

Paper 184 — Before the Sanhedrin Court

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Most endnotes and Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

Sources for Paper 184, in the order in which they appear

- (1) Rev. Alfred **Edersheim**, M.A.Oxon, D.D., Ph.D., *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Volume Two) (New York: Longman, Green, & Co., Eighth Edition, Revised, 1899)
- (2) David Smith, M.A., D.D., *Our Lord's Earthly Life* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1925)

Note: This source is coded **Smith2**.

- (3) George A. **Barton**, Ph.D., LL.D., *Jesus of Nazareth: A Biography* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1922)
- (4) Wm. Arnold Stevens and Ernest Dewitt Burton, *A Harmony of the Gospels for Historical Study: An Analytical Synopsis of the Four Gospels* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904, 1932)
- (5) Charles **Fiske** and Burton Scott **Easton**, *The Real Jesus: What He Taught: What He Did: Who He Was* (New York and London, Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1929)
- (6) Walter Russell **Bowie**, *The Master: A Life of Jesus Christ* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928)
- (7) David Smith, M.A., D.D., *The Days of His Flesh: The Earthly Life of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, Eighth Edition, Revised (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1910)

Note: This source is coded **Smith1**.

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.

- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable. The highlights are tentative.)

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PAPER 184 — BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN COURT

[The Roman soldiers had evidently orders to bring Jesus to the late High-Priest (Edersheim² 547).]

184:0.1 Representatives of Annas had secretly instructed the captain of the Roman soldiers to bring Jesus immediately to the palace of Annas after he had been arrested.¹

The former high priest desired to maintain his prestige as the chief ecclesiastical authority of the Jews. He also had another purpose in detaining Jesus at his house for several hours, and that was to allow time for legally calling together the court of the Sanhedrin.

THE TRIAL: (I) BEFORE THE
 SANHEDRIN (Smith² 423)

Had it been the day-time when He was arrested, He would forthwith have been conducted to the Hall of Hewn Stone; but it was now barely 2 A.M., and since the Sanhedrin might not meet **ere the time of morning sacrifice**—

It was not lawful to convene the Sanhedrin court **before the time of the offering of the morning sacrifice** in the temple,

about 3 a.m., when from the Temple watch-tower the gleam of daybreak was described on Mount Hebron—there was still a full hour to run (S2 423).

and this sacrifice was offered **about three o'clock** in the morning.

LIX: THE EXAMINATION BEFORE
 THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES (Barton
 365)

184:0.2 Annas knew that a court of Sanhedrists was in waiting at the palace of his son-in-law, Caiaphas.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

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[The priests] had, no doubt, arranged for a quorum of the court to await during the night, at the house of the high priest, the arrest of their victim (B 366).

Some thirty members of the Sanhedrin had gathered at the home of the high priest by midnight so that they would be ready to sit in judgment on Jesus when he might be brought before them.

Only those members were assembled who were strongly and openly opposed to Jesus and his teaching since

[The Sanhedrin] consisted of seventy members, but when it sat as a court **only twenty-three** had to be present. That was probably the number present on this fateful night (B 366).

it required **only twenty-three** to constitute a trial court.

THE TRIAL: (I) BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN (**Smith2** 423)

184:0.3 Jesus spent about three hours at the palace of Annas

They had **not far** to lead Him; for Annas had his residence on the slope of **Olivet** close by the Orchard of **Gethsemane** ... (S2 424).

on Mount **Olivet**, **not far** from the garden of **Gethsemane**, where they arrested him.

John Zebedee was free and safe in the palace of Annas not only because of the word of the Roman captain,

No others had the right of entry, but it is written that John was “known to the Chief Priest,” and the portress let him pass in (S2 424).

but also because he and his brother James were well known to the older servants,

[See 129:2.8, re the Zebedees’ spending Passover at Annas’s house in A.D. 22.]

having many times been guests at the palace

[Zebedee’s wife, **Salome**, was a relative of Annas, onetime high priest at Jerusalem and still the most influential of the Sadducean group, having been deposed only eight years previously (129:1.5).]

as the former high priest was a distant relative of their mother, **Salome**.

1. EXAMINATION BY ANNAS

184:1.1 Annas, enriched by the temple revenues, his son-in-law the acting high priest, and with his relations to the Roman authorities,

In those days the most influential personage in the Jewish state was Annas, the Chief Priest *emeritus* (S2 423).

was indeed the most powerful single individual in all Jewry.

[Compare Edersheim2 547, re Caiaphas as “hasty” and “bluff”.]

He was a suave and politic planner and plotter. He desired to direct the matter of disposing of Jesus; he feared to trust such an important undertaking wholly to his brusque and aggressive son-in-law. Annas wanted to make sure that the Master’s trial was kept in the hands of the Sadducees; he feared the possible sympathy of some of the Pharisees, seeing that practically all of those members of the Sanhedrin who had espoused the cause of Jesus were Pharisees.

