

The Guiltless Found Guilty
Jesus Faces Two Trials
The Greatest Opportunity - Part 32
Mark 14:53-15:20

Introduction

- What is good? - **God is the only good there is.** There is no good outside of Him. **He is the essence of what we call good.** It's not just His choices, it's His being. Who God is and what God does is good. **Anything outside of that, anything contrary to that, anything independent of that, is called evil,** because it's harmful. Only God-stuff is good-stuff. I know this sounds strange because we are used to determining God's actions based on an outside imaginary source and standard of GOOD, but that's not really a thing. If it was truly good, it would have come from the nature of God.
 - When we love someone rightly, it's good because **healthy, good, true and righteous love is from the nature of God.**
 - When we help someone, it's good because **God is unselfish and helpful.**
 - When we encourage people, it's good because **God's heart is encouraging.**
 - We CAN do good because **we are created in God's image.**
- What is sin and why is it so important? – Evil or sin is anything contrary to the nature of God. It's anything that goes against God.
 - Sin is not a thing, but a posture – it's tempting to think of sin as some cosmic goo that we get into our souls, and we need to get rid of it. But it's a posture of a heart. Rocks don't sin. Trees don't sin. Animals don't sin. Why? Because they don't have a spirit to be aligned with God. It's selfishness, pride, and resistance. It stems from our broken nature. It's choosing something other than God.
 - When we murder, we sin because **it's not our role to do so, it's selfish, and violates God's authority.**
 - When we lie, we sin because it's a **distortion of Truth and transparency,** which is the nature of God.
 - When we steal, we sin because it's **taking that which is designated by God as someone else's** and we violate against Him.
 - Posture & Mindset & Repentance – if we needed any clarity to a solution for sin being an improper posture toward God, or an improper mindset, **notice how the Bible tells us to fix sin: Repent** – which means **re-align with God's perspective.** In some cases we must go a step further for wholeness like: apologizing and make it right.
 - The Bible uses 2 common words to describe sin: **1.) Missing the mark** – like a bullseye – which speaks to maybe even doing our best, but we miss, we err, we mess up, we don't get it right. **2.) Trespass** – knowing a proper boundary and crossing it. It's choosing to do something wrong. Or it's neglecting to do something commanded that's right. One type is our broken nature and the other type is our willful disobedience.
 - It's worldwide in EVERYONE – The Bible is clear. Everyone has sinned. Everyone continues to sin.

- Ro 3:22–23 - *“For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,...*”
- We can’t stop it even if we tried – like a **broken rudder** under a ship, the ship is going to drift even when the wheel is held tight. **When we finally align our hearts with God, we are still broken and drift.**
 - Ro 7:17–20 – *“So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.”*
- The Danger of Sin – if God is life and everything about life is in Him, what happens when things happen outside of His nature and will? What’s the opposite of life? Death. Death means destruction, decay, loss, ruin. Things outside the nature of God harm. So, sin is bad because it’s not only defying God, but it’s harmful and dangerous.
 - **Romans 6:23 – “...the wages of sin is death.”**
 - The Price for Sin THROUGH us – **When we sin, we destroy things and people. We break them down, many times, little bits at a time.** When we lie to them, their world is torn and trust is wrecked. When we cheat them, they lose something deeply. When we are mean to them, their identity takes a hit and we are Satan-like, with their destruction. We like to think that our sin is no big deal but if we analyzed it deep enough, we would be so sad and likely spiral into shame (if the Holy Spirit didn’t help us).
 - The Price for Sin IN us – The Bible tells us that anyone that sins, they must answer to that, and **the penalty is spiritual death. Why is it so serious?** Because of **WHO we are violating. We are violating an infinite God. It’s not like violating another person.** Another person is full of sin themselves, and they are constantly hurting others, but God isn’t. He is good all the time and in every way. It’s like a violation against a perfectly pure being of all goodness. The violation is that much greater when that deity is infinite.
 - The Depth of Cleansing – The rule, due to the depth of violation, is: **IF SOMEONE SINS; SOMEONE DIES.** Since God didn’t want to destroy every human being after the Fall (Garden of Eden), immediately, **He made a system whereby something else could die for our sin and it would hold it off** (atone – cover it up). He allowed vicarious death to fix it. Notice that in order to cover up Adam and Eve after their sin (they saw they were exposed and naked and vulnerable), God gave them animal skins to wear. Where did He get those? Killed those animals. Notice the sacrificial system of the Jewish people. Notice the Passover process. Notice that Jesus had to DIE in order to pay for the sins of the world. He could pay an infinite price because He was infinite (deity), yet could die because He became fully man (humanity). It’s brilliant.
- The problem’s really bad (separation from God) – **it’s not just that our sins hurt people and hurt us, it’s that they separate us from God. Our sin makes us enemies**

of God, because, remember it's our rebellious nature that makes us rebels against heaven. Our selfishness makes the cosmic statement that we don't respect God and we, like Lucifer, think that we can do better and each selfish thought and action is cosmic treason against the rightful King.

- Doomed – when you add up all the pieces, you realize that mankind is doomed. We are all worthy of spiritual and eternal death. We have sufficiently violated God and are enemies of His Kingdom. There's nothing we can do about it now and the result is that mankind are disconnected from God, evil, and enemies.
 - Eph 2:1–3 - *“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.”*
- SOMEONE has to die for our sins – someone has to die for our sins and it can't be an animal this time. The animal sacrifice only kicked the can down the road and swept it under the rug. Only human blood and death will be sufficient to pay for our sins. Life for a life.
 - And that's where the good news of the Gospel changes the whole scenario...

Jesus was CONDEMNED so that we WOULDN'T be.

- Last Week = We talked about Devotion and Loyalty, asking, whom will you serve? Self or God. We covered the last supper, the Garden of Gethsemane & the betrayal with a kiss leading to the arrest of Christ.
- This Week = Jesus, being arrested, go through a series of unfair and inappropriate trials that result in Him being condemned to death on a cross.
- The Order of Jesus' Trials – It's important to note that when combining the accounts of all 4 gospels, it's very difficult to track on the chronology of events and what event fits where (e.g. did Peter deny Christ during the trial before Annas or Caiaphas, or both?). It seems best to me, and I could be wrong, that **the order is roughly this:**
 1. Late Night Trial (Annas) - Jesus is tried briefly before the prior high priest (Caiaphas' father-in-law) Annas. The order is clearly stated by John's gospel and no one else seems to explain that. It's possible that Jesus is held in some church-jail overnight until they could assemble the official Council (Sanhedrin) and the current high priest, Caiaphas. It's assumed that only Annas was able to get up in the middle of the night and deal with this nonsense that he was part of instigating (he was likely part of the team that hired the religious guards that went with Judas to arrest Jesus – not saying Caiaphas didn't lend his name and money to it too). Again, let me clarify, there is also the possibility that Jesus only appeared quickly before Annas and was immediately brought to Caiaphas that same night, so all the details of the beatings, mockings, Peter's denial are

actually during the Caiaphas trial and NOT Annas trial. Most commentaries take that perspective, I'm the odd one out.

2. **Peter's Denial** - Peter denies Christ during this nighttime process in the courtyard. It would demonstrate why he could get so close as well as that Jesus could see him eye-to-eye since it was a more intimate environment.
 3. **Next Morning Trial (Caiaphas)** – Once they had time to gather all the council together (Sanhedrin) and have a semi-official religious trial before Caiaphas. This would be the official religious trial in the eyes of the Jews. The one prior was more to honor Annas and let him have a shot at Jesus first. This one had all the big dogs at it. They were going to make an official ruling on this alleged Messiah. This was SUPER early since they had to get to Pilate at daybreak.
 4. **1st Trial before Pilate** – the Caiaphas/Sanhedrin council decided that Jesus was to be condemned to death, which can only be carried out officially by the Roman government, so they handed Jesus over to Pilate the local governor.
 5. **Trial before Herod Antipas** – Herod Antipas the Tetrarch, the son of Herod the Great (when Jesus was a baby) ran the northern Israel, Galilee area (guy who stole away his niece from his Philip, her other uncle). He loved interesting things and thought of Jesus as a fascinating figure. Pilate didn't want to deal with all this drama and sent Jesus over to Herod hoping that Herod would know more about the religious issues and handle it for him. He didn't. He had his fun with Jesus and sent Christ back to Pilate.
 6. **2nd Trial before Pilate** – Jesus was sent back to Pilate, and it was stuck to Pilate to handle it. He tried to release Jesus multiple times but to no avail. He was a politician after all and the pressure of the crowd was too much for him and he caved and condemned Jesus to crucifixion death. He had Jesus beaten and removed to die.
- **Timing¹** – the initial events that we are going to read occur **right after the arrest** in the Garden of Gethsemane, which are from **midnight to 3am**. They may have left the last supper around 11pm or midnight and prayed til 1am. Then the arrest would have gathered the bad guys together around 1-2am. The trial would have lasted the initial 2-3am when the rooster crows the 2nd time.

