

**Matt. 26:57-68:** Then those who had seized Jesus led Him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes & the elders had gathered. <sup>58</sup> & Peter was following Him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, & going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. <sup>59</sup> Now the chief priests & the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put Him to death, <sup>60</sup> but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward <sup>61</sup> & said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, & to rebuild it in three days.'" <sup>62</sup> & the high priest stood up & said, "Have You no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" <sup>63</sup> But Jesus remained silent. & the high priest said to Him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God." <sup>64</sup> Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power & coming on the clouds of heaven." <sup>65</sup> Then the high priest tore his robes & said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. <sup>66</sup> What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death." <sup>67</sup> Then they spit in His face & struck Him. & some slapped Him, <sup>68</sup> saying, "Prophecy to us, You Christ! Who is it that struck You?"

**Intro:** Last Sunday, we saw Jesus' betrayal by Judas with a kiss & His arrest by wicked men. We saw the sinfulness of man & the love of Christ on full display – so don't look away – but always pray – that you might follow Jesus' way! Jesus was betrayed & fulfilled all the Scriptures so that you will never be betrayed but saved, so stop betraying God! Today we see the unjust trial of Jesus before the leaders of Israel, & the amazing revelation of the reality of Jesus' true identity: Jesus is the God-Man Messiah! Jesus is God! Jesus is the only Savior!

- **Ps. 2:2:** The kings of the earth set themselves, & the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD & against His anointed.

- **Spurgeon:** The Greatest Trial On Record! Great court trials; eternal destinies are at stake in this trial!

You are weak & sinful, so cling to your strong, spotless, God-Man Savior-Judge Who violently died to save sinners!

### **1. The Weakness Of Men**

**Matt. 26:57-58:** Then those who had seized Jesus led Him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes & the elders had gathered. <sup>58</sup> & Peter was following Him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, & going inside he sat with the guards to see the end.

**a. Jesus allowed Himself to be seized & taken away:** He could have stopped it all! He could have called on 72,000 warrior-angels to deliver Him! But He allowed Himself to be taken before the leaders of Israel.

**b. Peter followed at a distance & watched:** Peter went along & sat with the guards to see the end – to see what would happen, but all he could do is watch! He was absolutely impotent – powerless to do anything to change the outcome! One movie I like: the good guy is captured, they torture him, trying to make him beg for mercy.

**R. C. Sproul:** Many people follow Jesus at a distance.

### **2. The Sinfulness Of Men**

**Matt. 26:59-61:** Now the chief priests & the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put Him to death, <sup>60</sup> but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward <sup>61</sup> & said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, & to rebuild it in three days.'" <sup>62</sup>

**a. Men plan evil:** These leaders of Israel are trying to find people who will lie about Jesus! They have to lie because Jesus never did anything wrong! **Heb. 4:15:** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

**1 Ki. 21:1-16:** Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. & after this Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house, & I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money."

But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers." & Ahab went into his house vexed & sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him, for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." & he lay down on his bed & turned away his face & would eat no food. But Jezebel his wife came to him & said to him, "Why is your spirit so vexed that you eat no food?" & he said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite & said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money, or else, if it please you, I will give you another vineyard for it.' & he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" & Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now govern Israel? Arise & eat bread & let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." So she wrote letters in Ahab's name & sealed them with his seal, & she sent the letters to the elders & the leaders who lived with Naboth in his city. & she wrote in the letters, "Proclaim a fast, & set Naboth at the head of the people. & set two worthless men opposite him, & let them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God & the king.' Then take him out & stone him to death." & the men of his city, the elders & the leaders who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them. As it was written in the letters that she had sent to them, they proclaimed a fast & set Naboth at the head of the people. & the two worthless men came in & sat opposite him. & the worthless men brought a charge against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God & the king." So they took him outside the city & stoned him to death with stones. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned; he is dead." As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned & was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money, for Naboth is not alive, but dead." & as soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

**b. Men reject the truth:** Jesus is the Messiah: born in Bethlehem, of a virgin, from David's line, performed mighty miracles, entered Jerusalem on a donkey, acclaimed by people, betrayed by a friend, & rejected by His people!

**c. Men do evil:** Two false witnesses finally come forward against Jesus, & they lie about what Jesus said.

**V. 61:** This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, & to rebuild it in three days.'

**Jn. 2:19-21:** "Destroy this temple, & in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, & will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking about the temple of His body.