[See 142:0.2.]

184:1.2 Annas had not seen Jesus for several years, not since the time when the Master called at his house and immediately left upon observing his coldness and reserve in receiving him.

Annas had thought to presume on this early acquaintance and thereby attempt to persuade Jesus to abandon his claims and leave Palestine. He was reluctant to participate in the murder of a good man and had reasoned that Jesus might choose to leave the country rather than to suffer death. But when Annas stood before the stalwart and determined Galilean, he knew at once that it would be useless to make such proposals. Jesus was even more majestic and well poised than Annas remembered him.

[See 129:2.7-8.]

184:1.3 When Jesus was young, Annas had taken a great interest in him,

but now his revenues were threatened by what Jesus had so recently done in driving the money-changers and other commercial traders out of the temple. This act had aroused the enmity of the former high priest far more than had Jesus' teachings.

184:1.4 Annas entered his spacious audience chamber, seated himself in a large chair, and commanded that Jesus be brought before him. After a few moments spent in silently surveying the Master, he said: "You realize that something must be done about your teaching since you are disturbing the peace and order of our country." As Annas looked inquiringly at Jesus, the Master looked full into his eyes but made no reply.

XXXII: FRIDAY.—THE DAY OF SUFFERING. (*A Harmony of the Gospels* 210)

§138. THE TRIAL BEFORE THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES. Matt. 26:57—27:10. Mark 14:53-72 [15:1*a*]. Luke 22:54-71. John 18:12-27.

John 18:19 The high priest therefore asked Jesus of his disciples,

[[H]e questioned Him "regarding His disciples and regarding His teaching"—promising fields of inquiry both. For had He not a Zealot among His disciples, and might He not on this score be made out a ringleader of sedition? (Smith² 427).]

Again Annas spoke, "What are the names of your disciples,

besides Simon Zelotes, the agitator?"²

Again Jesus looked down upon him, but he did not answer.

184:1.5 Annas was considerably disturbed by Jesus' refusal to answer his questions, so much so that he said to him: "Do you have no care as to whether I am friendly to you or not? Do you have no regard for the power I have in determining the issues of your coming trial?" When Jesus heard this, he said: "Annas, you know that you could have no power over me unless it were permitted by my Father. Some would destroy the Son of Man because they are ignorant; they know no better, but you, friend, know what you are doing. How can you, therefore, reject the light of God?"

184:1.6 The kindly manner in which Jesus spoke to Annas almost bewildered him. But he had already determined in his mind that Jesus must either leave Palestine or die; so he summoned up his courage and asked:

and of his teaching.

"Just what is it you are trying to teach the people?"

What do you claim to be?"

20 Jesus answered him,

Jesus answered:

"You know full well that

I have spoken openly to the world;

I have spoken openly to the world.

I ever taught in synagogues, and in the temple,

I have taught in the synagogues and many times in the temple,

where all the Jews come together;

where all the Jews and many of the gentiles have heard me.

and in secret spake I nothing.

In secret I have spoken nothing;

21 Why asketh thou me?

why, then, do you ask me about my teaching?"

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

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ask them that have heard *me*, what I spake unto them: these know the things which I said.

Why do you not summon those who have heard me and inquire of them?

Behold, all Jerusalem has heard that which I have spoken even if you have not yourself heard these teachings.”

But before Annas could make reply,

22 And when he had said this, one of the officers standing by

the chief steward of the palace, who was standing near,

struck Jesus with his hand, saying,

struck Jesus in the face with his hand, saying,

Answerest thou the high priest so?

“How dare you answer the high priest with such words?”

Annas spoke no words of rebuke to his steward,

23 Jesus answered him,

but Jesus addressed him, saying,

If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil:

“My friend, if I have spoken evil, bear witness against the evil;

but if well, why smitest thou me?

but if I have spoken the truth, why, then, should you smite me?”

184:1.7 Although Annas regretted that his steward had struck Jesus, he was too proud to take notice of the matter. In his confusion he went into another room, leaving Jesus alone with the household attendants and the temple guards for almost an hour.

184:1.8 When he returned, going up to the Master's side, he said, "Do you claim to be the Messiah, the deliverer of Israel?" Said Jesus: "Annas, you have known me from the times of my youth. You know that I claim to be nothing except that which my Father has appointed, and that I have been sent to all men, gentile as well as Jew." Then said Annas: "I have been told that you have claimed to be the Messiah; is that true?" Jesus looked upon Annas but only replied, "So you have said."

184:1.9 About this time messengers arrived from the palace of Caiaphas to inquire what time Jesus would be brought before the court of the Sanhedrin, and since it was nearing the break of day,

24 Annas therefore sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.

Annas thought best to send Jesus bound and in the custody of the temple guards to Caiaphas.

He himself followed after them shortly.