Lesson

- **Holy Hogwash**
 - Jesus is given a mismanaged religious trial (Annas)
 - *Mark 14:53-61a – “And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. ⁵⁴ And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he*

¹ “Peter’s emphatic denial was punctuated by the crowing of the cock a second time. It was the peculiar habit of the cock crowing, with comparative regularity, at three times during the period between midnight and 3:00 A.M. that accounts for the designation of the third watch of the night as “cock-crow” (cf. Ch. 13:35b). An early rabbinic tradition speaks of people setting out upon a night journey, departing at the first cock-crow, or the second, or the third (TB Yoma 21a, Baraita). Observation over a period of twelve years in Jerusalem has confirmed that the cock crows at three distinct times, first about a half hour after midnight, a second time about an hour later, and a third time an hour after the second. Each crowing lasts from 3–5 minutes, after which all is quiet again. Thus between the first crowing, noted in verse 69, and the second only an hour had passed, but Peter had been provoked to deny solemnly and emphatically his relationship to Jesus three times. He remembered Jesus’ prophecy of his faithlessness and the circumstances in which it had been uttered (Ch. 14:27–31), and was overwhelmed with grief.” NICNT

was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. ⁵⁵ Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. ⁵⁶ For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. ⁵⁷ And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, ⁵⁸ "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" ⁵⁹ Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. ⁶⁰ And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" ⁶¹ But he remained silent and made no answer."

- **ESV Combo Account**

- **Scriptural Color Key:** Luke is black; Matthew is orange; Mark is green; John is red; My additions are non-bold, black and non-italicized
 - *the assembly of all the chief priests and the scribes and the elders had gathered together. Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward, their testimony did not agree. At last two stood up, came forward and bore false witness against him, saying, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy this temple of God that is made with hands, and to rebuild it in three days. I will build another, not made with hands.'" Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" But Jesus remained silent and made no answer.*
 - And they led Jesus to the high priest² – This is the big question. **Is this Caiaphas**, the current reigning high priest, like the synoptic gospels suggest? **Or is it his father-in-law, the prior high priest, Annas?** It's not clear. It is important to note that the high priest is the seniormost official of religious power in the Jewish world. He's the big dog. He is supposed to be changed out every 4 years or so (he's kind of elected), but sometimes some high priests were around for a long time. For example, **Caiaphas was high priest for 19 years!**
 - And all the chief priests and the elders³ and the scribes⁴ came together⁵ – as mentioned earlier, it's unclear when the whole Sanhedrin was called together. It's very strange if they were all able to gather in the middle of

² The high priest at this time was Joseph, surnamed Caiaphas (Josephus, Antiquities XVIII. ii. 2; iv. 3). His ability as a diplomat and an administrator is suggested by his tenure of office over a period of nineteen years (A.D. 18–37) in an era when the average term of office was only four years.¹²⁰ He is associated in the record with the "chief priests," who included former holders of the high priestly office (presumably Annas, Ishmael ben Phiabi, Eleazar and Simon ben Kamithos), the commander of the Temple Guard, the steward of the Temple, and the three Temple treasurers." NICNT

³ "The "elders" represented the most influential lay families in Jerusalem, and seem to have been primarily wealthy landowners. The chief priests and the elders constituted the old ruling class in Jerusalem, with Sadducean leanings, who still held the balance of power in the Sanhedrin." NICNT

⁴ "The third group, the representatives of the scribes, consisted primarily of lawyers drawn from the middle classes who tended to be Pharisaic in their convictions." NICNT

⁵ "The three categories of persons mentioned in verse 53 are precisely those which, according to Josephus, constituted the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem, the supreme Jewish court of law. The council was composed of seventy members and the ruling high priest who presided over its deliberations (M. Sanhedrin I. 6; cf. Josephus, Antiquities IV. v. 4.; War II. xx. 5; Tos. Sukka IV. 6). While Mark says that "all" of the Sanhedrin has assembled, his statement need not be taken quite literally (cf. Ch. 1:5); some few individuals may have been absent. His intention is to indicate clearly that the court met in plenary session. According to the Mishnah the presence of 23 members constituted a quorum... If the Mishnah accurately preserves the arrangement of the court in the first century, the members sat in a semi-circle on elevated seats so that they all could see each other (M. Sanhedrin IV. 3a). To their right and left stood two court clerks who recorded the minutes of the transactions, while a seat for the accused and for the witnesses was placed in the center (M. Sanhedrin IV. 3b, 4)." NICNT

the night. Regardless, it's helpful to know that the groups mentioned here (chief priests, elders, & scribes) were the groups that made up the Sanhedrin, which was the high council, or like the Supreme Court of the Jews. Although there was supposed to always be 70 members of the council (23 would make an official quorum). For this initial group it's not likely that they had an official quorum which is why they had to bring Jesus before Caiaphas in the morning.

- And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. – John's Gospel says that one of the disciples knew people at the high priest's compound and got him and Peter in. Peter was likely feeling guilty that he had bailed on Jesus in the Garden and was wanting to try to keep an eye on Jesus from this moment forward. Clearly it's cold outside since they need a fire to keep warm. Remember, this is the middle of the night to the early morning.
- Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death,⁶ but they found none. – Since not all of the Sanhedrin or religious leaders were anti-Jesus (even though most were), there was a necessity of trying to make this trial legit so that it wouldn't blow back on the bad guys. They struggled to do so because Jesus didn't do anything wrong. It's very hard to convict a TRULY innocent person without bending the rules.
- For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. – There were people who were willing to step forward and try to accuse Jesus but a lot of it seemed to be either their own biased opinion, or a lie that they couldn't seem to line up with others.
 - The importance of witnesses in Jewish court⁷ - As bogus as this court proceeding is, and it is not right, we have to remember that not every member of the council agreed that Jesus was a bad guy. There were some on that board that were either ambivalent or pro (think about how Nicodemus was a Pharisee but secretly on Jesus' side). Therefore, they weren't allowed to completely make up stuff. They had to have a relatively accurate trial, and witnesses were the main thing to any trial. There really wasn't a prosecutor and defender. The prosecution were the witnesses to the crime, and the defender was the person accused to defend themselves. The Sanhedrin had some very solid demands

⁶ Nearly everything about Jesus' trial violates the rules for capital cases in the Mishnah (Pillar). Many have posited theories as to why, and one is that the Sanhedrin short-circuited procedures in order to expedite Jesus' execution.

⁷ "The proceedings against Jesus began with the taking of evidence, which is essential to any proper hearing. In capital cases condemnation required the unanimous evidence of at least two witnesses (M. Sanhedrin IV. 1), a provision firmly rooted in pentateuchal law (Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Num. 35:30; Josephus, Antiquities IV. viii. 15). Since in Jewish judicial procedure the witnesses functioned as the prosecution, they gave their evidence individually and verbally in the presence of the judges and the accused. If their respective depositions differed one from the other even in trivial details, they were inadmissible as evidence. The ready availability of witnesses for the prosecution suggests that they had been alerted that the arrest of Jesus could be expected momentarily and that they were to appear on call. A number were called and heard, but all that is recorded is that they failed to agree with each other and so invalidated their testimony. This detail indicates that the Sanhedrin adhered strictly to the legal standards for the hearing of witnesses. The one reproach to which the court was open, according to Mark's record, was that they assembled together, not with the intention of reaching a just verdict, but with a firm resolve to convict Jesus of a capital crime (Ch. 14:1, 55). This violation of the purpose and spirit of the law outweighed the regard, or disregard, of external legal forms." NICNT

about what is admissible, and any crime punishable by death (capital crime) HAD TO HAVE 2 witnesses that agreed to the facts they observed. Here we see that they couldn't even get two false ones to agree (which means they aren't great at stocking a jury).

- And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" Yet even about this their testimony did not agree⁸ – Why would they care what Jesus said about the temple? Can't people just say stuff? Not in the ancient world and certainly not about the most important religious institution/building to the Jewish people in Jerusalem or in the nation. The Temple was considered the location of God and that meant that any attack on the temple would be an attack on God Himself. Rome also would enforce rules like this and would consider any destruction of a holy place (temple, sanctuary, altar, etc.) as a capital crime. So, they tried to go at Jesus this way. One person reflected on Jesus saying that He would rebuild the temple in 3 days. His followers wrote this down as they thought that it was intense, but later realized that Jesus was talking about His own body (body = temple of God), spiritually and physically. But notice that the attack on Jesus was not just that Jesus prophesied that the temple would be destroyed (Mark 13:2), which is sketchy, but the attack as that Jesus said that HE WOULD destroy the temple and build another one. Jesus DID NOT say that. He said, 'if this, or when this, temple is destroyed, I will raise it up'. That's not a threat but a promise of what happens next. Besides, He was talking about His own body not the actual temple at that moment. Thankfully, the anti-Jesus people couldn't even get this story straight and they contradicted each other making the testimony be thrown out.
- And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" – Remember the way the religious courts work is for people to accuse and the accused to defend themselves verbally. They don't have anyone else working for them to talk for them.
- But he remained silent and made no answer. - But Jesus doesn't say anything. Why? Likely for one of two reasons: 1.) They would use anything

