

THE SIX TRIALS OF CHRIST

By John W. Lawrence

No copyright

edited for 3BSB by Baptist Bible Believer in the spirit of the Colportage Ministry of a century ago

~ out-of-print and in the public domain ~

Chapter 5

THE TRIAL BEFORE CAIAPHAS AND THE SANHEDRIN

In the four Gospels we have 4 chapters devoted to the first 30 years of CHRIST's life, while we have 85 chapters devoted to the last 3 1/2 years He was on this earth. The emphasis is clearly placed by GOD on the last 3 1/2 years.

Of the 85 chapters devoted to the 3 1/2 year ministry of CHRIST, 56 chapters are given to the entire period up to the last week, while 29 chapters concern the last week alone. The emphasis is clearly on the last week.

Of the 29 chapters that speak of the last week, 13 are devoted to the events of the last day which began at sundown and ended at sundown. Clearly GOD has placed the emphasis where He has wanted it placed. It will do us good to spend the time even in our private devotions on this final day of our Lord on earth.

Matthew has 8 chapters concerning the Last week and 2 chapters concerning the Last day.

Mark has 6 chapters concerning the Last week and 2 chapters concerning the Last day.

Luke has 6 chapters concerning the Last week and 2 chapters concerning the Last day.

John has 9 chapters concerning the Last week and 7 chapters concerning the Last day.

So the Gospels have a total of 29 chapters dealing with the last week and 13 of them concern the last day.

THE FIRST TRIAL SOUGHT SELF-INCRIMINATION

The first trial of CHRIST is over. Annas met with CHRIST in order to find an accusation with which to try Him. However, the Lord would not testify against Himself, but demanded witnesses. Annas sent the Lord bound to Caiaphas who was the high priest that year and who took over as the president of the Sanhedrin.

This trial is given to us in Matthew 26:57-66 and Mark 14:53-65.

Luke mentions only Peter's denials and the maltreatment of CHRIST (Luke 22:54-65).

John mentions only the denials of Peter at this trial (John 18:24-27).

Both Matthew and Mark are writing to bring out the illegality of the trial: Matthew to the Jews as an indictment to the nation of Israel; Mark to the Romans who prided themselves in their code of judicial justice. But in Mark, CHRIST goes to Pilate after this trial and he does no better than the Sanhedrin. This trial before the Sanhedrin is the main ecclesiastic trial. A mock rehearsal of the same events is held after the sun is up in order to conform to the Law.

We will follow the trial in Matthew's Gospel, and make comment of Mark then there is something additional that is given.

MATTHEW 26:57: "And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled."

By this time the entire Sanhedrin had had time to assemble themselves together and were waiting as JESUS was brought in. The case was so urgent that it could not await the daybreak. Everything had to be over when the populace awakened in the morning.

It was still night, probably about 3:30 or 4:00 A.M.

Luke tells us specifically that He was brought **"into the high priest's house"** (22:54). This was where the Sanhedrin had assembled, but it was illegal for the Sanhedrin to meet anywhere but their own hall, known as the hall of judgment, which was a part of the Temple complex.

They will go to this Hall of Judgment at daybreak in order to give a repeat performance of the trial that is about to take place.

Mark tells us: **"And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and elders and scribes"** (14:53). Thus the entire Sanhedrin was present, which is important. This thing was not railroaded through by just a few.

MATTHEW 26:58: "But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end."

Peter follows the procession afar off as they move from the home of Annas to the home of Caiaphas. He is going along with the servants and feels he will not be noticed this way.

In the Oriental house of this magnitude there would be the large room on one side of an open court or patio. In the case of Annas, JESUS was only taken into the court: **"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"** (John 18:15). In the case of the trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin, CHRIST is tried in the large room, while Peter is out in the court where the fire was burning: "Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast

with Jesus of Galilee" (Matthew 26:69). The inside room would have been lighted so everyone in the court could see beyond the large pillars into the area and watch the entire proceedings.

MATTHEW 26:59: "Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death."

The word '*council*,' is "**Sanhedrin**."

Think of it! Here was the greatest assembly in the world. These men sat in Moses' seat with divine authority over the entire nation of Israel.

These were the interpreters of the Law of Moses, and it was their task to administer justice.

It was their task to guard the nation against heresy and false prophets even as the Law itself said.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 - Open enticement

"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee."

Deuteronomy 13:6-11 - Secret enticement

"If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy Fathers; Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. And all

Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you"

It is in this first category that the Sanhedrin feel they are justified in assembling and trying this case. Though He has done miracles, these miracles are attributed to being performed by the power of Satan. Their verdict is that He is turning the people to "another GOD" in claiming to be the Son of GOD Himself.

This is the issue.