2. PETER IN THE COURTYARD

184:2.1 As the band of guards and soldiers approached the entrance to the palace of Annas, John Zebedee was marching by the side of the captain of the Roman soldiers. Judas had dropped some distance behind,

Luke 22:54 And they seized him, and led him *away*, and brought him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed afar off.

and Simon Peter followed afar off.

John 18:[15] Now [John] was known unto the high priest, and entered in with Jesus into the court of the high priest;

After John had entered the palace courtyard with Jesus and the guards,

	Judas came up to the gate but, seeing Jesus and John, went on over to the home of Caiaphas, where he knew the real trial of the Master would later take place.
	Soon after Judas had left, Simon Peter arrived,
16 but Peter was standing at the door without.	and as he stood before the gate,
	John saw him just as they were about to take Jesus into the palace.
	The portress who kept the gate knew John,
So the other disciple, who was known unto the high priest, went out and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.	and when he spoke to her, requesting that she let Peter in, she gladly assented.
18 Now the servants and the officers were standing there, having made a fire of coals [ERV mg.: Gr. <i>a fire of charcoal</i>]; for it was cold; and Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.	184:2.2 Peter, upon entering the courtyard, went over to the charcoal fire and sought to warm himself, for the night was chilly.
[There, among the serving-men in the court, he was in every sense 'without.' ...	He felt very much out of place here among the enemies of Jesus, and indeed he was out of place.
	The Master had not instructed him to keep near at hand as he had admonished John. Peter belonged with the other apostles,
Was he right in having come there at all? Commentators have discussed it as involving neglect of Christ's warning (Edersheim2 551).]	who had been specifically warned not to endanger their lives during these times of the trial and crucifixion of their Master.

[*Compare:* Peter, in a moment of ill-advised heroism, went beyond his instructions and attacked Jesus' captors, then cast down his sword and fled in panic (Fiske & Easton 172).]

184:2.3 Peter threw away his sword shortly before he came up to the palace gate so that he entered the courtyard of Annas unarmed.

His mind was in a whirl of confusion; he could scarcely realize that Jesus had been arrested. He could not grasp the reality of the situation—that he was here in the courtyard of Annas, warming himself beside the servants of the high priest. He wondered what the other apostles were doing and, in turning over in his mind as to how John came to be admitted to the palace, concluded that it was because he was known to the servants, since he had bidden the gate-keeper admit him.

184:2.4 Shortly after the portress let Peter in, and while he was warming himself by the fire,

17 The maid therefore that kept the door saith unto Peter,

she went over to him and mischievously said,

[The portress was a mischievous maid (Smith 467).]

Art thou also *one* of this man's disciples?

“Are you not also one of this man's disciples?”

Now Peter should not have been surprised at this recognition, for it was John who had requested that the girl let him pass through the palace gates; but he was in such a tense nervous state that this identification as a disciple threw him off his balance, and with only one thought uppermost in his mind—the thought of escaping with his life—

He saith,

he promptly answered the maid's question by saying,

I am not.

“I am not.”

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

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26 One of the servants of the high priest, being a kinsman of him whose ear Peter cut off, saith,

Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

[27] Peter therefore denied again:

[Apparently she had seen him somewhere before, and recently—perhaps on one of the days when Jesus was teaching **in the temple** (Bowie 282-83).]

Mark 14:71 But he began to curse, and to swear,

I know not this man of whom ye speak.

184:2.5 Very soon another servant came up to Peter and asked:

“Did I not see you in the garden when they arrested this fellow?

Are you not also one of his followers?”

Peter was now thoroughly alarmed; he saw no way of safely escaping from these accusers;

so he vehemently denied all connection with Jesus,

saying, “I know not this man, neither am I one of his followers.”

184:2.6 About this time the portress of the gate drew Peter to one side and said: “I am sure you are a disciple of this Jesus, not only because one of his followers bade me let you in the courtyard,

but my sister here has seen you **in the temple** with this man.

Why do you deny this?”

When Peter heard the maid accuse him,

he denied all knowledge of Jesus with much cursing and swearing,

again saying, “I am not this man’s follower;

I do not even know him;

I never heard of him before.”

	184:2.7 Peter left the fireside for a time while he walked about the courtyard. He would have liked to have escaped, but he feared to attract attention to himself. Getting cold, he returned to the fireside,
Matt. 26:73 And after a little while they that stood by came and said to Peter,	and one of the men standing near him said:
Of a truth thou also art <i>one</i> of them;	“Surely you are one of this man’s disciples.
	This Jesus is a Galilean,
for thy speech bewrayeth thee.	and your speech betrays you,
Mark 14:[70] for thou art a Galilean.	for you also speak as a Galilean.”
	And again Peter denied all connection with his Master.
Matt. 26:71 And when he was gone out into the porch,	184:2.8 Peter was so perturbed that he sought to escape contact with his accusers by going away from the fire and remaining by himself on the porch.
	After more than an hour of this isolation,
another <i>maid</i> saw him,	the gate-keeper and her sister chanced to meet him,
and saith unto them that were there, This man also was with Jesus the Nazarene.	and both of them again teasingly charged him with being a follower of Jesus.
72 And again he denied with an oath, I know not the man.	And again he denied the accusation.
	Just as he had once more denied all connection with Jesus,
[74] And straightway the cock crew.	the cock crowed,
[75] And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.	and Peter remembered the words of warning spoken to him by his Master earlier that same night.