⁸ "In point of fact, Jesus had once said, within sight of the Jerusalem Temple, "if this temple be destroyed, in three days I will raise it up" (Jn. 2:19). After Jesus' resurrection these cryptic words were understood by the disciples to refer to the temple of his body (Jn. 2:21f.), but quite naturally those who were present heard a dire threat against the sanctuary. Moreover, if the text of verse 58 and of Jn. 2:19 preserves a verbatim report of what was said, Jesus' accusers gave to his words a form which emphasized the threat still more: "I will destroy this temple." The accusation was utterly serious, for throughout the Graeco-Roman world the destruction or desecration of places of worship was regarded as a capital offense. When the prophet Jeremiah had simply announced the catastrophe that would overtake the Temple in Jerusalem he was seized and brought before the royal court as a criminal who deserved to die (Jer. 26:1–19; Josephus, Antiquities X. vi. 2). The mere threat of violence against the Temple might well seem to the Sanhedrin a crime meriting the death penalty (cf. Tos. Sanhedrin XIII. 5; TB Rosh-Ha-Shanah 17a; TJ Berachoth IX. 13b). If the verdict announced in verse 64 had been secured on the basis of this evidence, it would have represented gross injustice. Jesus certainly had no intention of destroying the sanctuary. He expected its destruction as the judgment of God upon an appalling sacrilege (Ch. 13:1 f., 14). But the testimony concerning the Temple definitely did not provide the basis for the final verdict. Mark states emphatically that in this instance also the witnesses differed in their evidence and were disqualified." NICNT

He says against Him because it's a biased trial; 2.) He knew He had to go to the cross anyway, what's the point?

- Church Wounds
 - Jesus is condemned by the religious council
 - Mark 14:61b-65 - *"Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"⁶² And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."⁶³ And the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further witnesses do we need?⁶⁴ You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death.⁶⁵ And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" And the guards received him with blows."*
 - ESV Combo Account
 - Scriptural Color Key: Luke is black; Matthew is orange; Mark is green; John is red; My additions are non-bold, black and non-italicized
 - *And they said, "If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to them, "You say that I am. If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I ask you, you will not answer." Again the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of the Blessed God. And Jesus said, "I am, but I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power of God and coming with/on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his robes (garments) and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your judgment (decision)?" They answered, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips." And they all condemned him as deserving death. Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him and (struck) him with blows. And some began to spit on him and to cover his face, blindfold(ing) him and kept asking him, "Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?" Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him. And they said many other things against him, blaspheming him.*
 - Again, the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"⁹ – The high priest is realizing that this isn't going the way they all wanted it to go. They got this organized to condemn Jesus one way or another and **it's kind of falling apart** right in front of his eyes. Therefore, **he is going to take matters into his own hands**. He goes after Jesus directly and **attacks the claims to being the Messiah**. The term 'Christ' means Messiah (Anointed One). The term 'Son of the Blessed' is Son of God and means the Messiah. He is not addressing Jesus' claim to deity, since he doesn't believe that nor cares at this point. He wants to get the fact on the table that Jesus is claiming to be the actual Messiah. **Claiming**

⁹ "Jesus was required by law to answer the accusations brought against him, and his failure to do so frustrated the council. By his steadfast silence he deprived the court of exploiting, for its purposes, the evidence that had been given against him. This brought the proceedings to a deadlock, and prompted the high priest to seek a decision by direct means. Although disqualified as admissible evidence, the utterance about destroying the Temple and rebuilding another in its place was messianic in tone, because Judaism anticipated a renewal of the glory of the Temple when the Messiah should come. Perhaps for that reason Caiaphas asked Jesus pointedly if he claimed to be the Messiah. In the formulation "the Messiah, the son of the Blessed One,"¹³² the second clause stands in apposition to the first and has essentially the same meaning. In Jewish sources contemporary with the NT, "son of God" is understood solely in a messianic sense. Jewish hopes were situated in a messianic figure who was a man.¹³⁴ The question of the high priest cannot have referred to Jesus' deity, but was limited to a single issue: do you claim to be the Messiah?" NICNT

to be the Messiah isn't technically a capital crime. It's not good and you can get in trouble for it, but let's say that someone was mentally ill and thought they were the Messiah but weren't. They don't have to die. The deeper issue that is going to be pushed here is whether Jesus interprets Himself as not just the Anointed one of God, the son of God, but that He truly believed Himself to be deity (son of God = God). That's the charge of blasphemy. It all comes down to this for the Jews.¹⁰

- Synoptic additions – in the other gospels we find out that this conversation is a bit more than recorded here. Luke recounts that Jesus said, 'If I tell you that I am, you won't believe me, and if I ask you questions about it, you won't dialogue with me.' Then the high priest got so mad, he commanded an answer by God, to which Jesus replied...
- And Jesus said, "I am,"¹¹ - this isn't one of the I AM statements that He has made prior, He is simply answering the question, but it's hard to reflect that He truly is the I AM. This is one of those few times in Scripture when Jesus Himself claims to be God.
- and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."¹² – This is the kicker. This is the one statement that sealed Jesus' fate with the Jewish leaders. In case anyone took His 'I am' statement as vague, Jesus backed it up with a hardcore statement that no one could misunderstand. He said the following points:
 1. You will be proved wrong – one day you will realize how wrong you are about me and you will not only be embarrassed but will be judged for it.

¹⁰ "This means that if Mark has described the course of the investigation correctly in its essentials, the council was prepared to regard the open and unequivocal claim of Jesus to be the Messiah a capital crime. Judaism expected the Messiah to provide proof of his identity. A Messiah imprisoned, abandoned by his followers, and delivered helpless into the hands of his foes represented an impossible conception. Anyone who, in such circumstances, proclaimed himself to be the Messiah could not fail to be a blasphemer who dared to make a mockery of the promises given by God to his people.¹³⁶ Moreover, there is some rabbinic evidence that God alone had the right to announce and enthrone the Messiah, so that one who claimed the messianic dignity before God had crowned him could be regarded as having infringed the majesty of God. For these reasons, Caiaphas' question is decisive, and demands a forthright "Yes" or "No." NICNT

¹¹ "It is evident from Mark's Gospel that Jesus had carefully avoided calling himself the Messiah (see on Ch. 8:29). This reserve was inherent in the tension between veiledness and open manifestation which is characteristic of the public ministry. It was not his desire to arouse the nationalistic and political hopes which clustered around the figure of the Messiah in popular thinking. Nevertheless, he knew himself to be God's anointed servant, and in spite of the paradoxical circumstances in which he found himself he refused to ignore the question or deny his identity. To the question whether he claimed to be the promised Messiah he replied clearly, "I am." That his reply was an affirmative reply, and not a pronouncing of the theophanic formula "I am he" is evident from the structure of verses 61–62. The question "Are you ...?" demands and receives the response "I am," which is then strengthened by the prophecy which follows." NICNT

¹² "The utterance of verse 62b brings together Ps. 110:1 and Dan. 7:13 (cf. Isa. 52:8), in a formulation describing the enthronement and parousia of the Son of Man, while the context leaves no doubt that Son of Man is a self-designation. "Power" was a recognized circumlocution for God,¹³⁹ while "to sit at the right hand of" someone was a familiar idiom meaning to occupy the place of highest honor (see above on Ch. 10:37). Jesus thus spoke without reserve of his exaltation and coming as the eschatological Judge (see on Chs. 8:38; 13:26). This prophecy counters the objection which the affirmation that he is the Messiah immediately provoked, that his claim lacks all proof. The day will come, he affirms, when those who now judge him will see him with unmistakable clarity enthroned at God's side, invested with power and majesty, and assigned the task of the eschatological Judge. He will then be unveiled in a convincing manner as the Anointed of God. The high priest and the Sanhedrin, as representatives of the people, had the responsibility to recognize the Messiah. Accordingly, they who have rejected him must see their decision overturned when the truth concerning Jesus' person and work is clearly revealed at the parousia, and he is disclosed in the position of supreme authority. There is evidence that contemporary Judaism also conceived of the Messiah as sitting at God's right hand and coming in the clouds of heaven.¹⁴¹ The Sanhedrin would understand Jesus' words as an unqualified claim to messianic dignity. The prophecy and the clear response "I am" are mutually supportive." NICNT

2. You will see me AS the Son of Man – I am the Messiah and that will be proven to you when I show up again. You can't kill me. I will be back.
 3. As the Messiah, I am at the right hand of the Father – the term 'Power' is a reference to the Father's (God's) role as the power bringing and the Jews knew exactly who Jesus was referencing. The right hand of God is the power position. In other words, Jesus is claiming to sit at the highest place of honor with God, meaning He is supreme not just over everyone, but above this council.
 4. I will come and judge you – one of the prophecies about the Messiah is that He would come and judge the world. Jesus is saying, you are judging me right now, but I will come back and condemn you for it, as the true Judge of God.
 5. I will come from heaven like God – Jesus said, I'm coming back from Heaven, which means it's His rightful place (as God). And will come like the prophecies about the Messiah suggest, with the clouds, which are usually God's vehicle transportation. All of this means that He's claiming to be the heavenly power and person of God.
- And the high priest tore his garments¹³ and said, "What further witnesses do we need? You have heard his blasphemy¹⁴ – Blasphemy, according to Leviticus is a capital offense that is to be carried out by stoning to death. Since Jesus said it in the presence of the group, they had sufficient witnesses to make a court case of it. They had all they needed.
 - What is your decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death¹⁵ – The group (they all = majority) decided to condemn Jesus to death for blasphemy.

