



LESSON 151 - JOHN 18:13-24

And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

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.

But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.

This is the first of six different trials Jesus was subjected to after He was arrested. All were illegal. The first trial was at night. It was illegal for the Jews to hold nighttime trials, for the Talmud stated that "criminal processes can neither commence nor terminate, but during the course of that day" and "if the person be condemned, the sentence cannot be pronounced till the next day. No judgment is to be executed on the eve of the Sabbath or the eve of any festival day." Christ was interrogated, judged, and condemned during the night and on the eve of the Passover. All justice was denied Him. In "His humiliation, His judgment was taken away." (Acts 8:33) Jesus was brought in front of Annas, who had been high priest between A.D. 6 and A.D.15, and was now father-in-law to the current high priest, Caiaphas. Why Annas was involved is not known. Perhaps he vetted the cases that came before Caiaphas, judging those he could, to save his son-in-law some time. The other five trials to which Jesus was subjected were in front of Caiaphas, the governing body of the Jews called the Sanhedrin, Pilate, Herod, and then Pilate again.

Notice in this passage there are no charges made against Jesus. There are no witnesses called against Him, although He stands there, with His hands bound, as if He were a criminal. Annas asked two things: about Jesus' disciples, and His doctrine. Jesus did not answer the first question, but answered the second with a question of His own: "Why ask Me? Ask those who heard Me," a very wise and reasonable suggestion. In other words, bring in some witnesses to My teaching. Let them testify: "behold, they know what I said." Jesus was saying that He was not a conspirator of any kind; His teaching had been done openly in the synagogue and the temple of Jerusalem.

One of the Jewish guards didn't like Jesus' response. He slapped Jesus illegally and for no good reason. Jesus had not been condemned and so, should have been under the protection of the Jewish law. No one had the right to hit Him. The officer thought he was protecting the honor of the highest ranking individual in the room. How little he knew! The Son of God was in front of him and he was totally clueless about it. He should have been slapping Annas and himself, those who needed waking up to the gravity of the situation.

Annas could see he wasn't going to win in this meeting. This Man Jesus was too smart for him, so he sent Him on to his son-in-law and current high priest, Caiaphas.

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