As he stood there, heavy of heart and crushed with the sense of guilt, the palace doors opened,

[To complete his humiliation it chanced that Jesus was at that moment being conducted, with His hands pinioned behind His back, through the courtyard on His way to the judgment-hall of Caiaphas (Smith 468).]

and the guards led Jesus past on the way to Caiaphas.

Luke 22:[61] And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.

As the Master passed Peter, he saw, by the light of the torches, the look of despair on the face of his former self-confident and superficially brave apostle,

and he turned and looked upon Peter.

Peter never forgot that look as long as he lived. It was such a glance of commingled pity and love as mortal man had never beheld in the face of the Master.³

184:2.9 After Jesus and the guards passed out of the palace gates, Peter followed them, but only for a short distance. He could not go farther. He sat down by the side of the road

62 And he went out, and wept bitterly.

and wept bitterly.

And when he had shed these tears of agony, he turned his steps back toward the camp, hoping to find his brother, Andrew. On arriving at the camp, he found only David Zebedee, who sent a messenger to direct him to where his brother had gone to hide in Jerusalem.

184:2.10 Peter's entire experience occurred in the courtyard of the palace of Annas on Mount Olivet. He did not follow Jesus to the palace of the high priest, Caiaphas.

That Peter was brought to the realization that he had repeatedly denied his Master by the crowing of a cock indicates that this all occurred outside of Jerusalem since

[I]t was forbidden to keep fowls in Jerusalem, on account of possible Levitical defilements through them (Baba K. vii. 7) (Edersheim2 537, fn 1).

it was against the law to keep poultry within the city proper.

V, XIII: THURSDAY NIGHT—BEFORE ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS—PETER AND JESUS. (Edersheim2 546)

184:2.11 Until the crowing of the cock brought Peter to his better senses,

He was not thinking of anything else now than ... how right he had been in not being entrapped by that woman (E2 552).

he had only thought, as he walked up and down the porch to keep warm, how cleverly he had eluded the accusations of the servants, and how he had frustrated their purpose to identify him with Jesus.

For the time being, he had only considered that

[W]hy should he incriminate himself, or perhaps Christ, by a needless confession to those who had neither the moral nor the legal right to exact it? (E2 552)

these servants had no moral or legal right thus to question him,

and he really congratulated himself over the manner in which he thought he had avoided being identified and possibly subjected to arrest and imprisonment.

Not until the cock crowed did it occur to Peter that he had denied his Master. Not until Jesus looked upon him, did he realize that he had failed to live up to his privileges as an ambassador of the kingdom.

LIX: THE EXAMINATION BEFORE
THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES (Barton
365)

Peter, having started on a cowardly
course, felt compelled to persist in it (B
370).

184:2.12 Having taken the first step
along the path of compromise and least
resistance, there was nothing apparent to
Peter but to go on with the course of
conduct decided upon.

It requires a great and noble character,
having started out wrong, to turn about
and go right. All too often one's own
mind tends to justify continuance in the
path of error when once it is entered
upon.

184:2.13 Peter never fully believed that
he could be forgiven until he met his
Master after the resurrection and saw that
he was received just as before the
experiences of this tragic night of the
denials.

3. BEFORE THE COURT OF SANHEDRISTS

184:3.1 It was about half past three
o'clock this Friday morning when the
chief priest, Caiaphas, called the
Sanhedrist court of inquiry to order and
asked that Jesus be brought before them
for his formal trial.

[Compare 168:3.3, 173:2.2, 175:3.1.]

On three previous occasions the
Sanhedrin, by a large majority vote, had
decreed the death of Jesus, had decided
that he was worthy of death on informal
charges of law-breaking, blasphemy, and
flouting the traditions of the fathers of
Israel.

V, XIII: THURSDAY NIGHT—BEFORE ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS—PETER AND JESUS. (Edersheim² 546)

But whatever view be taken, this much at least is certain, that it was **no formal, regular meeting of the Sanhedrin** (E2 553).

[The Sanhedrin] met first in one of the Temple-Chambers, the so-called *Lishkath haGazith*—or **Chamber of Hewn Stones**—and at the time of which we write in ‘the booths of the sons of Annas’ (E2 554).

[With a humane sense of the value of human life the Jewish law had laid down a very complete code of regulations for the conduct of capital trials. [Etc.] (Smith¹ 469)]

[See Wilson 280.]