¹³ "By tearing his garments, Caiaphas expressed symbolically the fact that he regarded Jesus' declaration as blasphemous. It is not necessary to infer that he tore the sacred and magnificent robes worn by the high priest when officiating at one of the appointed feasts. There is nothing either in the circumstances of the night session or in the Marcan text which suggests that he was wearing his official robes. The significant element was the gesture of sorrow and indignation (cf. II Kings 18:37; 19:1, 4; Judith 14:19; M. Sanhedrin VII. 5, 6), which was as eloquent of his convictions as his call for a verdict when he specified the offense of blasphemy. The law of Moses prescribed death by stoning for blasphemy (Lev. 24:16). In the absence of any stated objection, a unanimous verdict was attained and Jesus was sentenced to death." NICNT

¹⁴ "The pentateuchal law concerning blasphemy (Lev. 24:15–16) was very elastic in the first century. It covered the sins of "defaming" God and "piercing" his name. The Hebrew root of the essential verb in Lev. 24:15 means to undervalue someone and to say so. Applied to God it meant to dishonor him by diminishing his majesty or depriving him of rights to which he is entitled (cf. Ch. 2:7). Only in the post-Christian period, through the deliberations at Jamnia and elsewhere, did "blasphemy" acquire the technical significance defined in the Mishnah: "The blasphemer is only guilty if he pronounces the name of God distinctly" (M. Sanhedrin VII. 5a)." NICNT

¹⁵ "Mark, however, unequivocally reports a death sentence, using accepted legal terminology when he says that "all condemned him as liable to death." As curious as this wording may sound, it means that a formal judgment took place and that a death sentence was handed down. That Mark has a real death sentence in mind is confirmed by Ch. 10:33 where Jesus prophesies that the chief priests and scribes will "condemn" him to death, using the same terminology found in verse 64. In the absence of a court of appeal in Jewish criminal law, the sentence was valid. A capital sentence, however, could not be executed by the Jewish court under Roman provincial rule. Only the procurator possessed the power of life and death in terms of his imperial authority. The session of the court thus ended with the formal decision to hand Jesus over to the Roman procurator with a carefully formulated charge which would secure the execution demanded by the court (see Ch. 15:1)." NICNT

- And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him,¹⁶ saying to him, "Prophecy!" – if this is a separate incident than the religious guards that take him away and do it – I don't think it is (it's likely a combination of both groups), what's interesting here for me is the motivation behind the spitting and insults. There seems to be **three likely reasons why people would do this in that group (if it has the religious leaders in it, not just guards):** 1.) They truly were disgusted and offended that a man would blaspheme the true God and they were so **angry on God's behalf** that they would tear a man down as a punishment. My problem with that view is that usually if you were that honoring to God, this seems rather petty and too far, but maybe not. 2.) They were **personally angry at Jesus** for all that He had done and this was their **chance to vent** on Him. This is most likely in my view. 3.) They wanted to **be seen** as one of the group visibly that condemned Jesus and **demonstrate that they were appalled at His actions**. In other words, it was done **for show to the group** about what they felt they needed to do as religious leaders. This might be possible as well. The prophecy demand was making fun of His claim to be the Messiah who would know how to speak for God. They were insulting Jesus. The spitting and striking was to punish.
- And the guards received him with blows. – The NIV says that the guards took Him and beat Him more (but I think it's the same beating). Mark doesn't talk much about this. The other gospel writers do. They explain that this was one of the group insulting beatings Jesus endured. He endures another one by Roman guards.
- Three Strikes
 - Peter denies Christ 3x's
 - Mark 14:66-72 - *"And as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came, ⁶⁷ and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, 'You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus.' ⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, 'I neither know nor understand what you mean.' And he went out into the gateway and the rooster crowed. ⁶⁹ And the servant girl saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, 'This man is one of them.' ⁷⁰ But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, 'Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.' ⁷¹ But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, 'I do not know this man of whom you speak.' ⁷² And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.' And he broke down and wept."*

¹⁶ "Once Jesus was condemned, it was necessary for the council to show that it could not condone his (apparently) abhorrent behavior. This was accomplished through the spitting and the administering of blows, which were conventional gestures of rejection and repudiation (cf. Job 30:10; Num. 12:14; Deut. 25:9; Isa. 50:6; M. Berachoth IX. 5b; TJ soṭah II. 16d [37]). The detail that Jesus was blindfolded and cuffed, with the demand to "prophecy," i.e. to say who it was that struck him, accurately preserves an old interpretation of Isa. 11:2–4, according to which the Messiah could judge by smell without the need of sight." NICNT

- How do we know what happened here?¹⁷ – there are two possible reasons and perhaps it's both: 1.) There was another disciple who got Peter into the courtyard in the first place (per John, the other disciples, unnamed, 'was known to the high priest.'). perhaps he watched this happen. 2.) Peter told the story to John Mark who was writing this, and wanted everyone to know that he failed his lord. That's most likely.
- **Scriptural Color Key:** Luke is black; Matthew is orange; Mark is green; John is red; My additions are non-bold, black and non-italicized
- Mt 26:58, 69-75; Mk 14:66-72; Luke 22:55-62; John 18:16b-18, 24-27 (Luke as the Base)
- ESV Combo Account –
 - 1st Denial
 - *And Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl of the high priest who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in below in the courtyard. And going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. And when the servants and officers had kindled a charcoal fire outside in the middle of the courtyard, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself. And sat down together, Peter sat down among them. Then the servant girl at the door, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said to Peter, "You also are not one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." "This man also was with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know nor understand what you mean. I do not know him."*
 - 2nd Denial
 - *And a little later the rooster crowed (and) Annas then sent (Jesus) bound to Caiaphas the high priest. when Simon Peter went out into the gateway entrance, And another servant girl saw him standing and warming himself and again said to the bystanders, "You also are one of them. This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." So they said to him, "You also are one of his disciples" But Peter again denied it with an oath and said, "Man, I am not. I do not know the man."*
 - 3rd Denial
 - *And After a little while, after an interval of about an hour one of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, came up and asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" The bystanders again insisted, saying to Peter, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean. You are one of them, for your accent betrays you." But Peter again denied it. Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "Man, I do not know this man you are talking about."*
- Rooster Crows
 - *And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed a second time. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord Jesus, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down, went out and wept bitterly."*
- And as Peter was below in the courtyard, - Jesus seems to either be above in an open deck in trial and being beaten, or in an upper room. Peter was down below in the courtyard.
 - Multiple locations – if you read the combined account it seems like the first denial was in the area of Annas, where Jesus started His trial,

¹⁷ "The most plausible source for this tradition is Peter himself, who must have authorized, if he did not actually construct, the version of the events." NICNT

and then the second and third were in the courtyard of Caiaphas, the high priest. In other words, **the denials seem to stretch over a period of hours, instead of in a couple of minutes.**

- one of the servant girls of the high priest came, and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus."¹⁸ – This door girl was trying to out Peter as being part of Jesus' team. How she knew that, we don't know, but she is clearly using disparaging language (Nazarene reference seems to be racially prejudiced) and **trying to get him busted.**
- But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you mean." – Peter immediately and instinctively denies this. He is trying to stay around and didn't want any trouble. He had already run away but then came back to see what was going to happen. **He is always an up and down guy, very emotional. We do have to give him credit that he and one other disciple had the guts to go into the courtyard which was dangerous, while the other guys didn't.** This is Peter's first denial of Christ.
- And he went out into the gateway and the rooster crowed. – since it's technically heading into early morning (they had been here all night), **it's normal for a rooster to start crowing** (even if it's a bit early). Peter doesn't track on it at all the first time. This seems to be why Jesus needed the Rooster to crow twice so it would trigger his memory.
- And the servant girl saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." – it seems that the same girl kept pushing it in the group (although **the combined account suggests it's another girl in another courtyard**) and ultimately chased Peter off the fire to another part of the courtyard.
- But again he denied it. – Peter wasn't having it and denied it again. 2nd denial.
- And after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean." – Now we have the people in the courtyard provoked by that one girl who was saying that Peter was part of the illegal Jesus group, and they start paying closer attention. **The North of Israel, Galilee region, had a unique dialect and accent that was almost undeniable.** They picked up on Peter's accent right away (he should have stayed quiet, but perhaps his denial got them thinking). They

¹⁸ "According to Jn. 18:16, the servant girl who first recognized Peter was the portress. While it seems improbable that she had accompanied the auxiliary police to Gethsemane, from some prior occasion she was certain that she had seen Peter with Jesus. Her scornful observation, "You also were with this Nazarene, this Jesus," was calculated to embarrass and unsettle the one addressed. The reference to Jesus appears to be contemptuous, and it is possible that the expression "with this Nazarene" is intended to identify Peter as a disciple (see on Ch. 3:14). He is one who had been "with Jesus," and who was known in terms of this relationship. But Peter denied the charge, using the form common in rabbinical law for a formal, legal denial (e.g. M. Shebuoth VIII. 3: " 'Where is my ox?' He said to him, 'I do not know what you are saying' "). Peter's refusal to acknowledge his relationship to Jesus constitutes the fact of denial, behind which stands the solemn pronouncement of Ch. 14:30. Denial implies a previous relationship of obedience and fidelity. It can occur only when there has just been acknowledgment and commitment (cf. Chs. 8:29; 14:29, 31). Peter's unfaithfulness to the person of Jesus expressed anxiety for his own safety and the determination to seek approval from the bystanders rather than from the Lord. In an attempt to escape further notice he moved out to the forecourt. The crowing of the cock was so regular and common an occurrence it seemed to possess no significance for him." NICNT

said, you are clearly from Jesus' neck of the woods, and now down here during His trial, dude you are clearly one of His guys.