Dr. Edersheim, in "*Life and Times of Jesus*," states: "The Sanhedrin did not and could not originate charges. It only investigated those brought before it." Yet the entire procedure of this court, in its relationship to the Lord, reveals that it originated the charges as well as proceeded to try the case. The Court thus becomes both the prosecution and the judge.

MATTHEW 26:59b ". . . sought false witness against Jesus to put him to death."

Here they were seeking false witnesses when as yet they have not stated His crime. Any trial is to begin with a clear statement of the crime alleged and with the production of witnesses already secured to support the charge and to testify against the person.

In this case there is no charge and they have to seek for witnesses, or as Matthew says, "**False witness.**"

Why do they have to seek?

Because unsought, nothing presented itself, but Annas has said, "Get witnesses and get rid of Him!" They are seeking to be obedient.

Think of the judges trying a case seeking witnesses. This is not the work of the judges who are to be impartial and administer justice.

The Judges had already reached the verdict before they tried the case. The verdict was "death." All they needed now were the witnesses to substantiate this decision.

MATTHEW 26:60a "But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none . . ."

Before we stand to condemn them, let us be careful we are not guilty of the same act in another area. I have seen many people with the verdict rendered already -- with their minds already made up -- seeking for passages of Scripture to support their preconceived position.

The act is the same; the difference is only in the area involved and in the magnitude of the case.

There were many who wanted to testify against CHRIST, each one for their own

reasons.

"A man's life is known by his enemies."

He that has no enemies has sought to be a manpleaser -- he has done no lasting good.

In the ministration of truth, CHRIST had offended many. They welcomed the opportunity to get back at Him.

But each witness destroyed the witness of someone else. Thus Mark tells us: **"For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together."** The Law required two witnesses to agree. One witness was no witness.

At last two witnesses gave a semblance of agreement to something they heard Him say. This was enough. They were rushed into the meeting room to testify.

MATTHEW 26:60b-61: **"At the last came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days."**

Mark goes into fuller detail as to what they testified: **"And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another without hands"** (14:57-58).

Matthew's witness said He had the power to both destroy the Temple of GOD and to build it up in three days.

If they are going to use this against Him, they have to prove that He doesn't have this power.

Mark's witness testified that CHRIST said "I will destroy this handmade temple and I will build another (of the same kind) not handmade in three days time."

In order to use this against Him they have to prove that He will not do this.

The fact is that CHRIST said neither. **"You destroy this sanctuary** (inner sanctuary, i.e., Holy of Holies -- the dwelling place of GOD) **and in three days I will raise it up."**

CHRIST here referred to His body.

This was the sign of His authority for casting out the money changers, etc., from the temple. In other words, "You men destroy my body and in three days I will raise it up."

With the witnesses not agreeing as to His statement, they were destroying themselves and were becoming no witnesses at all. Furthermore, even if they had agreed, no legal accusation could have been formed against CHRIST by their testimony. The case is falling apart, but this will never do, for the case has already been decided. Something must be done and done in a hurry.

MATTHEW 26:62: "And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee?"

The is the first time that Caiaphas has addressed CHRIST in the Scripture.

There is something as far as criminal code is concerned that is very important in reference to this man.

John brings this to our attention in John 18:14: **"Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people."**

This refers to a previous statement given in John's Gospel in 11:47-53: **"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death."**

This is the decision of the Sanhedrin.

The Council met and knew they had to do something, but what? "If we do nothing the gullible people will be taken in by Him, and this will cause the Romans to come and take away our authority and nation from us."

Caiaphas addresses the Sanhedrin clearly not acting as President but only as "one of them." Many authorities state that it was illegal for the High Priest to be President of the Sanhedrin as occurs in the trial of CHRIST.

"Ye, who dwell on these scruples and these fears, do not even know the simplest rule of statesmanship, that one must be sacrificed to many," according to B.W. Westcott.

Then John adds a footnote in verse 51 and 52 that whereas Caiaphas made the statement in one way, GOD would use it as truth in another. Verse 53 shows us the counsel of Caiaphas was accepted and their action was decided. Their indecision was now only in reference to time and means.

But the point of criminal prosecution and justice is that no judge qualifies to render justice in a case which he himself has already formed a preconceived decision as to the outcome.

Here we have the Judge who has previously given his verdict of what must be done in

the case now taking over in the trial of the case in his own home -- all of which was contrary to their own code, let alone to every code of criminal prosecution.

It is in this situation with the witnesses breaking down that the high priest arises from his seat and says to CHRIST: "Answerest thou nothing?"

Why should He? If He has done wrong produce the witnesses, but this they could not do. Had not CHRIST previously challenged His adversaries: "**Which of you convinceth me of sin?**" (John 8:46).

Here was the LAMB of GOD without spot.

Why should He? Were not these witnesses destroying themselves and testifying of nothing that could possibly bring an indictment against Him.

