kakos* and *poneros* mean respectively the potency of evil in its essential character and its hurtful effects of influence – both in the physical and moral sense. Romans 12.9-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. . Thus in Luke 11.24 ‘the unclean spirit’ goes out of a man, but when it returns it is with ‘seven other spirits more evil than himself’. See Luke 8.27-29. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. . Timothy’s ministry was mostly involved in refuting false teaching at Ephesus the most important city in the Roman province of Asia – modern Turkey. The site was originally sacred to the worship of the Anatolian fertility goddess, Artemis and Diana. It was also the centre of the pagan Emperor cult. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. . The Greekis an ethical concept in the prophets. The seat of evil is the human heart, the centre of human existence. It occurs 95 times in Proverbs (‘a lack of virtue) is an ethical concept in the prophets, used 21 times for different Hebrew words. Good and evil are two possibilities for man. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. . Numbers 11.16-24. Ezra is supposed to have reorganized this group of men after the Exhile and the Persians gave authority to the Jews in all local matters which they did and which resembled the later Sanhedrin. Later, the Greeks permitted them to be known as the gerousia or ‘Senate’ which was made up of elders who represented the Jewish nation. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. . Persia ruled from 538-332BC and the founder of the Persian Empire, Cyrus the Great, has been looked upon favourably in the long span of Jewish history. He allowed the exiles to return from Babylon after the 70-year captivity following the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of Jerusalem and the First Temple. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. . For the next several centuries from 333BC, the land of Israel was conquered and ruled by various groups, including the Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Fatimids, Seljuk Turks, Crusaders, Egyptians, Mamelukes, Islamists and others. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. . For the next several centuries from 333BC, the land of Israel was conquered and ruled by various groups, including Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Fatimids, Seljuk, Turks, Crusaders, Egyptians, Mamelukes, Islamists and others. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. . Jesus defended the woman ‘caught in adultery’ by saying  “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” John 8.7 [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. . Importantly, no trial could take place on the day before the Sabbath or the day before a festival: more importantly, trials likely to lead to a sentence of capital punishment, could ***never*** be held at night – ***all*** these rules were broken. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. . F F Bruce, op.cit., pp59-60. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. . When we put together the material in the four gospel accounts, we find that within the 12 hours of the night before his crucifixion, Jesus underwent a trial of six parts which put Him through an experience that no accused person was permitted to undergo according long-standing laws of the Sanhedrin. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. . D R de Lacey, School of Arts and Humanities, University of Cambridge. New Bible Dictionary, Third Ed. 1996, IVP, (xvi) 1996. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. . F F Bruce op.cit., p205 [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. . T W Manson, op.cit., p301. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. . Bruce, ibid, p61 to which he adds, “Luke ascribes to him a leading part in the earliest attempt by the Sanhedrin to repress the apostles’ preaching in Jerusalem.” [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. . The High Priest was the unquestioned representative and spokesman of the nation not only to the provincial governor, whether of Judea or of Syria, but to the Emperor in Rome. FF Bruce. ibid, p59. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. . John Macquarrie, Principles of Christian Theology, SCM, London, 1966, p57. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. . It is also argued that Jesus died on the Friday during Passover on the Day of Preparation for the Sabbath (cf. Matthew 27:62, Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54, John 19:42). [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. . George A Barton, Journal of Biblical Literature, 1922, Vol. 41. No.3-4 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)