

Luke 22:63 - 71 The Lynch Mob Have a Mock Trial of Jesus

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Last week we looked at the parallel sub plot in the trial sequence of Jesus. The story of Peter's great fall into the sin of denying Jesus, and his heartbroken repentance of what he did in the weakness of his flesh. That study is posted if anyone missed that and is curious about the story of Peter's denials, his repentance, and his restoration.

But that's the sub plot, not the main thing that's happening. An important story within a bigger story. It's very important to us because we all fail just like Peter did, and restoration after failure is a hopeful truth that we cling to.

Restoration to what? A friendship, a relationship that becomes more important to those of us who have found Him, than anything else this world can offer us. We are friends with God who made everything. We are snatched out of this condemned world and held as property of the Creator. We are adopted as His sons. Small s.

We have that privilege because of what was happening to Jesus in the larger story before us. Jesus is receiving the blows that we deserve. He is going to die, in our place, on that cross. The punishment that we were due is going to

fall on Him.

These mock trials are a confounding problem. Trying to find some guilt worthy of capital punishment by which to effectively murder Him, in a sinless life, is a difficult task. Truth must be set aside in order to proceed. They knew that. But their hatred overrules their logical thinking. Hatred causes men to set truth and logic aside.

Borrowing from John MacArthur's commentary on this passage, listen to a list of their own rules and laws that they will ignore in order to take the life of Jesus. The verdict was already in place and had been for weeks and months. Jesus must die. We need to do whatever it is we need to do to accomplish His death.

When they arrest and bind up Jesus to lead Him away, in the garden, that verdict has already been reached, with no trial at all. Folks, this is a lynch mob at work, clear and simple. Here are the laws they ignored in order to murder Jesus;

- The proceedings took place in the high priest's home and not in the temple m.sanh. 11.2
- Jesus was tried without a defense. (m.sanh. 4.1 says both sides of a case must be heard.
- Jesus was accused of blasphemy without actually blaspheming in the technical sense of the term by pronouncing the divine name m.sanh7.5
- The verdict came in the space of one day when 2 days was required in a capital trial m.sanh.4.1
- Jesus was tried on a feast day
- contradictory evidence was supposed to be null according to their rules
- A pronouncement of guilt by the high priest is contrary to the normal order which should start with the least senior member m.sanh.4.2

The Jewish part of the trial really happens in 3 phases. Annas is first. He's like the godfather figure in this mob like family that the high priesthood has

degraded to. Annas was high priest from 6AD to 15AD.

He was deposed by the Roman curator, but he had 5 sons plus this son in law, Caiaphas. Like a mob family. They controlled the high priesthood and the temple market place for many many years. Caiaphas himself ruled in that position for 28 years. It was a long run for the family Annas.

The soldiers bring Jesus to Annas first because it's the middle of the night, the trial is illegal, according to Jewish law, and they need the big brains to figure out how they're going to legally make Jesus dead.

Annas is just buying time and trying to come up with reasons for executing a sinless man, while the sanhedrin, the council of elders is likely being roused from their beds and brought in for whatever is going to happen next. Most of them were probably already there having gone out with the mob to capture Jesus and haul Him in. This is after all a mob mentality effort, a group hatred shared amongst the scribes and pharisees and leadership of Israel.

So this portion of the mock trial has two parts. First Annas and then Caiaphas. Luke kind of picks it up mid stream. Actually right at the end phase, so we'll look at some of the other gospel records to fill in what has already taken place.

63 And the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking Him, and beating Him, 64 and they blindfolded Him and were asking Him, saying, "Prophecy, who is the one who hit You?" 65 And they were saying many other things against Him, blaspheming.

Blaspheming Jesus. Blaspheming the person who created the universes with words from His blessed mouth. He spoke all that IS into existence from nothing. And some tiny pea brained human dares to blaspheme the Creator of everything. It's a stunning thing to think about. Not the first time either.

Plasphemy is what is happening. These men who are railroading Jesus to the cross are blaspheming God in all that they do, and in a twist of fate, the very thing they will accuse Him of, worthy of death, is blasphemy. They are

committing the capital crime as they accuse Him of the same capital crime!

Jesus addresses this very thing in Matthew 12, early in His ministry. He says;

31 Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32 Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the one to come....

These men are blaspheming Jesus, 2nd person of the trinity, God of very God, who spoke the worlds into existence. They can be forgiven. It's awesome to think of the grace that allows this level of abuse and still will forgive. Forgiveness is possible. But to me it seems unlikely.

