

THE SIX TRIALS OF CHRIST

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Chapter 4

THE TRIAL BEFORE ANNAS

We are beginning a section of Scripture which staggers the imagination. In all the history of mankind on the earth, there has never been the equal of the miscarriage of justice that is about to take place concerning the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

It is a mockery at mercy and this in spite of what the Law had said: "**Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee**" (Deuteronomy 16:18-20)

In order to carry out the letter of the Law, every place where there were 120 men as head of families had a Sanhedrin, that would govern all matters, consisting of 23 elders. If the town was smaller, it was governed by 3 or 7 members, or elders. This was the governing body of a synagogue community. One of them was designated the "**chief ruler.**" The Sanhedrin served thus as a court.

In Jerusalem was the Great Sanhedrin, "**The Council,**" consisting of 70 members plus the High Priest. This was the final Court of Appeal and the highest ruling body of the nation of Israel.

The smaller Sanhedrins are referred to in passages such as: "**But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee**" (Matthew 5:22-23) and "**But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues**" (Matthew 10:17) and "**But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them**"

(Mark 13:9) and others.

JEWISH LAWS OF JURISPRUDENCE

Based on the Law, one of the finest codes of jurisprudence had been specifically laid out for the operation of the Sanhedrin in criminal procedure.

In legal terms the Law demanded three things: publicity of the trial, entire liberty of defense allowed to the accused, and a guaranty against the dangers of testimony.

Accordingly, one witness is no witness for there must be at least two who knew the fact: **"At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death"** (Deuteronomy 17:6) and **"One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established"** (Deuteronomy 19:15). The witness, who testifies against a man, must affirm that he speaks the truth; the judges then proceed to take exact information of the matter.

If it is found that the witness has sworn falsely, they compel him to undergo the punishment to which he would have exposed his neighbor: **"If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong; Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days; And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you"** (Deuteronomy 19:16-19).

The discussion between the accuser and the accused is conducted before the whole assembly of the people. In the case where a man is condemned to death, those witnesses whose evidence decided the sentence, inflict the first blows, in order to add the last degree of certainty to their evidence: **"The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you"** (Deuteronomy 17:7).

Thus CHRIST speaking to men in their culture exclaimed, "Let him among you who is without sin, cast the first stone," and in context of the statement referred to the crime at hand - the sin of adultery.

HOW A TRIAL WAS TO PROCEED

Thus according to Joseph Salvador, quoted by Simon Greenleaf in "The Testimony of the Evangelists," a trial would proceed in the following manner.

On the day of the trial, the executive officers of justice caused the accused person to make his appearance. At the feet of the Elders were placed men who, under the name of auditors, or candidates, followed regularly the sittings of Council. The papers in the

case were read; and the witnesses were called in succession. The president addressed this exhortation to each of them: 'It is not conjectures, or whatever public rumour has brought to thee, that we ask of thee; consider that a great responsibility rests upon thee: that we are not occupied by an affair, like a case of pecuniary interest, in which the injury may be repaired. If thou causest the condemnation of a person unjustly accused, his blood, and the blood of all the posterity of him, of whom thou wilt have deprived the earth, will fall upon thee; GOD will demand of thee an account, as he demanded of Cain an account of the blood of Abel. Speak.'

A woman could not be a witness, because she would not have the courage to give the first blow to the condemned person; nor could a child, that is irresponsible, nor a slave, nor a man of bad character, nor one whose infirmities prevent the full enjoyment of his physical and moral faculties. The simple confession of an individual against himself, or the declaration, however renowned, would not decide a condemnation. The Doctors say -- 'We hold it as fundamental, that no one shall prejudice himself. If a man accuses himself before a tribunal, we must not believe him, unless the fact is attested by two other witnesses; and it is proper to remark, that the punishment of death inflicted upon Achan, in the time of Joshua was an exception, occasioned by the nature of the circumstances; for our Law does not condemn upon the simple confession of the accused, nor upon the declaration of one prophet alone.'