- But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know this man of whom you speak."¹⁹ – this means that Peter was saying, 'if I am lying, may God curse me, but if you are accusing me falsely may the curse fall on you.' But it's the self-condemnation that was supposed to get people to back off since no right thinking Jew would curse themselves by God.
- And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. – this was the jarring realization moment for Peter because the rooster hit the alarm again (like roosters do).
- And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept – those haunting words flooded back and he realized what he had done. He didn't just fall asleep in the garden and then bail during the arrest, but now he denied his lord 3x's. It was all too much and he felt like the failure that he was.
 - Affirmation and Denial – isn't it fascinating that during Jesus' earthly ministry that He was quiet about His identity, but now He proclaims it boldly to the religious leaders, while at the same time Peter who had publicly affirmed Jesus' status and identity, now was denying who He was.
- The Official Religious Word
 - Jesus is tried again in a religious court (Caiaphas)
 - Mark 15:1 – *"And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate."²⁰*
 - And as soon as it was morning, - the Roman legal proceedings started normally at daylight. If you weren't in line by that time you would lose your spot. They would work early and retire early. The Romans had no

¹⁹ The confident challenge, "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean," provoked Peter to maintain vehemently and formally that he had no knowledge of the Nazarene. The statement that he began to invoke a curse is intentionally left without an object in the Greek text to denote both that he cursed himself if he is lying and those present if they insist on asserting that he is a disciple. Peter's avoidance of the name of Jesus ("this man of whom you speak") is deliberate and exposes the Lord to the contempt envisioned in Ch. 8:38 ("ashamed of me and of my words")." NICNT

²⁰ "Pilate belonged to a special group of imperial administrators, consisting of men beneath the rank of senator, the so-called equestrian class or Roman "knights." These magistrates, who owned a moderate minimum of property, were used to govern relatively small areas that required careful supervision. Their official title in the period prior to Claudius was not procurator but prefect (praefectus). So far as criminal and political jurisdiction was concerned, they possessed powers similar to those held by senatorial proconsuls and imperial legates.¹² Pilate came to Judea in the year A.D. 26 as the fifth of the provincial prefects and remained in office ten years. He showed himself a harsh administrator who despised the Jewish people and their particular sensitivities.

The detail that Jesus was delivered to Pilate's forum early in the morning is a significant index of the historical accuracy of the tradition. It was necessary for the Sanhedrin to bring its business to Pilate as soon after dawn as possible because the working day of a Roman official began at the earliest hour of daylight. Legal trials in the Roman forum were customarily held shortly after sunrise, as Seneca noted in a wry comment: "All these thousands hurrying to the forum at the break of day—how base their cases, and how much baser are their advocates" (On Anger II. vii. 3). If the chief priests had delayed until morning to examine Jesus and then sought to bring him before the governor, they would have arrived too late and interrupted Pilate in the carefully organized leisure of a Roman gentleman. That is a major reason why the Jewish court conducted its own proceedings throughout the night." NICNT

respect for the Jewish issues that came to them all the time and they just wanted them to go away quickly. But, it was part of ruling.

- the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. – this is why I think there were two trials (first one very brief) with Annas and Caiaphas and Caiaphas was the second and likely referred to in this morning time. It just seems more likely that the group of leaders could get there by the early morning (5am) instead of 2am.
- And they bound Jesus and led him away²¹ and delivered him over to Pilate²² - why did this send Jesus to Pilate? **Why not just stone Him to death right there and then? They were occupied by Rome and Rome was very serious about who could kill someone in their territory.** They usually would want to be a part of the process, so things are done properly and don't get out of hand. Therefore, any judgment that the Jews would give would need to be enforced, or at least reviewed by Roman authority. Therefore, they had to send Jesus to Pilate the local authority.
- **Changed Charge (Blasphemy to Treason)** – Rome doesn't care about religious blasphemy issues. Therefore, to get Rome's attention and make them do what the Jewish leaders wanted, they official charge was likely changed to 'treason' against the State of Rome. How did they do that? They highlighted two things: 1.) the Jewish **Messiah was supposed to be a military and political leader** who would free them from their oppressors, which makes that person a threat to Rome; 2.) Jesus' claim (usually said by others) that He was 'King of the Jews'. **King is a trigger word** for the Roman Empire. That meant insurrection and a challenge to the Emperor.
- **ESV Combo Account**
 - *And as soon as morning came, they led him away to their council, (where) all the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council to put him to death. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor."*

²¹ "The official residence of the Judean procurators was Caesarea Maritima. When the Roman officials came to Jerusalem on special occasions, particularly at the great Jewish festivals, they took up quarters in the palace of Herod, which was situated in the northwest of the city.⁹ Josephus states explicitly that the procurator, Gessius Florus, lived there and held his court on the public square in front of the buildings (War II. xiv. 8, xv. 5). That this was true of Pilate as well may be deduced from the information that he had gilded votive tablets bearing Tiberius' name erected in the royal palace (Philo, Legation to Gaius 38). Mark locates the Roman trial of Jesus in "the praetorium" (Ch. 15:16), which in this context can only mean the official residence of the governor. While the question whether the praetorium of Pilate is to be situated in the fortress Antonia, which was located northwest of the Temple, or whether it was identical with the palace of Herod has been disputed, the weight of evidence favors the latter location. Jesus was therefore bound and led through the city from the quarters of Caiaphas to the strongly fortified and handsomely equipped palace of the Herods, where he was accused of high treason before Pontius Pilate." NICNT

²² "The Sanhedrin exercised not only civil jurisdiction according to Jewish law but also a certain degree of criminal jurisdiction. Under certain circumstances it could pronounce a death sentence, but there is no definite proof that it could legitimately execute capital sentences. The "right of the sword" was reserved to the Roman magistrate as sole bearer of the full imperial authority (imperium). This was one of the most carefully guarded prerogatives of the Roman government and permitted no concessions. Consequently, the Sanhedrin had to surrender its prisoner to the Romans if the sentence of the court was to be carried out. The prefect could exercise the right of confirmation or he could reverse the death sentence passed by the Jewish council (cf. Jn. 19:10). Naturally, this alternative demanded that he acquaint himself independently with the subject of the conviction. In such a case a new trial had to be conducted before the Roman court, and the Sanhedrin would be required to convince the governor that Jesus had committed a capital offense under Roman law. Since blasphemy was not one of the crimes for which Roman law provided punishment, and was a subject which did not concern the Roman judge, this charge played no part in the trial which followed. The incendiary charge of high treason, which the Roman court could not possibly dismiss, was substituted in its place. This recasting of the indictment was necessarily one of the subjects of the resolution indicated by Mark in verse 1. This decision constituted the final action of the council and terminated its all-night session." NICNT

- You Have the Right to Remain Silent
 - Jesus is handed over to Pilate
 - Mark 15:2-5 – *“And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.”³ And the chief priests accused him of many things.⁴ And Pilate again asked him, “Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you.”⁵ But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.”*
 - Scriptural Color Key: Luke is black; Matthew is orange; Mark is green; John is red; My additions are non-bold, black and non-italicized
 - Mt 27:11-14; Mk 15:2-5; Lk 23:1-7; John 18:28-32 (Luke as the Base)
 - ESV Combo Account –
 - *“Then the whole company of them arose and they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor’s headquarters (and) brought him before Pilate. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor’s headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. So Pilate went outside to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this man?” They answered him, “If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.” Now Jesus stood before the governor and they began to accuse him, saying, “We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.” And Pilate the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And Jesus answered him, “You have said so.” And the chief priests accused him of many things. But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate again asked him, “Do you not hear how many charges they testify against you? Have you no answer to make?” But Jesus made no further answer, not even to a single charge, so that Pilate the governor was greatly amazed. Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.” The Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.” This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die. Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no guilt in this man.” But they were urgent, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.” When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time.*
 - And Pilate asked him,²³ *“Are you the King of the Jews?”* – this is Pilate reacting to the charges that were being brought against Jesus and he was

²³ “The specialist in Roman law, A. N. Sherwin-White, has remarked that “in the hearing before Pilate, the Markan narrative fits the Roman framework well, considering that it was written with an entirely different purpose in mind.” Mark’s account of the trial proceedings is actually of a very summary kind, and must be supplemented by details from the other Gospels and from known Roman legal procedure.¹⁷ It must be assumed that when Jesus was handed over to the governor by court attendants that Pilate was informed either in writing or verbally of the accusations made against the prisoner. The first question addressed to Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?” indicates that the procurator had already been informed of such a charge when Jesus was delivered up at the praetorium. The chief accusation was that Jesus was guilty of high treason against the government because he wanted to make himself king of the Jews. The designation “king of the Jews” is a secularized form of “Messiah” which permitted Jesus’ messianic claim to be transposed into a political key inviting the decisive intervention of Pilate. The Sanhedrin certainly recognized that the words “king of the Jews” conveyed to the Roman governor an understanding essentially different from the designation “Messiah” which Jesus had accepted (Ch. 14:62). The new formulation meant “a leader of the resistance,” as shown by the remarks of Josephus concerning the riots which followed Herod’s death: “as the several companies of the seditious met anyone to give them leadership, he was created king immediately, in order to do mischief to the public; they were in some small ways hurtful to the Romans ...” (Antiquities XVIII. x. 8). It must be considered highly ironical that having branded Jesus a blasphemer because he failed to correspond to the nationalistic messianic ideal, the council now wanted him condemned by the pagan tribunal on the plausible allegation that he made claims of a distinctly political character.” NICNT

being notified of. Pilate knew the group that brought Jesus to trial and knew they were, in his mind, petty.

