

42- Arrest, Trial and Denial John 18:1-40

The time has come to fulfill the purpose for which Jesus had been born. He was born so that He may die for our sins. The darkness envelopes them as they move through the night headed for the destiny of the cross. After Jesus prays the prayer recorded in John 17 they come to the brook Cedron (also called Kidron) and cross over.

I- The Arrest:

I remind us that earlier in the night Judas had left to betray Jesus. We see this take place now in a place that Judas knew well and knew that Jesus frequented. Some speculate that Judas had initially taken the soldiers to the upper room and there not finding Jesus lead them to the garden.

The other three gospels give us the account of the agony in the garden when Jesus asked His disciples to watch and pray and they fell asleep. His sweat became drops of blood in these moments of intense prayer. John does not give us any of this agony. He moved quickly to Christ arrest.

Joh 18:1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. 2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. 3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

They come to arrest the one who had done no wrong, guilty of only doing good, as a common robber and thief. In the night with swords and torches.

Did this surprise Jesus? Certainly not! The other gospels tell us of the kiss of betray. John does not.

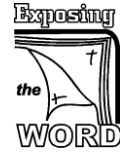
The Liberty Commentary says: "Note the paradox: they came with **torches** to take the Light of the world, and they came with weapons to arrest the Prince of Peace." (p 208)

Joh 18:4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? 5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. 6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. 7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. 8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: 9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

Jesus asked them who they were looking for and the verification from His mouth that He was the one was so powerful that they fell back at the words. This shows that Jesus had the power to overcome this show of force if He had so desired. We do not see such a display again from Jesus. He surrendered and was lead as a sheep to slaughter.

Jesus may have surrendered to the mob but Peter certainly did not. Peter, the one who had had the audacity to rebuke Christ for talking about dying and the one who claimed he would not deny him. He responds the only way he knew, directly with force.

Joh 18:10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. 11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword



into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

Luke 22:51 tells us Jesus healed the ear on the man's head. Jesus' arrest is complete.

The drama of the next few hours will unfold switching from the trial to Peter denying Christ.

II- The Trial (Scene 1):

Arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus is taken under the cloak of darkness to be tried in a trial that would last the night into the next day.

Joh 18:12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, 13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. 14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Only John of the four gospels gives us the account of the questioning of Annas.

The position of High Priest, that God had originally set up to be the mediator between the people and God, had now become no more than a political position. Annas, where Jesus was first taken, is a subject of discussion as to exactly what position he held. Let me quote from *Smith's bible Dictionary* to show just how many opinions there are of him.

Some maintain that the two, Annas and Caiaphas, were together at the head of the Jewish people, Caiaphas as actual high priest, Annas as resident of the Sanhedrin. Act 4:6. Others again suppose that Annas held the office of **sagin**, or *substitute of the high priest*; others still that Annas held the title and was really the ruling power. He lived to old age, having had five sons high priests.

Regardless of position it is obvious that he held great power because it was to him they took Jesus after His arrest. He wanted to ascertain how many followers Jesus had and other things.

III: The Denial (Scene 1):

The narrative switches now to the first scene outside the halls of power to the streets. This is the first of three denials of Peter.

Joh 18:15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. 16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. 17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. 18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

John is assumed to be the one who had inside contacts and went in with Jesus. Peter was left outside at first of outside the courtyard then as he allowed access the first denial took place.

There is an obvious thing that needs mentioned. Peter had made his brag about what he would do. We need to be careful to say we will or will not do anything because most times the brags are out of pride and not of the Spirit of God. We need the help of God to succeed in anything.

IV- The Trial (Scene 2):

The scene is now in the house of Caiaphas. The trial is underway not to discover if He is guilty but to find a reason to kill Him.



Joh 18:19 *The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. 20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. 21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.*

Again Jesus is relying on the verification of His messiahship into the hearts of men. He told them to ask those who had heard Him what He had claimed. He had taught openly and done nothing in secret as opposed to what they were doing under the cloak of darkness.

Joh 18:22 *And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? 23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? 24 Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.*

This is not really a surprise that they would strike Him. The surprise is that they could get away with it and not be struck dead on the spot. Jesus chose to not exercise His power. He was being a Lamb lead to the slaughter for us.

V: The Denial (Scene 2):

The scene switches back to Simon Peter. He stands by the fire and is asked if he is Jesus follower again. He denies it the second time and the third.

Joh 18:25 *And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. 26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? 27*

Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.

Remember Jesus had told Him that He would deny him three times before the rooster crowed. The gospel of Luke gives us more of the emotion of this final denial. **Luke 22:61-62** *And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.*

There is no denying that Jesus knows all about us. He knows our past failure and triumphs as well as our future as well. I choose to believe that when Jesus turned to Peter that Peter saw the love in His eyes that broke the heart of Peter. Christ had known what He would do and Peter did not, but Christ still loved him and us as well, intently. The denial was over, Peter had not proven a disappointment to Christ for Christ had know all along that this would happen. We have a lot of people who feel like when they experience a failure that God cannot use them ever again and they have surprised God by failing Him. Beloved God is in the business of rebuilding live.

VI- The Trial (Scene 3):

There was a trial, or an inquisition, that takes place in the house of Caiaphas. Matthew records this for us in **Matthew 26:57-68**. John passes over this portion of the trial of Jesus and tells us in **Joh 18:28** **Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.** (for the other gospel accounts see **Matt 26:57-68, Mark 14:53-65, Luke 22:54, 63-65**)

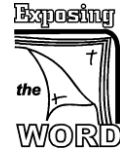
We see that shortly after dawn Jesus is condemned by the Sanhedrin according to



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Mar 15:1 *And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.*

They take Jesus now to the residence of Pilate early in the morning. Now this is a paradox as well. Here these men were condemning an innocent man for political purpose and to protect their position with what one could argue would rise to murder, and were concerned with not being defiled for the Passover. How quickly they overlooked their sin because of their self-righteousness.

John's third scene of the trial takes place before Pilate in his judgment hall.

Joh 18: 29 *Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? 30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. 31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: 32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.*

The Romans crucified, which was prophesied concerning Messiah, but the Jews stoned for capital punishment.

Pilate interview of Jesus serves to confuse Pilate. He wondered why Jesus was being delivered unto him. What had he done? Pilate does not find fault in Him and desired to release Him.

John 18:33 *Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? 34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell*

it thee of me? 35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? 36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. 38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

The irony of this is that the Truth stood in front of Pilate and he did not recognize it. Spiritually blind cannot see the glorious gospel until the Spirit opens blind eyes.

Luke 23:6-12 gives us the detail that Pilate sent Jesus to Herod who sent Him back to Pilate.

John 18:39 *But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? 40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.*

Mat 27:20 *But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.*

They sold out the Lord for a murdered and thief. But is it any different in our day? Men today continue to sell Him out for drugs, sex, money, power and a number of things. The question now is have you sold out to Jesus or have you sold Jesus out for things?