184:3.2 This was **not a regularly called meeting of the Sanhedrin**

and was not held in the usual place,

the **chamber of hewn stone** in the temple.

This was a special trial court of some thirty Sanhedrists and was convened in the palace of the high priest. John Zebedee was present with Jesus throughout this so-called trial.

184:3.3 How these chief priests, scribes, Sadducees, and some of the Pharisees flattered themselves that Jesus, the disturber of their position and the challenger of their authority, was now securely in their hands! And they were resolved that he should never live to escape their vengeful clutches.

184:3.4 Ordinarily, the Jews, when trying a man on a capital charge, proceeded with great caution and provided every safeguard of fairness in the selection of witnesses and the entire conduct of the trial.

But on this occasion, Caiaphas was more of a prosecutor than an unbiased judge.

184:3.5 Jesus appeared before this court clothed in his usual garments and with his hands bound together behind his back. The entire court was startled and somewhat confused by his majestic appearance. Never had they gazed upon such a prisoner nor witnessed such composure in a man on trial for his life.

[[A]t least two witnesses must agree in testifying to the crime alleged (Fiske & Easton 180).]

184:3.6 The Jewish law required that at least two witnesses must agree upon any point before a charge could be laid against the prisoner.

[The priests could not employ Judas Iscariot as a witness,

Judas could not be used as a witness against Jesus

for their rules forbade the condemnation of a man on the evidence of a traitor, and, in this matter, they abode by their rules of procedure (Barton 367).]

because the Jewish law specifically forbade the testimony of a traitor.

More than a score of false witnesses were on hand to testify against Jesus,

[See 184:3.8, left column, below.]

but their testimony was so contradictory and so evidently trumped up that the Sanhedrists themselves were very much ashamed of the performance.

Jesus stood there, looking down benignly upon these perjurers, and his very countenance disconcerted the lying witnesses. Throughout all this false testimony the Master never said a word; he made no reply to their many false accusations.

§138. THE TRIAL BEFORE THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES. Matt. 26:57—27:10. Mark 14:53-72 [15:1a]. Luke 22:54-71. John 18:12-27.

184:3.7 The first time any two of their witnesses approached even the semblance of an agreement was when

Matt. 26:[60] But afterward came two, [61] and said,

two men testified that

Mark 14:58 We heard him say,

they had heard Jesus say

I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.

in the course of one of his temple discourses that

he would “destroy this temple made with hands and in three days make another temple without hands.”

59 And not even so did their witness agree together.

That was not exactly what Jesus said, regardless of the fact that he pointed to his own body when he made the remark referred to.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying,

184:3.8 Although the high priest shouted at Jesus,

Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

“Do you not answer any of these charges?”

[61] But he held his peace, and answered nothing.

Jesus opened not his mouth.

He stood there in silence while all of these false witnesses gave their testimony.

V, XIII: THURSDAY NIGHT—BEFORE ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS—PETER AND JESUS. (Edersheim² 546)

Hatred, fanaticism, and unscrupulous Eastern exaggeration would readily misrepresent and distort certain sayings of Christ, or falsely impute others to Him.

Hatred, fanaticism, and unscrupulous exaggeration so characterized the words of these perjurers

But it was altogether too hasty and excited an assemblage, and the witnesses contradicted themselves so grossly, or their testimony so notoriously broke down, that for very shame such trumped-up charges had to be abandoned.

that their testimony fell in its own entanglements.

The very best refutation of their false accusations was

And to this result the majestic calm of Christ's silence must have greatly contributed (E2 558).

the Master's calm and majestic silence.

184:3.9 Shortly after the beginning of the testimony of the false witnesses, Annas arrived and took his seat beside Caiaphas. Annas now arose and argued that this threat of Jesus to destroy the temple was sufficient to warrant three charges against him:

Dexterously manipulated, the testimony of these witnesses might lead up to two charges. It would show that Christ was a dangerous seducer of the people,

1. That he was a dangerous traducer of the people.

That he taught them impossible things and otherwise deceived them.

2. That he was a fanatical revolutionist in that he advocated

Whose claims might have led those who believed them to lay violent hands on the Temple,

laying violent hands on the sacred temple, else how could he destroy it?

while the supposed assertion, that He would or was able to build the Temple again within three days, might be made to imply Divine or magical pretensions (E2 559).

3. That he taught magic inasmuch as he promised to build a new temple, and that without hands.

184:3.10 Already had the full Sanhedrin agreed that Jesus was guilty of death-deserving transgressions of the Jewish laws,

But ... the purpose of the High-Priest was not to formulate a capital charge in *Jewish Law*, ... but to formulate a charge which would tell before the Roman Procurator (E2 559).

but they were now more concerned with developing charges regarding his conduct and teachings which would justify Pilate in pronouncing the death sentence upon their prisoner.

They knew that they must secure the consent of the Roman governor before Jesus could legally be put to death. And Annas was minded to proceed along the line of making it appear that Jesus was a dangerous teacher to be abroad among the people.