- The religious leaders are there – at this beginning point with Pilate, he is hearing the charges fired off by the actual accusers right there. Jesus isn't going to get into another public squabble with the religious leaders.
- And he answered him, "You have said so." – this was Jesus' way of saying, 'yes, I'm a king, but not in the way that you are thinking of it.'
- Pilate tried to get rid of Jesus for the 1st time – we find out from other gospel authors that Pilate realized that **this was a religious problem** and told them to take Jesus away and do their own religious court thing. He didn't want anything to do with it. That's when the religious leaders tipped their hand of wanting Jesus to die and they didn't have the right. They then explained why Rome would care in their following accusations.
- And the chief priests accused him of many things²⁴ – we have to go to other gospel accounts to find out what charges they were making other than a general treason accusation. Luke suggests there were at least 3: **1.) inciting a riot of the people** – which Rome hated; **2.) forbidding the payment of taxes by Jews** – which Rome hated, but Jesus actually said the opposite; **3.) that Jesus' teachings were insurrection-based** – the claim of anti-Roman teaching would get their attention.
- And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." – Pilate is used to prisoners doing everything in their power to justify themselves and get free, but Jesus isn't doing any of that and it caught Pilate off guard.
- But Jesus made no further answer,²⁵ so that Pilate was amazed²⁶ - What could possibly make a man be silent when he's on death row? And how could this guy be so self-controlled?

²⁴ "The chief priests seized the opportunity of substantiating their charges, but only the evangelist Luke provides the details. According to Lk. 23:2 the Sanhedrin urged the multiple charge that Jesus was inciting the populace to riot, that he was forbidding the payment of taxes to Caesar, and that he had royal pretensions. When Pilate remained unconvinced, they reintroduced their first impeachment that Jesus was stirring up the people with his teaching throughout Judea and Galilee (Lk. 23:5). Such multiple charges were common in criminal jurisdiction in the provinces during the period of the Flavian emperors. While the report of these accusations is generalized in Mark, in practice there must have been only two or three spokesmen who alleged certain facts which Pilate must adjudicate." NICNT

²⁵ 1 Peter 2:21-23

²⁶ "After listening to the chief priests, Pilate challenged the accused to define his position, but to his astonishment Jesus refused to defend himself. Surrounded by unbelief and hostility, he manifested the exalted, sublime silence of the suffering servant of God (Isa. 53:7). Such silence was wholly unusual in the forum, and demonstrated a presence and a dignity which puzzled the prefect. Nevertheless, without a defense it would have been necessary for Pilate to have pronounced against Jesus. To judge from early martyr trials, those who refused to defend themselves were given three opportunities to change their minds before sentence was passed. Roman magistrates were as reluctant to sentence an undefended man as one who was inadequately accused (cf. Acts 25:16). As it was, Pilate was disinclined to believe that Jesus was guilty. In order to understand this it is important to remember that the Gospels preserve only an excerpt from the trial, and it is obvious that Jesus' answer to the magistrate's initial question was necessarily fuller than the reserved admission reported in verse 2. At this point it is possible to supplement Mark's account with tradition peculiar to John alone (Jn. 18:33–38), where Jesus' explanation of the nature of his kingship indicates why Pilate became convinced that he was not a political offender.

The theme of Jesus' silence is sustained throughout the Marcan passion narrative. From the time of his arrest until his death, he makes only two brief responses, one to Caiaphas and one to Pilate. He remains the passive one, in the conviction that the Son of Man must suffer and die (Ch. 8:31). Mark's reader senses in Jesus' passivity and silence that the sovereign Lord of history is accomplishing his mysterious purposes to which even the Son of Man must be submissive." NICNT

- **Mark's Missing Trial (Herod the Tetrarch)** – Mark's Gospel doesn't explain that first Pilate had a brief encounter with Jesus to assess his guilt. After it became problematic, **Pilate found out that King Herod was the localized jurisdiction and sent Jesus to Him. Jesus was sent back** and Pilate had to handle the matter himself.
 - Jesus is silent and Herod felt insulted – we learn from Luke that Herod wanted to see Jesus do some miracle in front of him like entertainment. Jesus did nothing. He wanted to ask a lot of questions, but Jesus was silent.
 - **2nd Mocking Situation - Finally Herod had enough and gave Him over to his soldiers to mock Jesus and they were the ones that put Jesus in royal clothing and sent him back to Pilate.**
 - Lk 23:4–12 - *"Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man."⁵ But they were urgent, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place."⁶ When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.⁷ And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time.⁸ When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him.⁹ So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer.¹⁰ The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him.¹¹ And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate.¹² And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other."*
- **Another Interesting Sidenote: Judas Kills Himself**
 - Mt 27:3–10 – *"Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders,⁴ saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself."⁵ And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself.⁶ But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money."⁷ So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.⁸ Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.⁹ Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel,¹⁰ and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."*
- **C for Effort**
 - **Pilate Tries to Release Jesus**

- Mark 15:6-14 – *“Now at the [Passover] feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked.”²⁷ And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the [recent, local] insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas.⁸ And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them.⁹ And he answered them, saying, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?”¹⁰ For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up.¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead.¹² And Pilate again said to them, “Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?”¹³ And they cried out again, “Crucify him.”¹⁴ And Pilate said to them, “Why? What evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him.”*
- But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him.”²⁸ -
- **Scriptural Color Key:** Luke is black; Matthew is orange; Mark is green; John is red; My additions are non-bold, black and non-italicized
- Mt 27:15-31; Mk 15:6-19; Luke 23:13-25; John 18:33-19:16 - Luke as the Base but Order According to John
- ESV Combo Account –
 - *So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?” Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.” Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.” Pilate said to him, “What is truth?” After he had said this, he went back outside. Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the Jews. And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as*

²⁷ “Pilate did not believe Jesus was guilty, but rather than pronouncing for acquittal he decided it would be politically expedient to deal with this case in terms of the paschal amnesty. Two forms of amnesty existed in Roman law, the *abolitio* or acquittal of a prisoner not yet condemned, and the *indulgentia*, or pardoning of one already condemned. What Pilate intended in the case of Jesus, who at this stage of the proceedings had not yet been sentenced by the court, was clearly the first form. It was the governor’s custom to release one prisoner upon popular request at the Feast of the Passover, and apparently he believed that the people would ask for Jesus. This mistaken conviction, with the consequences to which it led, becomes the focus of Mark’s concern in the verses which follow. The historicity of the paschal amnesty has been disputed often, primarily because Josephus offers no evidence that such a custom ever existed. There is, however, a parallel in Roman law which indicates that an imperial magistrate could pardon and acquit individual prisoners in response to the shouts of the populace. This practice is illustrated by a papyrus document which may be dated A.D. 85, reporting the trial of one Phibion, who had locked up his alleged creditor and certain women of his household. The magistrate, G. Septimius Vegetus, the governor of Egypt, said to the defendant: “You deserve to be scourged for having imprisoned, on your own responsibility, a decent man and his women, but I will deal more humanely with you and will give you to the populace.” Although there is no evidence here of a regular amnesty on a feast, the case is analogous to the one before Pilate: the governor released a criminal at the wish of the people, an action that was consistent with his imperial authority. Moreover, a provision in the Mishnah tractate Pesachim VIII 6a (“they may slaughter for one ... whom they have promised to bring out of prison ...”), which is judged to belong to the earliest strata of the Mishnah, implies that the custom of releasing one prisoner or several at the Feast of the Passover must actually have existed in Jerusalem in the first century.” NICNT

²⁸ “The rejection of his offer seems to have surprised the prefect, who continued to attempt to negotiate with the crowd. He consulted the will of the people with the ill-considered question, “What then do you want me to do with the king of the Jews?” If he had hoped that the populace would call for some milder form of punishment than that demanded by the chief priests he was mistaken. They promptly responded with the shrill yell, “Crucify him!” When the governor protested that no sufficient cause had been demonstrated and challenged the crowd to name the treasonable crime by which the Galilean had merited this punishment, the people contemptuously and persistently shouted their demand more loudly. The shouts of the crowd are probably to be categorized as “acclamations,” in accordance with the legal provision for decision upon popular demand. Both the leaders of the people and the inflamed crowd demanded not simply capital punishment, but the most ignominious form of death, crucifixion. Jesus must be declared guilty of high treason and punished with the full rigor of the law promulgated by the Emperor Augustus, the *lex Iulia maiestatis*.” NICNT

he usually did for them. Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted, for whom they asked. And they had then among the rebels who had been thrown into prison, a robber who had committed murder in the insurrection started in the city, a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him, I find no guilt in him. Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover." Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" For he knew (perceived) that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream." And Pilate again said to them "So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews? I will therefore punish and release him."

