

**The Trial**  
**Message 03 of 5 in the series: “24 Hours That Changed History”**

**A. After Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, He was put on trial by the Sanhedrin (the high council) in the middle of the night at the home of the high priest.**

They took Jesus to the high priest's home where the leading priests, the elders, and the teachers of religious law had gathered. Meanwhile, Peter followed him at a distance and went right into the high priest's courtyard. There he sat with the guards, warming himself by the fire. Inside, the leading priests and the entire high council were trying to find evidence against Jesus, so they could put him to death. But they couldn't find any. Many false witnesses spoke against him, but they contradicted each other. Finally, some men stood up and gave this false testimony: "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this Temple made with human hands, and in three days I will build another, made without human hands.'" But even then they didn't get their stories straight! Then the high priest stood up before the others and asked Jesus, "Well, aren't you going to answer these charges? What do you have to say for yourself?" But Jesus was silent and made no reply. Then the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus said, "I AM. And you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothing to show his horror and said, "Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?" "Guilty!" they all cried. "He deserves to die!" Then some of them began to spit at him, and they blindfolded him and beat him with their fists. "Prophecy to us," they jeered. And the guards slapped him as they took him away.

Mark 14:53–65 (NLT)

**Note:** Jesus' trial violated virtually every legal standard Israel had — from Old Testament law to the rules of the Sanhedrin. According to the *Mishnah, the written record of Jewish oral tradition*, the very people who prided themselves on upholding the law broke it completely. This wasn't just an unfair trial — it was an illegal one.

**1. The arrest of Jesus was completely illegal.**

Jesus was arrested without any legal evidence being presented first. Under Jewish law, charges had to be supported by witnesses before an arrest could be made. But in Jesus' case, the religious leaders had already decided what they wanted to do and then went looking for a way to make it happen. The arrest was carried out through Judas, who had taken a bribe. But Jewish law did not allow an accomplice or criminal to serve as a valid witness.

"If a malicious witness comes forward and accuses someone of a crime, then both the accuser and accused must appear before the LORD by coming to the priests and judges in office at that time. The judges must investigate the case thoroughly. If the accuser has brought false charges against his fellow Israelite, you must impose on the accuser the sentence he intended for the other person..." Deuteronomy 19:16-19 (NLT)

**2. The trial was illegally held at night.**

The trial took place in the middle of the night, which was strictly forbidden in capital cases. Jewish law was very clear: if a man's life was on the line, the trial had to happen during the daytime so everything could be done openly and fairly. Holding a capital trial at night wasn't a small mistake—it violated one of the most basic safeguards of their justice system. *Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1*

**3. Not a single witness could agree on what happened.**

The witnesses who testified against Jesus contradicted each other. According to the Law of Moses, at least two witnesses had to agree before someone could be convicted of a serious crime. Since the witnesses' stories didn't match, the case should have been dismissed immediately.

"You must not convict anyone of a crime on the testimony of only one witness. The facts of the case must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." Deuteronomy 19:15 (NLT)

**4. Jesus was unlawfully compelled to testify against Himself.**

Because the witnesses couldn't prove anything, the high priest tried another tactic: he pressured Jesus to incriminate Himself. But Jewish law did not allow a person to testify against themselves. Guilt had to be established through witnesses, not forced confessions. *Mishnah Sanhedrin 6:2*

**5. They conducted the trial in an unauthorized location.**

Jewish law required capital trials to take place in the Chamber of Hewn Stone on the Temple Mount, where the Sanhedrin officially met. Instead, Jesus was tried in the private home of the high priest, which meant any verdict given there was legally invalid. *Mishnah Sanhedrin 11:2*

**6. They rushed to a verdict without following proper procedure.**

In Jewish law, a death sentence could never be given the same day as the trial. If the court believed someone was guilty, they had to wait until the next day before confirming the verdict. This gave the judges time to reconsider and make sure justice was done. But in Jesus' case, they rushed the entire process. He was arrested, tried, and condemned all in the same night. To make matters worse, this happened on the eve of Passover and the Sabbath\*\*, when capital trials were not even supposed to be held.

*Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1*

**Note:** What appeared to be a trial was, in fact, a predetermined execution — one that countless prophecies had long foretold.

**7. The authorities would unite in conspiracy against Him.**

"you spoke long ago by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant, saying, 'Why were the nations so angry? Why did they waste their time with futile plans? The kings of the earth prepared for battle; the rulers gathered together against the LORD and against his Messiah.' In fact, this has happened here in this very city! For Herod Antipas, Pontius Pilate the governor, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were all united against Jesus, your holy servant, whom you anointed. But everything they did was determined beforehand according to your will." Acts 4:25-28 (NLT) Psalm 2:1-2 (NLT)

**8. He would be betrayed by a friend.**

"Even my best friend, the one I trusted completely, the one who shared my food, has turned against me."  
Psalm 41:9 (NLT)

**9. False witnesses would testify against him.**

"Malicious witnesses testify against me. They accuse me of crimes I know nothing about. They repay me evil for good. I am sick with despair. Yet when they were ill, I grieved for them. I denied myself by fasting for them, but my prayers returned unanswered. I was sad, as though they were my friends or family, as if I were grieving for my own mother. But they are glad now that I am in trouble; they gleefully join together against me. I am attacked by people I don't even know; they slander me constantly. They mock me and call me names; they snarl at me." Psalm 35:11-16 (NLT)

**10. He would suffer unfair treatment, marched to His death like a lamb with no resistance.**

"He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people." Isaiah 53:7-8 (NLT)

**B. Caiaphas, the high priest, unknowingly prophesied the very reason Jesus had to die — even as he plotted to kill Him.**

"Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen (Lazarus raised from the dead). But some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. Then the leading priests and Pharisees called the high council together. 'What are we going to do?' they asked each other. 'This man certainly performs many miraculous signs. If we allow him to go on like this, soon everyone will believe in him. Then the Roman army will come and destroy both our Temple and our nation.' Caiaphas, who was high priest at that time, said, 'You don't know what you're talking about! You don't realize that it's better for you that one man should die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed.' He did not say this on his own; as high priest at that time he was led to prophesy that Jesus would die for the entire nation. And not only for that nation, but to bring together and unite all the children of God scattered around the world..." John 11:45-52 (NLT)

**1. Jesus willingly gave His life to take away the sins of all who place their faith in Him.**

"The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded." John 10:17-18 (NLT)

"...But now, once for all time, he has appeared at the end of the age to remove sin by his own death as a sacrifice. And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment, so also Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him." Hebrews 9:26-28 (NLT)

"We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood..." Romans 3:22-25 (NLT)

**2. Even the schemes of evil people cannot derail what God has purposed for your life.**

"You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people." Genesis 50:20 (NLT)

"Then he sent someone to Egypt ahead of them—Joseph, who was sold as a slave. They bruised his feet with fetters and placed his neck in an iron collar. Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, the LORD tested Joseph's character." Psalm 105:17-19 (NLT)

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