"What is it which these witness against thee?" You answer that Caiaphas. They witnessed nothing against CHRIST but only witnessed to the vile, corrupt, depraved heart of their sin nature.

MATTHEW 26:63a: **"But Jesus held his peace."**

He was absolutely silent. It was not His place to testify against Himself; it was their place to bear witness if He had done any wrong.

The trial before Annas had gone from bad to worse, and the same thing was occurring here before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin.

Their witness had failed.

The two that were used did not agree among themselves.

The high priest tried to have CHRIST speak, but this failed. His silence was golden as He stood in absolute innocence. There was only one final way that the high priest knew in order to achieve the decision that they had already reached.

MATTHEW 26:63b: **"And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God."**

Stalker says, "He put Him on oath to tell what He claimed to be; for among Jews the oath was pronounced by the Judge, not by the prisoner."

This is the climax of the life of CHRIST on earth.

The person sworn answered without repeating the form itself with a simple "Yes" or "No."

If he deviated from the truth he could know that the living GOD would punish him who had been invoked as a witness to the statement.

Before we consider CHRIST's answer let us consider two things.

1. The high priest knew first of all that to claim to be the MESSIAH would be to claim to be the Son of GOD, and thus Deity.

This was clear to him as a student of the Old Testament Scriptures. Thus whoever would be the MESSIAH would be the Son of GOD which in the mouth of an Israelite was Deity incarnate: **"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God"** (John 5:18) and **"The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God"** (John 10:33).

2. Secondly, the high priest knew precisely what JESUS CHRIST claimed to be. They all knew that He claimed to be the MESSIAH. They knew all of the works He had performed including His last main one of raising Lazarus from the dead.

If He answers "No," they will forget the trial and drop the case. He has discredited Himself -- His word will stand.

If He answers "Yes," He will not be making any new statement nor new claim, but they will charge Him with blasphemy and execute Him as they have planned.

In either case they feel they will win and CHRIST will lose. Fools!

MATTHEW 26:64

The reply of CHRIST is in two parts. **"Thou has said."**

This is an idiom for "Yes, that is right. You said it as you asked the question." "I am" (Mark 14:62).

He then added: **"Nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven"** (Matthew 26:64).

The answer the Lord gave means suffering and death for Him, but it means "life" for us. The Lord cannot but speak the truth.

Let the scoffers have their hour; His will come when they shall see He was right and they were wrong.

Again let us remind ourselves that the high priest and all the members of the Sanhedrin were completely cognizant of what the Old Testament Scriptures taught, and that when the MESSIAH came He would be the SON of GOD, and He would be exalted to the highest seat of authority.

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand; until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Psalm 110:1). CHRIST quoted this in Matthew 22:44.

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of Heaven . . ."

CHRIST makes the same claims He has made from the very beginning, which were made even by His forerunner -- John the Baptist.

He is the CHRIST.

To be the CHRIST He must fulfill all the Scriptures prophecied about the MESSIAH. This He claims He will do. They may take away His earthly life because the Father wills, but they can never touch His eternal life, nor His stated destiny. He shall sit and He shall come again.

THE INDICTORS ARE THEMSELVES INDICTED

It was this same group, this same Sanhedrin, that later sat and tried Stephen: **"And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel"** (Acts 6:8-15)

Stephen gave his address before this body (Acts 7:1-53), but was never allowed to complete it before they became so enraged that they were willing to kill Stephen to stamp out the light.

"But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55-56).

The witness had been borne. They saw this in the face of Stephen, and then snuffed out his life.

With JESUS bearing testimony for the very last time of whom He was, He places His accusers and judges on trial. They must now prove that what He has said is not true.

But they have already decided this, first when they committed the unpardonable sin, and later in secret meeting. They had already considered the evidence and rendered the verdict. They have judged the case in private session and given the sentence of death. The procedure that has been followed is only their means of carrying out that sentence.

Now they sit as His judges; but then He will sit as their JUDGE -- and He has the greater judgment both in extent and duration. It is not a matter that they do not believe; they will not believe. It is a willful rejection.

MATTHEW 26:65a: **"Then the high priest rent his clothes."**

The rending of the garments is designed to be a sign of intense sorrow or anguish, in this case because the high priest heard blasphemy. By tearing his garments he was saying to the other judges, "I mourn because my ears have had to listen to the greatest possible blasphemy they could hear."

But you who sit in Moses' seat and judge according to the Law, Do you hear the Law?

"And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes." (Leviticus 21:10)

Here is the high priest condemning One who was guiltless before the Law, for no witnesses could be produced to prove otherwise, and no witnesses were allowed to prove His Messiahship; yet here he is breaking the Law himself in his eagerness to condemn CHRIST to death.