Oh how people bear false witness against Jesus today! (JW's; Muslim, Mormon; Prosperity Preachers; Gay; **Me!**)  
- **Rev. 21:8:** the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, & all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire & sulfur, which is the second death. **GOSPEL!**

You are weak & sinful, so cling to your strong, spotless, God-Man Savior-Judge Who violently died to save sinners!

### **3. The Silence Of Christ**

**Matt. 26:62-63:** & the high priest stood up & said, "Have You no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" <sup>63</sup> But Jesus remained silent.

**a. There was an expectation that the Messiah would build a new temple: Zech. 6:12:** Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD." [Also Ezekiel 40-48]

**b. Jesus is again fulfilling prophecy: Isa. 53:7-8:** He was oppressed, & He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, & like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. By oppression & judgment He was taken away

**c. Oh! How I'm not like Jesus!:** Anger, defend myself, speak up! What frees us to not speak up? The Cross!

**d. Jesus was silent because of love:** Jesus did not speak up & went on to die because He loves you!

#### **4. The Deity Of Christ**

**Matt. 26:63-64:** & the high priest said to Him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God." <sup>64</sup> Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power & coming on the clouds of heaven."

**a. Jesus is God: Daniel 7:13-14:** In my vision at night I looked, & there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days & was led into His presence. <sup>14</sup> He was given authority, glory & sovereign power; all peoples, nations & men of every language worshiped Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, & His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

- **Ps. 110:1:** The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool."

- **Exodus 20:4-5:** You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or **worship** them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God. [Jesus is saying He's the Messiah; All Authority; All Power; Son of God; God to be worshiped; Judge]

**Tim Keller:** In both of Jesus' biblical allusions here (Son of Man from Dan. 7:13, & "at his right hand: from Ps. 110:1), the Messiah comes as a judge. Everybody in the room – all of the ruling council of the Sanhedrin – knows who the Son of Man is. In Dan. 7, the Son of Man comes from the throne of God to earth in the clouds of heaven to judge the world. & the clouds of heaven are not the same as the clouds of earth, just water vapor. These clouds are the shekinah glory, the very presence of God. Therefore by replying as He does, Jesus is saying: "I will come to earth in the very glory of God & judge the entire world." It's an astounding statement. It's a claim to deity. Of all the things Jesus could have said – & there are so many texts, themes, images, metaphors, & passages of the Hebrew Scriptures that he could have used to tell who He was – He specifically says He's the judge. By His choice of text, Jesus is deliberately forcing us to see the paradox. There's been an enormous reversal. He is the judge over the entire world, being judged by the world. He should be in the judgment seat, & we should be in the dock, in chains. Everything is turned upside down. & as soon as Jesus claims to be this judge, as soon as He claims deity, the response is explosive.

**b. The Son of God is the Christ:** Notice in the text, Son of God & the Christ are synonymous.

- **Matt. 16:16:** Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

**c. The coming of Christ: V. 64:** Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on **you will see** the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power & coming on the clouds of heaven."

1) There was a kind of coming of Christ to the Father in glory for vindication & judgment in 70 AD:

- **Matt. 24:30:** they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power & great glory.

2) The second coming at the end of history: The wicked & the righteous will be raised from the dead & be judged!

3) Another view: **D. A. Carson:** Jesus is telling the members of the Sanhedrin that from then on they would not see Him as he now stands before them but only in His capacity as undisputed King Messiah & sovereign Judge. **R. T. France:** "From now on, that is the way they will see Him. Jesus' reference is 'to the state of authority which Jesus will enjoy continuously at the right hand of God.'"

#### **5. The Violent Blasphemy Of Men**

**Matt. 26:65-68:** Then the high priest tore his robes & said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. <sup>66</sup> What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death."

<sup>67</sup> Then they spit in His face & struck Him. & some slapped Him, <sup>68</sup> saying, "Prophecy to us, You Christ! Who is it that struck You?"

**a. Jesus is the only true & faithful witness:** Jesus is the only good witness Who actually tells the truth! He is the only witness Who makes the truth really, really clear! He's the Witness of all witnesses! Can I get a witness on that!

- **Rev. 1:5:** Jesus Christ, Who is the faithful witness

**b. The high priest tears his robes & accuses Jesus of blasphemy:** Jesus claimed to be the Son of God – & God – & Judge of all! This is blasphemy unless it's true! And it is true! Jesus is God!