1st Denial by People –

- Now the chief priests and the elders stirred up (and) persuaded the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas and destroy Jesus instead. They all cried out together, "Not this man, but Barabbas! Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas!"

2nd Attempt at Release

- And the soldiers of the governor led Jesus away and took him into the governor's headquarters inside the palace, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet purple robe/cloak on him (arrayed him), and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. They came up to him and began to salute him, kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they took the reed and were striking his head and spitting on him and struck him with their hands. Pilate went out again and addressed the Jews once more, desiring to release Jesus, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you? And they said, "Barabbas. And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?"

2nd Denial by People

- When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they kept shouting out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." The Jews answered him, "Crucify him. We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid.

3rd Attempt at Release

- He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" ¹¹ Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin." ¹² From then on Pilate sought to release him. A third time he said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" And he said, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him."

3rd Denial by People

- *But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries, they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified! Crucify him!" The Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." And their voices prevailed.*
- Other Important Gospel Additions – Mark is very, very brief about this encounter and leaves out a lot. A few things should be noted.
 - Jesus and Pilate talk more – the first interesting thing is that when the religious leaders leave, Pilate has a real talk with Jesus and Jesus interacts with him a bit. Jesus explains that He is not vying for political power, but that He is on a supernatural mission.
 - Pilate claims Jesus is innocent – Pilate gathers the religious leaders back together to point out that he finds Jesus innocent and so did Herod.
 - Pilate's wife has a dream – during all this talk Pilate's wife comes to him and says, 'don't harm this innocent man, I had a bad dream about all of this.' Interesting sidenote. I wonder how we got that information in the Bible.
- Now at the feast – This is still the famous Passover Feast and following Feast of Unleavened Bread which brought tens of thousands of pilgrim Jews from around the area.
- he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. – apparently, and it's debated for no reason, **Pilate came up with the idea to release a prisoner that the crowds liked, during the Passover time as a way to earn goodwill** with them. He wanted to use this option to release Jesus.
- And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas²⁹ – **we don't have any information on this guy nor this insurrection.** It was a big deal at the time but there were tons of insurrections all over the Roman Empire and this one didn't even make the record books.
- And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. – it's possible that this is **a totally different crowd** wanting their usual benefit of Passover from him (release of one of theirs). But this presented Pilate an idea.
- And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" – This was a weird way of answering and kind of put everything on the wrong foot. **Very few people in that particular group would have called Jesus their king, so perhaps Pilate was just being testy. He should have just said, 'do you want me to release to you the prophet Jesus?' But, whatever.**

²⁹ "In quelling an uprising the Romans had seized the insurgent Barabbas, who was charged with murder, together with some of his accomplices. Nothing is known about this insurrection, although Mark speaks of it as well known. In the period of the procurators revolts and bloodshed were constant occurrences (cf. Lk. 13:1; Josephus, Antiquities XVIII. i. 1; iii. 2), and the redemptive associations of the pilgrimage feasts only added fuel to a resentment of the Roman presence that constantly smoldered. The leader of this revolt seems to have been a popular hero, and may have been a leading Zealot, but little is known of him or his deeds. The surname Barabbas (Bar Abba, i.e. "son of Abba" or "son of the father") was not uncommon among the rabbis.²⁸ The fact that Barabbas is introduced prior to the reference to the petitioners in verse 8 suggests that the latter were supporters of the insurgent who came to the forum specifically to ask for his release." NICNT

- For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. – **Pilate knew this was bogus.** He knew that the Jewish leaders were on a power trip and wanted to get rid of a rival. **He didn't like them and would be resistant to help them.**
- But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead³⁰ – the chief priests saw that they were in trouble and in danger of getting Jesus released, so they went into overdrive to get Him convicted and executed. **They riled the group.**
- **Other Important Gospel Additions** – Mark is very, very brief about this encounter and leaves out a lot. A few things should be noted.
 - **Pilate Beat Jesus to get Him released** – Pilate actually went through with a risky plan. He had his guys beat Jesus really bad so that he could bring Him back out and then move the crowd to release Him seeing that He was already punished. It didn't work.
 - **The 2nd Mocking/Beating** – Just like the religious guards did to Jesus, so too did the Roman guards. They took off His clothes and put on a royal robe and put on a crown of thorns to make Him look like a pitiful king. They pretended to salute Him, mocked Him, spit on Him, beat Him. It was demoralizing. They were bored and just wanted to have fun messing with a prisoner that claimed to be a big deal and challenge Rome (at least in their minds). Jesus would have been pretty bloodied by the time they were done and in a lot of pain. Mark says that this happened at the end, but it seems that there was a 3rd beating (scourging) at the end and Mark is just gathering them thematically.
 - **Pilate tries to release Jesus again** – Pilate brings Jesus out bloodied and says, do you want Barabbas or Jesus? The crowd was riled to say Barabbas.
- And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" – Pilate wanted them to make the call so he could wash his hands of it.
- And they cried out again, "Crucify him." – this was a bloodthirsty crowd due to the stirring up of the religious leaders.
- And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" – Pilate not only knew that Jesus was innocent but he wanted to make sure that the religious leaders knew that he knew and the crowd knew that he was being pressured into it.

³⁰ "it is probable that the crowd had already agreed to seek the release of the freedom fighter Barabbas, whose bold actions seem to have won popular support. In Judea it was customary to confront the Roman authorities with as large and boisterous a delegation as could be mustered (cf. Acts 24:1; Josephus, Antiquities XVIII. viii. 4). With the encouragement of the chief priests the noisy crowd emphatically rejected Pilate's offer and clamored for the release of Barabbas (cf. Acts 3:13f)." NICNT

- Why was Pilate so unwilling to kill Jesus?³¹ – **Pilate is a bad guy.** He's not a humanitarian. He is not anti-death penalty. He is actually really **anti-Jewish. So, why didn't he just help the Jewish leaders kill another troublesome Jew? Well, oddly enough, his antagonism against the Jewish leaders was the primary reason.** He wanted to make it difficult for them because he hated them. They really wanted Jesus dead but it was all a power move so he was going to frustrate their plans, until it became disadvantageous for him.
- Other Important Gospel Additions – Mark is very, very brief about this encounter and leaves out a lot. A few things should be noted.
 - Pilate is spooked – Pilate tries to get the Jews to take Jesus away and crucify Him themselves (which they can't legally do), to which the religious leaders say that Jesus must die because He, **'claimed to be the Son of God.'** **This freaked Pilate out,** likely due to his wife's dream and all the strangeness of it.
 - Pilate talked to Jesus again – **Pilate brought Jesus back inside for another talk.** He demanded Jesus answer Him and give him something to get him off the hook. He tried to pressure Jesus with mentioning his authority over Him. Jesus explained that Pilate had no authority over Him. Regardless of that weird insult, Pilate was convinced that Jesus had to be released. He tried one more time (3rd time).
 - The crowd upped the ante – the raucous crowd, spurred by the religious leaders, **knew that Pilate was going to find a way to release Jesus and they couldn't have that.** They had the crowd begin to chant that IF Pilate released Jesus, then he was turning his back on Rome, because Caesar was the rightful king, and **Pilate was wanting to release a competing king.** This charge of **treason,** no matter how false it was, was **enough to scare Pilate into doing what they wanted.**
- Adding Insult to Injury
 - Pilate beats Jesus and sends Him off to crucifixion
 - Mark 15:15-20 - *"So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. ¹⁶ And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. ¹⁷ And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they*

³¹ "Pilate's efforts to rescue Jesus were not dictated simply by motives of justice and humanity. On the contrary, the predominant motive of his actions was undoubtedly that anti-Semitic bias for which both Philo and Josephus faulted him. Because he despised the Jews, whom he regarded as an obstreperous and rebellious race, and seized every opportunity to let them see this, he inevitably adopted an attitude of resistance when he was asked to condemn the prisoner brought before him. He could not have failed to perceive that the insistence of the priests on the execution of Jesus was due to some hidden agenda. His suspicion of ulterior motives increased when he learned that the defendant was to be put to death as a political offender. It did not require any peculiar sagacity on Pilate's part to realize that the spokesmen for the Sanhedrin were not acting out of loyalty to Rome. They clearly wanted to be rid of someone troublesome to them and they intended to use the Roman magistrate as their henchman. Seen in this light, Pilate's reluctance to accede to the priests' demand is understandable and inevitable. His determination to evade their scheme was undoubtedly strengthened when in the course of his examination of the accused it became clear he was anything but a political agitator." NICNT

put it on him. ¹⁸ And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
¹⁹ And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him."