Who ever heard of the chief justice acting in such a manner? But all protocol is set aside to achieve the desired decision. Yet this act was to be employed by GOD as symbolic of the rending of the Aaronic priesthood in order to establish a new priest and priesthood after the order of Melchisedec: **"If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law"** (Hebrews 7:11-12).

At this time the high priest addresses the other members of the Sanhedrin: **"He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye?"**

The high priest renders his decision: **"He hath spoken blasphemy."** But the decision that there is not further need of witnesses, and this in spite of the fact that the law demanded them.

But Caiaphas and members of the Sanhedrin: You have had the Man to testify against Himself, and accepted that testimony as convicting evidence contrary to your own code, but you have not proved Him to be wrong. You must FIRST prove His claim is false

before you render your decision. Furthermore, does this claim that JESUS is the CHRIST remain without testimony? Why have you not allowed witnesses on His behalf to substantiate His claim?

Matthew tells us why. You committed the unpardonable sin when the signs of His Messiahship were first presented to the nation, and now there was no sign but the sign of the prophet Jonah: **"But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here"** (Matthew 12:39-41) and "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed" (Matthew 16:4). That sign is death, burial and resurrection of JESUS CHRIST and the Gospel going to the Gentiles. The resurrection of JESUS CHRIST is the sign to Israel that His claim of Messiahship was correct: "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4) and **"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ"** (Acts 2:32-36). This is why so many priests came to believe later: **"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith"** (Acts 6:7).

The high priest continues: "Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy."

You will remember that a man's words before the Sanhedrin could not be used against him apart from other witnesses and being proven wrong. Here they again break their own code of justice.

WHAT THINK YE?

"What think ye?" -- Render your decision.

The whole Sanhedrin rendered the predetermined verdict: "He is guilty of death." Thus they voted simultaneously in contradiction to their own law.

The trial itself is over, or shall we call it better, "The mockery of Justice."

The verdict has been rendered.

The charge for which He was condemned: "Blasphemy."
The verdict: "Guilty."
The sentence: "Death."

We have just seen religion at work with words; now we will behold its deeds. There is nothing as bad as religion. Religion always has and always will be the greatest enemy of truth and righteousness until the Lord destroys religion in the tribulation.

It was religion that put JESUS CHRIST on the cross. It has been religion that has slain the martyrs of JESUS: "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration" (Revelation 17:6). Politically, Satan controls the kingdom of this world as the Prince of the kosmos. Religiously, Satan controls the world as the prince and power of the air. The whole world lies in the power of the wicked one (I John 5:19) on two counts.

THE MOCKERY OF THE TRIAL ON TWO COUNTS

What is taking place is something that startles the imagination. These men have just sentenced a man to die: that was their verdict. Any court that has the power of life and death ought to be a place of solemnity and dignity. The judges are responsible before the very law and authority given them to try a case, to protect the criminal against all injustice and maltreatment when he is found guilty.

These outrages would have been inexcusable even toward a man irrevocably condemned to punishment, but were all the more criminal toward JESUS who had never been proven guilty of anything.

The very fact that these things were done in Caiaphas' house too, makes him culpable just as a citizen, let alone as presiding officer of the Sanhedrin. But those displays of feelings which occurred were just the aftermath of Caiaphas' own rage which he himself displayed upon the bench. Behind it all is more than the wickedness of the human heart, even though that heart is exceedingly sinful and incurably wicked. What is displayed against CHRIST is an infernal wickedness of the forces of the underworld. This is their hour.

Here is the record of the proceedings.

(1) **"Then did they spit in his face,"** (Matthew 26:67)

This fulfills Isaiah 50:6, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."

For someone to spit in another's face was to show the greatest contempt possible for that one.

"They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face" (Job 30:10)

"And the Lord said unto Moses, If her Father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again" (Numbers 12:14).

(2) **"and buffeted him,"** (Matthew 26:67)

This word is "to strike with the fist," or "the knuckles."

Paul used the same word in I Corinthians 9:27 of "keeping under" his body by giving blows with the fists. When they get tired of doing this, someone suggested they play a little game.

(3) They covered his face (Mark 14:65) and someone then **"smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that struck thee?"** (Matthew 26:67-68).

Here is the first mockery. He claimed to be MESSIAH. If He were MESSIAH He could give the name of the person who struck Him even though He were blindfolded. These servants ridicule the Lord's claim at being the MESSIAH and PROPHET who was to come. Secondly, The Roman soldiers later ridicule His claim at being a KING.

When He answered nothing, they laughed and jested and mocked. He had given His word, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah," and this must stand.

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:7).

One word would have felled them all, yet He opened not His mouth. One word and He would have been vindicated, but this was not the Father's will nor way. The SON was to be vindicated by His resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4). The Father's will for Him now was to be "dumb" though He be the Lord of all.

~ end of chapter 5