**c. The other leaders call for death & violently mock Jesus:** They should have bowed down & worshiped! But what do they do? **Vs. 66-68:** What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death." Then they spit in His face & struck Him. & some slapped Him, <sup>68</sup> saying, "Prophecy to us, You Christ! Who is it that struck You?"

They say He must die; They spit on Him (unclean); they strike Him; they slap Him; & they mock Him! Jesus loves

**Spurgeon:** The day shall come when all that strike Christ, shall find that He has seen them, though they thought His eyes were blinded. The day shall come, blasphemer, worldling, careless man, when everything that you have done against Christ's cause & Christ's people, shall be published before the eyes of men & angels, & Christ shall answer your question, & shall tell you who it is that struck Him. I speak to some this morning who have forgotten that Christ sees them; & they have ill-treated His people; they have spoken ill of His holy cause, saying, "How does God know? & is there knowledge in the Most High?" I tell you, the Judge of men shall, before long, point you out, & make you, to your shame & confusion of face, confess that you struck the Savior when you struck His Church.

**d. Everything Jesus says happens:** All that Jesus has prophesied comes true! & He fulfills all prophecies!  
- **Isa. 50:6:** I gave My back to those who strike, & My cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not My face from disgrace & spitting.

**e. Why did Jesus have to suffer like this?!** For God's glory! LOVE! 1) To save His people from their sins!

2) So that we might have an example to imitate: **1 Peter 2:21-25:** To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps. "He committed no sin, & no deceit was found in His mouth." When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him Who judges justly. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins & live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd & Overseer of your souls.

**Hymn:** In my place condemned He stood; Sealed by pardon with His blood; Hallelujah! What a Savior!

**Jesus Is The Son Of The Blessed; No Testimony Against Him Past The Test; He's The Greatest & Best; Who They Beat & Oppressed; Undressed & Killed With Jest; To Remove Sins As Far As East Is From West; Then He Rose With A Quest; To Leave Us At Rest; & Forever Obsessed With His Glory Possessed!**

They tried my King Jesus in a kangaroo court  
The leaders of Israel were a wicked sort  
His Words they'd distort  
Their testimony came up short  
And couldn't support  
What they tried to purport  
Wicked lies they'd import  
False accusations snort  
And Pilate extort  
Jesus' life they'd abort  
Mock Him as sport  
And His teachings deport  
But His mission they could not thwart  
Though He died the most gruesome death of any sort  
He can't be stopped by any court

No matter their last resort  
"He is risen!" is the report!  
He conquered all that sins distort  
He's alive and strong like the mightiest fort  
He's the final and greatest court  
And our everlasting escort  
Who will never leave or come up short  
So now we exhort: Trust in Him as your greatest resort  
Your most satisfying, loving, and holy Support!

He's the great Son of Man  
With all dominion in hand  
Our worship is His demand  
His Kingdom will forever stand  
Just as He promised and planned  
Not like the sinking sand  
Of our sin that's forever banned  
It's empty and bland  
But He gives joy that will forever expand  
And never land  
But take you by the hand  
And soar forever grand  
Every trial it will withstand  
All because He's the great God-Man!

They spit on Him in vile disgrace  
And beat Him on the back and face  
Blinded Him and mocked debase  
All we deserve, He took our place  
And died for every tongue in Adam's race  
Then rose to save us all by grace  
So by faith all Him embrace  
Your every sin He will erase  
Of your evil there's no trace  
And all your sadness soon replace  
The bitter guilt that you retrace  
"NO CONDEMNATION!" is your case  
With mercy He'll forever chase  
Christ is all! - the joy Place!

Christ Jesus Is The Judge Of All  
He's Judge Who's Judged By Sinners Small  
The God-Man, Silent Lamb Would Fall  
Yet To False Witnesses He'd Call  
Himself The Son Of Man Enthral  
He's Daniel's God, The LORD Of All  
Who'll Come In Power, Foes Will Fall

He Is The Christ, Yet Him They'd Maul  
And Spit And Slap His Face Appall  
He'd Die And Bear God's Hellish Gall  
Then Rise Again And Live, Stand Tall  
By Faith Alone Please Trust Him Call  
He'll Come Again And Give You All  
The Joys And Good Lost In The Fall!

You are weak & sinful, so cling to your strong, spotless, God-Man Savior-Judge Who violently died to save sinners!