If your heart has received all of the revelation, all of the evidence, all of the miracles, everything that the Spirit has provided to prove that Jesus is the Son of God, and you have hardened your heart to this level of hatred;

You've set aside all of the evidence and chosen the lie, for whatever your reasons are, your love of sin overrides all of the evidence the Spirit has provided that Jesus is who He says He is, you have one final step to have committed the unforgiveable sin. Die in your hardness.

As grievous as this sin of striking God with blows and blaspheming Him, these men haven't crossed over that line, as far as we know. God knows. But if they die in that hardness, it's unforgiveable.

It boggles our minds that they can reject mountains of evidence God has provided and blinded by hate, and their own love of this world, and it's systems, and it's sin, and yes, it's ruler, these men are beating God with their fists and blaspheming the Son of God. Frightening thought.

Perhaps John's account will help us see the whole picture better. John begins with Annas;

J18:19 (Annas) *The high priest therefore questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. 20 Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues, and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret. 21 "Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; behold, these know what I said."*

Here Jesus is appealing to Annas to follow the normative rules of a trial. You need witnesses of crimes to make the charges. You don't just haul some guy in all cuffed up and kill Him.

The Jewish court system was highly refined at this time. They had rules of discovery and evidence and proof by more than two witnesses, in an orderly manner. Any evidence from different parties that was inconsistent with other parties cancelled both out. Inconsistent witnesses cancel each other out.

Jesus is asking Annas, why aren't you following your own rules of engagement. Go find your witnesses. Go do your due diligence and come up with some witnesses. I did everything in the open. Go find some accusers who heard and saw what I did and said. Follow your own laws Annas.

22 And when He had said this, one of the officers standing by gave Jesus a blow, saying, "Is that the way You answer the high priest?" 23 Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?" 24 Annas therefore sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Annas 0, Jesus 1. This is a glimpse into the early part of the non-trial. The illegal trial in the darkness of night. Annas here is called "high priest". That may indicate that though he was deposed by Rome and succeeded by son in law, the Jews may have considered him to be high priest even though for Rome's sake someone else, a close relative, was the puppet with the title.

That title, high priest, in this false religion that is present in Israel, degraded from the grace God designed to a works religion that is false, that title of high

priest is not a dignified title. This high priest of the ruler of this world is a dupe, a pawn of Satan. No dignity is due him.

Anton LaVey was high priest of the church of satanism. Right now a man named Peter Gilmore is the high priest of the church of satan. We don't dignify high priests of Satan. Neither should we dignify Annas or Caiaphas. They were the equivalents in their day of the high priesthood of the worlds most sinister and evil false religious system.

Annas has more in common with the godfather of the mob than he does with being the priest designed and spoken of in the revealed word of God to Moses. That ship had sailed long long ago. He is Satan's man. Head of a family of evil. He has more in common with a mob head than the high priesthood of Israel as defined by Moses.

Annas is asking questions trying to formulate a charge that can be used. Mark helps us I think in this phase. False witnesses, since Jesus won't give them answers. Jesus says, go ask the folks who listened to what I said. They can't get anywhere doing that. So they go looking for false witnesses. Liars who will lie about what Jesus said.

Mark14:55 Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death; and they were not finding any. 56 For many were giving false testimony against Him, and yet their testimony was not consistent. 57 And some stood up and began to give false testimony against Him, saying, 58 "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'" 59 And not even in this respect was their testimony consistent. 60 And the high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, "Do You make no answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" 61 But He kept silent, and made no answer.

Angry men getting ever angrier as they are frustrated trying to find some sin against a sinless life. Nothing will stick. Even the false witnesses can't get their stories straight enough to do any good. Jesus is silent now.

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so He did not open His mouth.

Now they bring Him, bound, to Caiaphas. I think Matthew's gospel comes in right about at this point;

Matt26: 57 And those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. 58 But Peter also was following Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and sat down with the officers to see the outcome. 59 Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, in order that they might put Him to death; 60 and they did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, 61 and said, "This man stated, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days.'" 62 And the high priest stood up and said to Him, "Do You make no answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" 63 But Jesus kept silent.

They have to murder Him for something He said because there simply isn't anything that He did that can be used against Him. Nothing. Zero sinful acts. They've got nothing. But what about what He said. Can we get a couple of witnesses who can agree that He said something dangerous.

Their own sanhedrin rules cannot rule saying something a capital offense. The jews don't kill someone for saying they can destroy and rebuild the temple. That's weak. But remember, they have to come up with some cause that can excite Rome to act. Remember "whose" temple this is?

Herod's temple. This temple is a collaboration with non-jews that has put it in place. Someone claiming they have the powers to knock down the temple and rebuild it is a threat to Roman domination. It's weak. Farfetched, but that's all they've got. They'll do their best to try to make it sound seditious to the Romans.