184:3.11 But Caiaphas could not longer endure the sight of the Master standing there in perfect composure and unbroken silence. He thought he knew at least one way in which the prisoner might be induced to speak.

§138. THE TRIAL BEFORE THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES. Matt. 26:57—27:10. Mark 14:53-72 [15:1a]. Luke 22:54-71. John 18:12-27.

Accordingly, he rushed over to the side of Jesus and, shaking his accusing finger in the Master's face,

Matt. 26:63 And the high priest said unto him,

said:

I adjure thee by the living God,

“I adjure you, in the name of the living God,

that thou tell us whether thou art the Son of God.

that you tell us whether you are the Deliverer, the Son of God.”

Mark 14:62 And Jesus said,

Jesus answered Caiaphas:

I am:

“I am.

and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power,

and coming with the clouds of heaven.

Matt. 26:65 Then the high priest rent his garments, saying,

He hath spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses?

Behold, now ye have heard the blasphemy:

66 what think ye?

They answered and said,

He is worthy of death.

Soon I go to the Father,

and presently shall the Son of Man be clothed with power

and once more reign over the hosts of heaven.”

184:3.12 When the high priest heard Jesus utter these words, he was exceedingly angry,

and rending his outer garments, he exclaimed:

“What further need have we of witnesses?

Behold, now have you all heard this man’s blasphemy.

What do you now think should be done with this lawbreaker and blasphemer?”

And they all answered in unison,

“He is worthy of death;

let him be crucified.”

184:3.13 Jesus manifested no interest in any question asked him when before Annas or the Sanhedrists except the one question relative to his bestowal mission. When asked if he were the Son of God, he instantly and unequivocally answered in the affirmative.

184:3.14 Annas desired that the trial proceed further, and that charges of a definite nature regarding Jesus’ relation to the Roman law and Roman institutions be formulated for subsequent presentation to Pilate.

[See 182:2.9.]

[Immediately after the feast Pilate might be returning to Caesarea (Bowie 291).]

Matt. 26:67 Then did they spit in his face and buffet him:

and some smote him with the palms of their hands,

V, XIII: THURSDAY NIGHT—BEFORE ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS—PETER AND JESUS. (Edersheim2 546)

This Man, alone so calm and majestic among those impassioned false judges and false witnesses;

The councilors were anxious to carry these matters to a speedy termination, not only because it was the preparation day for the Passover and no secular work should be done after noon,

but also because they feared Pilate might any time return to the Roman capital of Judea, Caesarea, since he was in Jerusalem only for the Passover celebration.

184:3.15 But Annas did not succeed in keeping control of the court. After Jesus had so unexpectedly answered Caiaphas, the high priest stepped forward and smote him in the face with his hand.

Annas was truly shocked as the other members of the court, in passing out of the room,

spit in Jesus' face,

and many of them mockingly slapped him with the palms of their hands.

And thus in disorder and with such unheard-of confusion this first session of the Sanhedrist trial of Jesus ended at half past four o'clock.⁴

184:3.16 Thirty prejudiced and tradition-blinded false judges, with their false witnesses,

are presuming to sit in judgment on the righteous Creator of a universe.

majestic in His silence,

majestic in His speech;

unmoved by threats to speak,

undaunted by threats when He spoke; Who saw it all—the end from the beginning; the Judge among His judges, the Witness before His witnesses: which was He—the Christ or a blaspheming impostor? Let history decide; let the heart and conscience of mankind give answer (E2 562).

And these impassioned accusers are exasperated by

the majestic silence and superb bearing of this God-man.

His silence is terrible to endure;

his speech is fearlessly defiant.

He is unmoved by their threats

and undaunted by their assaults.

Man sits in judgment on God, but even then he loves them and would save them if he could.

4 . THE HOUR OF HUMILIATION

LIX: THE EXAMINATION BEFORE THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES (Barton 365)

Jewish procedure ... required that, when a man was condemned to death by the Sanhedrin,

the sentence was not valid until it had been again voted by the judges at a meeting held a day later (B 368).

[[T]he judges must pass the rest of the day in mourning and fasting (Smith² 432).]

184:4.1 The Jewish law required that, in the matter of passing the death sentence,

there should be two sessions of the court.

This second session was to be held on the day following the first,

and the intervening time was to be spent in fasting and mourning by the members of the court.

[We have seen that, when Caiaphas and the Sanhedrists quitted the audience-chamber, Jesus was left to the unrestrained licence of the attendants (Edersheim² 563).]

The guards now regarded Jesus as a condemned prisoner and they amused themselves by abusing him (B 369).

§138. THE TRIAL BEFORE THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES. Matt. 26:57—27:10. Mark 14:53-72 [15:1*a*]. Luke 22:54-71. John 18:12-27.

Luke 22:63 And the men that held *Jesus* mocked him and beat him.