- Scriptural Color Key: Luke is black; Matthew is orange; Mark is green; John is red; My additions are non-bold, black and non-italicized
- ESV Combo Account
 - Pilate Caves – *"So when Pilate heard these words, decided that their demand should be granted he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar.""* *So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" He, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged/scourged him. So he delivered him over to them over to their will to be crucified."*
 - So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, - Pilate was in over his head and he knew it. It had all turned on him. He thought that he could get it his way but the tide had turned and **it had become untenable**. He caved. The other gospels record that **he went to the seat of judgment** (where you make final determinations and proclamations), and tried one last time to release Jesus (4th time?). It didn't work. So, **Pilate** took out a basin and **washed his hands** saying that he was innocent of this innocent man's blood. The crowd responded with something nasty: They said, **'let the blood be on our hands and on our children.'** Imagine that, cursing your children with the rejection of the Messiah penalty. Wow, stupid arrogant move.
 - released for them Barabbas, - Pilate set the bad guy free. He thought he had no choice.
 - and having scourged Jesus³² - Perhaps out of all the things that happened to Jesus this was the most brutal physically. Normally it could kill a man without any other crucifixion. This the cat-'o'-nine-tails whip with pieces of rock and glass embedded (metal) that would rip off pieces

³² "A Roman scourging was a terrifying punishment. The delinquent was stripped, bound to a post or a pillar, or sometimes simply thrown to ground, and was beaten by a number of guards until his flesh hung in bleeding shreds. The instrument indicated by the Marcan text, the dreaded flagellum, was a scourge consisting of leather thongs plaited with several pieces of bone or lead so as to form a chain. No maximum number of strokes was prescribed by Roman law, and men condemned to flagellation frequently collapsed and died from the flogging. Josephus records that he himself had some of his opponents in Galilee scourged until their entrails were visible (War II. xxi. 5), while the procurator Albinus had the prophet Jesus bar Hanan scourged until his bones lay visible (War VI. v. 3). Although scourging was a customary preliminary to execution after a capital sentence (e.g. Josephus, War II. xiv. 9; V. xi. 1; VII. vi. 4; Livy XXXIII. 36), it was also inflicted as an independent punishment. According to Mark (cf. Lk. 23:16, 22; Jn. 19:1-4), the scourging ordered by Pilate preceded in time the sentence of crucifixion. Not until the governor pronounced a death sentence could the scourging be regarded as a prelude to crucifixion. The text is most intelligible on the understanding that the flogging took place, not in the public square in front of the praetorium, but inside the building, since Mark explicitly states that the mocking of Jesus took place within the courtyard of the palace (verse 16). It is scarcely credible that Jesus should have been taken into the governor's residence after he had been scourged, since the mocking is a boisterous sequel to the scourging and was doubtless set in motion by the men responsible for its administration. The two phases of Jesus' humiliation presumably took place on the same site." NICNT

of flesh and leave the back exposed and raw. It's the scene in the movie, the Passion of the Christ that gets me every time.

- he delivered him to be crucified. – this was a statement of guilt and judgment not that they led him away immediately. We know from the next statement that they had more things they wanted to do to Jesus before He was taken outside.
- And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. – Mark puts this beating here, although it makes more sense to have it earlier when Pilate was trying to release Jesus. This is more of a mocking situation, rather than the brutal scourging for crucifixion. Perhaps Mark is just thematically putting all the beatings together. I've already talked about this above.
- And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him³³ – this was for looks and due to hitting on head, pain. This would cause a lot of swelling.
- And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"³⁴ – these are the words and actions of ignorant, bored soldiers, who want to take their frustration out on a guy who allegedly thinks He's a big deal.
- And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him³⁵ – this would leave anyone bloody and swollen.
- And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him³⁶ – this was the time they brought Jesus out again to the people so He needed clothes on.
- And they led him out to crucify him – at the end of that whole situation Jesus was led out to be crucified. He had been beaten multiple times,

³³ "The scourging of the Galilean who claimed to be king of the Jews caused a sensation among the detachment of soldiers quartered in the praetorium. They were auxiliary troops recruited from among the non-Jewish inhabitants of Palestine who were assigned to the military governor, and had accompanied him from Caesarea to Jerusalem to assist in the maintenance of public order. After the sentence had been carried out the soldiers, who knew from the trial of Jesus' admission, proceeded to make a mockery of his kingship by an uproarious masquerade. Mark's description suggests a kind of grotesque vaudeville: Jesus, bruised and bleeding, is pushed among the coarse soldiers who gathered in the expectation of a few moments of entertainment. From their point of view the condemned man represented a welcome diversion from the tension that always mounted in Jerusalem during the festival season. In imitation of the purple robe and the gilded wreath of leaves which were the insignia of the Hellenistic vassal kings (cf. 1 Macc. 10:20, 62, 69; 11:58; 14:43f.), they threw around Jesus' naked body a faded scarlet cloak (cf. Mt. 27:28) or some shabby purple rug, and pressed down on his head a wreath plaited from the branches of some available shrub such as acanthus or of palm-spines. This pretendant to the throne would be both a vassal prince and a figure of fun. The so-called crown of thorns was not meant primarily as a torture but was part of the mock royal attire, like the robe. It may well have been an improvised caricature of the radiate crown signifying divine kingship and frequently depicted on coins then in circulation. When Jesus had been invested with the regalia of a vassal prince, the soldiers pretended to recognize his regal claim." NICNT

³⁴ "The salutation "Hail, King of the Jews!" corresponds formally to the Roman acclamation "Ave, Caesar!", the vocative admitting the royal prerogative, while the bending of the knee before Jesus parodied an essential requisite of Hellenistic homage to the ruler." NICNT

³⁵ "the buffeting and striking of the exhausted prisoner with rods and with the fist was mere brutality. The several elements of this rough farcical play throw into bold relief the royal pretensions of Jesus and the vulgar mentality of the soldiery, who regarded him only as an object of ridicule since he dared to rival the sovereignty of the divine emperor." NICNT

³⁶ "The soldiers then removed the mock regalia and gave Jesus back his own clothes. Normally those condemned to be crucified were led naked to the place of execution and were scourged on the way while carrying the cross-beam (cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus VII. 69, "They accompanied him, beating his naked body with scourges"; Josephus, Antiquities XIX. iv. 5). Because Jesus had already been scourged, this custom was not followed. This fact also explains why the scourging which always precedes the Roman crucifixion was not administered. If it had been repeated, Jesus would have doubtless died by flagellation rather than by crucifixion. When he was clothed he was remanded to the execution squad consisting of four soldiers (Jn. 19:23) under the command of a centurion and was led out to be crucified." NICNT

insulted and mocked multiple times. He had been emotionally, mentally, and physically wrecked. And now it was time to be hung on a cross.

Conclusion

- This is difficult to read. This is my hero and His one key period of suffering. I know what's coming but it's already too much. **Jesus is an extremely good person suffering needlessly to evil. If anyone has a cry of 'unfair', it's Jesus.** He LITERALLY didn't do anything wrong. We say that a lot but most of the time we have a significant part in our suffering (we all have a part in our suffering due to our sin and being in the human race).
 - Heb 7:26–27 – “*For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.*”²⁷ *He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.*”
- Jesus is condemned as a criminal – This is an **official declaration both by the Jewish leaders (Jesus' culture), and the Roman government (Jesus' authorities): Guilty of death.** For all of those who don't know Jesus and His story, they are going to assume that He's a terrible man and dying for something horrific.
- There is one more trial to come – **Heavenly trial.** He will have to face the Father and have the sins of the world transferred upon Him (on the cross). **He will be condemned there as well.**
- Guilt, Condemnation, for what? – why? What does this do? Sure, Judas regretted it, Pilate knows it's bogus, a centurion is going to admit that he was watching an innocent man die. So, what does this all mean? What could it possibly benefit?
 - It's all about loving us – Paul the Apostle said it best, 1 Co 15:3 - “*For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures...*”
 - Jesus made a way –
 - How? – 2 Co 5:21 - “*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*” (cf. Gal 1:4; Heb 1:3)
 - Eph 2:4–10 – “*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,*⁵ *even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—*⁶ *and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*⁷ *so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*⁸ *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,*⁹ *not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*¹⁰ *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*”
 - Ro 3:21–26 – “*But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—*²² *the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:*²³ *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*²⁴ *and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*²⁵ *whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood,*

to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."

- **Why so brutal and bloody –**
 - Only blood can deal with sin – Heb 9:18–22 - "Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood.¹⁹ For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,²⁰ saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you."²¹ And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship.²² Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.**"
 - Blood of animals can only cover sins for a time – Heb 10:4, 11 - "For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins... And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins."
 - Human Blood of the Son of God - Heb 9:11–12 – "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation)¹² he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption."
- **The Result for Children of God**
 - Ro 8:1–4 – "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us..."
 - Forever changed and safe – Col 1:13–14 - "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."
 - Freedom to connect with God – Heb 10:19–22 - "Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God,²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."