Does all of this seem insanely unhinged? Why has normal reason been set aside and insanity reigns in its place. What possible threat is Jesus to these men who have become completely irrational?

To get into their mindset (the Jewish leadership) you need to back up to the raising of Lazarus from the dead. That's when the panic begins. Jesus calls Lazarus out of the tomb after he has been dead for 4 days. He's all wrapped up like a mummy. Out walks Lazarus. The only guy who could legitimately write one of those books about dying and going to hell, going to heaven, whatever. He never said a word btw.

Listen to John's account of the panic that sets in on these leaders at that moment. Ch. 11

45 Many therefore of the Jews, who had come to Mary and beheld what He had done, believed in Him. 46 But some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done. 47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. 48 "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." 49 But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, 50 nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish."

The Romans will come and take away our position and our nation. We won't be the ruling authorities of the Jewish nation any more. Our power will be lost. Our nation will be crushed into submission to Rome. No more Israel.

Caiaphas says one man can die, or the whole nation can go follow this King and the Romans are going to step in and we're going to lose everything. Everything. One man has to die . . . to keep the status quo. To keep the Romans at ease. Kill Jesus to keep the peace. Keep the status quo. Keep the nation as it is. Too bad, but he's gotta go. For the good of everybody, He has

to die.

John says Caiaphas didn't have a clue that his prophecy was true, in a different way. One man did have to die, so that we could live. These men are pawns. Dupes in a play by Satan who is orchestrating them to murder the son of God.

This is just about at the point where Luke begins his trial narrative.

L22:63 And the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking Him, and beating Him, 64 and they blindfolded Him and were asking Him, saying, "Prophecy, who is the one who hit You?" 65 And they were saying many other things against Him, blaspheming.

The council is assembled. Daylight is nigh. Now these pawns of Satan can get down to serious business. They're on a time schedule. Self imposed. They want to celebrate passover with clean hands with their families, on schedule. They need to get Jesus executed fairly quickly. They have to come up with their charges and they have to get the Romans to do it.

Lamb slaughter time is in just a few hours. This Jesus business is an annoying inconvenience because of the passover. But they're not about to put it off. They've captured Him and they're going to see Him dead. Quickly. Down to business. We're burnin' daylight boys. Time to get this done.

66 And when it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying, 67 "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe; 68 and if I ask a question, you will not answer.

Luke is the single gospel writer that includes this statement. It's here to remind us that these dupes of Satan are not in control of this event. They can ask, He doesn't answer, until the perfect moment, planned for all eternity, by the Father.

He won't give them an answer, until He will. The timing is sovereign God's timing. He doesn't speak, until He does. All of it by the predetermined

forecouncil and plan of God before the world began.

and if I ask a question, you will not answer. When He questioned Annas about their setting rules and procedures aside, all it got Him was a blow in the face. No rules. No procedures. No defense. This is a lynch mob.

But finally, at the right moment in God's plan, according to Matthew's account; 63b *And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God."* 64 *Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."*

That's what they wanted! Now things can move quickly towards His execution. Why you say?

L22:69 *"But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND of the power OF GOD."* 70 *And they all said, "Are You the Son of God, then?" And He said to them, "Yes, I am."* 71 *And they said, "What further need do we have of testimony? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."*

The reference to Son of Man is a biblical reference to the prophet Daniel who coined that messianic term. Son of Man is Messiah. He claims to be both Messiah and to be equal with God.

The cause of Jesus execution according to the jews; blasphemy. Blasphemy. He claims to be equal with God. He claims to be God.

Leviticus 24:16 says; 16 *Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD must surely be put to death; the whole assembly must surely stone him, whether he is a foreign resident or native; if he blasphemes the Name, he must be put to death.*

From the jewish perspective, they have all they need to murder Jesus. Moses

says to stone a blasphemer to death. But they have a huge problem. Rome has removed from the Jews the power of capital punishment. They've got what they came for. As far as they're concerned Jesus has blasphemed the name of God.

One tiny problem. What Jesus said is NOT blasphemy, if it's true. To have said anything less would be a sin. It would be a lie to not say what He just said. It's absolute truth. He IS the Son of God. He will henceforth be at the right hand of God in Heaven. And the next time the world sees Jesus, He'll be arriving in the sky, on the clouds of heaven. Stated perfectly. No blasphemy.

But in their darkened blinded minds He is a blasphemer and must surely die. They've got Him. No further witnesses needed. But

Rome could give a flying rip if someone blasphemes the Hebrew God. That isn't a Capitol crime to Rome. It's a religious issue between idiots as far as Rome is concerned. Don't bother us with your religious problems. Blaspheme smathspHEME. We could not care less. A pebble in your sandal is a bigger annoyance to Rome. A fly landing on your nose is a much bigger problem than Jewish blasphemy. Get lost Jews.