Matt. 26:67 Then did they spit in his face and buffet him:

And some smote him with the palms of their hands [ERV mg.: Or, *with rods*],

68 saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ:

who is he that struck thee?

Luke 22:65 And many other things spake they against him, reviling him.

But these men could not await the next day for the confirmation of their decision that Jesus must die. They waited only one hour.

In the meantime Jesus was left in the audience chamber in the custody of the temple guards,

who, with the servants of the high priest, amused themselves by heaping every sort of indignity upon the Son of Man.

They mocked him,

spit upon him, and cruelly buffeted him.

They would strike him in the face with a rod

and then say, "Prophesy to us, you the Deliverer,

who it was that struck you."

And thus they went on for one full hour,

reviling and mistreating this unresisting man of Galilee.

184:4.2 During this tragic hour of suffering and mock trials before the ignorant and unfeeling guards and servants, John Zebedee waited in lonely terror in an adjoining room. When these abuses first started, Jesus indicated to John, by a nod of his head, that he should retire. The Master well knew that, if he permitted his apostle to remain in the room to witness these indignities, John's resentment would be so aroused as to produce such an outbreak of protesting indignation as would probably result in his death.

184:4.3 Throughout this awful hour Jesus uttered no word.

[We can all imagine what a sensitive, pure person would suffer under such circumstances, and Christ was the most sensitive and pure of all who have ever lived (Barton 369).]

To this gentle and sensitive soul of humankind,

joined in personality relationship with the God of all this universe, there was no more bitter portion of his cup of humiliation than this terrible hour at the mercy of these ignorant and cruel guards and servants, who had been stimulated to abuse him by the example of the members of this so-called Sanhedrist court.⁵

184:4.4 The human heart cannot possibly conceive of the shudder of indignation that swept out over a vast universe as the celestial intelligences witnessed this sight of their beloved Sovereign submitting himself to the will of his ignorant and misguided creatures on the sin-darkened sphere of unfortunate Urantia.

V, XIII: THURSDAY NIGHT—BEFORE
ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS—PETER AND JESUS.
(Edersheim² 546)

All now rose in combined rebellion against the Perfect Man: the abject servility of the East, which delighted in **insults** on One Whom it could never have vanquished, and had not even dared to attack; ... the **brutality** of the **worse than animal in man** (since in him it is not under the guidance of Divine instinct),

and which, when unchained, seems to intensify in **coarseness** and **ferocity**;

and the profanity and devilry which are wont to apply the ... blows of tyrannical usurpation of power to all that is higher and better, ... before the shadows of which, when cast by superstition, they cower and tremble in abject fear!

And yet these **insults, taunts, and blows** which fell upon that lonely Sufferer,

not **defenceless**, but **undefending**,

not **vanquished**, but **uncontending**, not helpless, but majestic in voluntary self-submission for the highest purpose of love—

184:4.5 What is this trait of the **animal in man** which leads him to want to **insult** and physically assault that which he cannot spiritually attain or intellectually achieve?

In the half-civilized man there still lurks an evil **brutality** which seeks to vent itself upon those who are superior in wisdom and spiritual attainment.

Witness the evil **coarseness** and the brutal **ferocity** of these supposedly civilized men

as they derived a certain form of animal pleasure from this physical attack upon the unresisting Son of Man.

As these **insults, taunts, and blows** fell upon Jesus,

he was **undefending** but not **defenseless**.

Jesus was not **vanquished**, merely **uncontending** in the material sense.

have not only exhibited the curse of humanity, but also removed it by letting it descend on Him, the Perfect Man, the Christ, the Son of God (E2 562).

184:4.6 These are the moments of the Master's greatest victories in all his long and eventful career as maker, upholder, and savior of a vast and far-flung universe. Having lived to the full a life of revealing God to man, Jesus is now engaged in making a new and unprecedented revelation of man to God. Jesus is now revealing to the worlds the final triumph over all fears of creature personality isolation. The Son of Man has finally achieved the realization of identity as the Son of God. Jesus does not hesitate to assert that he and the Father are one; and on the basis of the fact and truth of that supreme and supernal experience, he admonishes every kingdom believer to become one with him even as he and his Father are one. The living experience in the religion of Jesus thus becomes the sure and certain technique whereby the spiritually isolated and cosmically lonely mortals of earth are enabled to escape personality isolation, with all its consequences of fear and associated feelings of helplessness. In the fraternal realities of the kingdom of heaven the faith sons of God find final deliverance from the isolation of the self, both personal and planetary. The God-knowing believer increasingly experiences the ecstasy and grandeur of spiritual socialization on a universe scale—citizenship on high in association with the eternal realization of the divine destiny of perfection attainment.

5. THE SECOND MEETING OF THE COURT

184:5.1 At five-thirty o'clock the court reassembled, and Jesus was led into the adjoining room, where John was waiting. Here the Roman soldier and the temple guards watched over Jesus while the court began the formulation of the charges which were to be presented to Pilate. Annas made it clear to his associates that the charge of blasphemy would carry no weight with Pilate. Judas was present during this second meeting of the court, but he gave no testimony.

[This second meeting was probably brief (Barton 371).]

184:5.2 This session of the court lasted only a half hour,

and when they adjourned to go before Pilate, they had drawn up the indictment of Jesus, as being worthy of death, under three heads:

[See 185:2.10ff.]

1. That he was a perverter of the Jewish nation; he deceived the people and incited them to rebellion.

2. That he taught the people to refuse to pay tribute to Caesar.

3. That, by claiming to be a king and the founder of a new sort of kingdom, he incited treason against the emperor.

184:5.3 This entire procedure was irregular and wholly contrary to the Jewish laws. No two witnesses had agreed on any matter except those who testified regarding Jesus' statement about destroying the temple and raising it again in three days. And even concerning that point, no witnesses spoke for the defense, and neither was Jesus asked to explain his intended meaning.

184:5.4 The only point the court could have consistently judged him on was that of blasphemy, and that would have rested entirely on his own testimony.⁶ Even concerning blasphemy, they failed to cast a formal ballot for the death sentence.

184:5.5 And now they presumed to formulate three charges, with which to go before Pilate, on which no witnesses had been heard, and which were agreed upon while the accused prisoner was absent. When this was done, three of the Pharisees took their leave; they wanted to see Jesus destroyed, but they would not formulate charges against him without witnesses and in his absence.

184:5.6 Jesus did not again appear before the Sanhedrist court. They did not want again to look upon his face as they sat in judgment upon his innocent life. Jesus did not know (as a man) of their formal charges until he heard them recited by Pilate.

§138. THE TRIAL BEFORE THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES. Matt. 26:57—27:10. Mark 14:53-72 [15:1a]. Luke 22:54-71. John 18:12-27.

184:5.7 While Jesus was in the room with John and the guards,

Luke 22:66 And as soon as it was day, the assembly of the elders of the people was gathered together, both chief priests and scribes;

and while the court was in its second session,

some of the women about the high priest's palace, together with their friends, came to look upon the strange prisoner, and one of them asked him,

and they led him away into their council, saying, 67 If thou art the Christ, tell us.

“Are you the Messiah, the Son of God?”

But he said unto them,

And Jesus answered:

If I tell you, ye will not believe:

“If I tell you, you will not believe me;

68 and if I ask *you*, ye will not answer.

and if I ask you, you will not answer.”

XXXI: FRIDAY.—THE DAY OF SUFFERING. (*A Harmony of the Gospels* 210)

§139. THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE. Matt. 27:[2] 11-31. Mark 15:1-20. Luke 23:1-25. John 18:28—19:16a.

184:5.8 At six o'clock that morning

John 18:[28] They lead Jesus therefore from Caiaphas into the Prætorium:

Jesus was led forth from the home of Caiaphas to appear before Pilate

for confirmation of the sentence of death which this Sanhedrist court had so unjustly and irregularly decreed.

1. *Compare:* 183:5.1 The captain of the temple guards gave orders that [Jesus] should be taken to Caiaphas, the acting high priest. The captain of the Roman soldiers directed that Jesus be taken to the palace of Annas, the former high priest and father-in-law of Caiaphas. And this he did because the Romans were in the habit of dealing directly with Annas in all matters having to do with the enforcement of the Jewish ecclesiastical laws.

2. *Note:* Where was John Zebedee during this interview? In 183:5.4 we read:

And this explains why John Zebedee was permitted to remain near Jesus all the way through his trying experiences this night and the next day. The Jews feared to say aught to John or to molest him in any way because he had something of the status of a Roman counselor designated to act as observer of the transactions of the Jewish ecclesiastical court.

According to the UB, John and his brother James were well-known to Annas, having been guests at his house many times. The UB's lack of mention of where John was, why he apparently didn't meet Annas, and why he was not acknowledged as a close follower of Jesus, is a curious omission.

3. *Compare:* In that gentle countenance [Peter] read deep pity and sorrow, but there was no anger there (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* [1898],) p. 713.

4. *Compare:* Mt. and Mk. make it plain that the mockery was done by the Sanhedrists. Lk., perhaps deeming this incredible, has put the incident before the meeting of Sanhedrin and attributed the brutality to “the men that held Jesus” (Smith2 472, footnote).

5. *Note:* Why was it worse than the later scourging and the crucifixion itself?

6. *Compare*: Unless somebody is injured, there can be no crime; and to prove a crime, there must be evidence other than the prisoner's own (Wilson 280).

Compare also: The Roman officers declared that the Jews in pronouncing condemnation upon Jesus were infringing upon the Roman power, and that it was even **against the Jewish law to condemn a man to death upon his own testimony** (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* [1898], p. 715).