Next week, if God allows, we'll look at the Roman trial and how the Jews present the problem to Rome in order to get them to execute Jesus. Fascinating stuff. Do we need to add one more time, God is in sovereign control of every millisecond, every microsecond, every nanosecond, every atom and molecule involved in the death of His Son.

This is a drama. Written by God. Totally under His control. Satan thinks he's winning. He thinks he'll own the vineyard if he murders the vineyard owner's Son. Satan's right on schedule in this drama.

The chief priests think they've won. They are consumed with hatred. They need to rub this Jesus out. Make Him disappear. They are threatened by Him that the people will follow Him and there'll be an uprising and Rome will have to crush their nation and they won't be the filthy rich bosses if that happens.

Rome will bring the hammer down. They'll lose everything.

The chief priests think they're winning. Drama. And being that this is a drama, let's look at the phony over reaction of the high priest. Oh my, what a dramatic person he is. How passionate a lover of *his* god (small "g") this high priest is. Big drama.

Mark 14:61b *Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"* 62 *And Jesus said, "I am;*

I am. That's the tetragrammaton again. The name of God. I AM that I AM. Jesus claims the name of God in His very answer to these men. The hour has arrived. Jesus is giving them what they want to hear. On schedule. On God's perfect schedule. It's time to move towards the cross.

62 And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." 63 *And **tearing his clothes**, the high priest said, "What further need do we have of witnesses?"* 64 *"You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?"* *And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.* 65 *And some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, "Prophecy!"* *And the officers received Him with slaps in the face.*

Tearing of the clothes. This is the highest display of passion possible for this man. When something happens that is so beyond the pale that life cannot proceed for one more minute, you tear your clothes. That's the sign. It cannot be any worse. Life cannot proceed. You tear your clothes. The end all of end all's.

BTW history tells us that even this is phony baloney. The priests had special "tear" garments with sections built in to easily be torn asunder and then re-stitched up for the next time tearing your clothes was necessary.

The priest was only allowed to tear his garment in this display if God was

blasphemed. He couldn't tear his garments for lesser offenses. The tearing of the garments was a display because God had His name offended. Big drama!

Mark's gospel and Matthew's gospel both end right at the point where Luke sort of picked up the story. They beat Jesus with their fists. They spit on Him. They cover His Holy head and beat Him repeatedly. Blow after blow.

Tell us who hit you if you're God. Prophecy oh thou God. Who punched you. Whose fist just injured you. Damaged you. It sounds like the ravings of mad men who are under the bodily control of Satan and his demons. The veil of civility has lifted. This is pure satan, getting in his blows. These men have left sense and reason and civilization behind. Darkness has descended. The high priest of Satan has torn his clothes.

Matthew writes; Mt.26:65 *Then the high priest tore his robes, saying, "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; 66 what do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death!" 67 Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him, 68 and said, "Prophecy to us, You Christ; who is the one who hit You?"*

In a fallen world we enjoy civilized society and behaviours. That is a common grace, given by God through different restraints. Family. Government. Religions. Social order. Acceptable behaviours and unacceptable behaviours restrained by all of those things.

But we're beginning to see more and more instances of what happens when evil is not restrained, aren't we. When restraints are gone and darkness descends, that veil of civilization evaporates and men quickly descend to shocking behaviours. It's like someone flips that switch, and the mob mentality takes over, and the evil just flows like a river that was always there behind the dam, but the dam is broken, and out it comes. Frightening.

No one has to force men to be evil. All you have to do is take away all of the God given, common grace restraints, and you find out what's behind that dam

that was holding destruction back.

L22:53 “*While I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me; but this hour and the **power of darkness** are yours.”*

In God's perfect timing He has removed every restraint and Satan is enjoying this hour of darkness. It's shocking what can happen when God lifts restraint and allows Satan free reign to accomplish evil.

Beloved, we are here this morning, enjoying God's grace to us, our sins forgiven, once for all time, because of the events that happened in our scriptures we studied this morning.

God Himself, came out of heaven, took on human flesh, and took the disgrace, the fury, the blows by hateful fists to His sinless person, that we deserved. He will die on that cross, in our place. He will give His righteousness to anyone who believes, freely, and remove your sin, take it's penalty.

Hours ago from these events He told the disciples, This is my body, broken for you. Our verses this morning are just the beginning stages of the breaking, the destruction of His body in our place. Once for all time. That transaction is completed in what Jesus accomplished. He did it for us.