The witnesses were to attest to the identity of the party, and to depose to the month, day, hour, and circumstances of the crime. After an examination of the proofs, those judges who believed the party innocent stated their reasons; those who believed him guilty spoke afterwards, and with the greatest moderation. If one of the auditors or candidates, was entrusted by the accused with his defense, or if he wished in his own name to present any elucidations in favor of innocence, he was admitted to the seat, from which he addressed the judges and the people. But this liberty was not granted to him, if his opinion was in favour of condemning. Lastly; when the accused person himself wished to speak, they gave the most profound attention. When the discussion was finished, one of the judges recapitulated the case; they removed all the spectators; two scribes took down the votes of the judges; one of them noted those which were in favor of the accused; and the other, those which condemned him. Eleven votes, out of twenty-three, were sufficient to acquit; but it required thirteen to convict. If any of the judges stated that they were not sufficiently informed, there were added two more Elders, and then two others in succession, till they formed a council of sixty-two, which was the number of the Grand Council. If a majority of votes acquitted, the accused was discharged instantly; if he was to be punished, the judges postponed pronouncing sentence till the third day; during the intermediate day they could not be occupied with anything but the cause, and they abstained from eating freely, and from wine, liquors, and everything which might render their minds less capable of reflection.

On the morning of the third day they returned to the judgment seat. Each judge, who had not changed his opinion, said, I continue of the same opinion and condemn; any one, who at first condemned, might at this sitting acquit; but he who at once acquitted was not allowed to condemn. If a majority condemned, two magistrates immediately accompanied the condemned person to the place of punishment. The Elders did not descend from their seats; They placed at the entrance of the judgment hall an officer of

justice with a small flag in his hand; a second officer, on horseback, followed the prisoner, and constantly kept looking back to the place of departure. During this interval, if any person came to announce to the elders any new evidence favourable to the prisoner, the first officer waved his flag, and the second one, as soon as he perceived it, brought back the prisoner. If the prisoner declared to the magistrates, that he recollected some reasons which had escaped him, they brought him before the judges no less than five times. If no incident occurred, the procession advanced slowly, preceded by a herald who, in a loud voice, addressed the people thus: 'Thus man (stating his name and surname) is led to punishment for such a crime; the witnesses who have sworn against him are such and such persons; if any one has evidence to give in his favour, let him come forth quickly.'

PAUL WAS A MEMBER OF THE SANHEDRIN

At some distance from the place of punishment, they urged the prisoner to confess his crime, and they made him drink a stupefying beverage, in order to render the approach of death less terrible.

With this code for the local Sanhedrins, the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem was in no way less lax in its administration of justice.

The appointment to the Great Sanhedrin was made by that tribunal itself. They would either promote to their ranks a member of one of the many lesser Sanhedrin of the various towns, or one from the foremost of the three rows of disciples or students who sat facing the judges.

Paul himself was a member of this last body -- a disciple or student of Gamaliel: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the Fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day" (Acts 22:3).

In fact, Paul tells us in Galatians that he had forged ahead of many his own age: "**For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews? religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews? religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my Fathers**" (Galatians 1:13-14).

"**Profited**" "advanced" is a word used of wood-cutters of cutting their way through a forest, to make progress, to forge ahead. Paul made greater progress in Judaism beyond many of equal age. He was so outstanding that he had forged ahead of those who were his same age. He had been brought to a place of prominence which normally would have been reserved to a man of older age.

Paul was certainly in line for becoming appointed a member of the Great Sanhedrin.

THE LAW OF THE SANHEDRIN

Membership consisted of 24 Chief priests, 24 elders, 24 scribes, and 1 High Priest for a

Total of 71 members.

It's grand function was the specialized interpretation and application of both written and oral law. Moreover the Law gave to them this supreme authority: **"If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose; And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment: And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the Lord shall choose shall show thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee: According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall show thee, to the right hand, nor to the left. And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously"** (Deuteronomy 17:8-13).

CHRIST both recognized this authority, and also commanded that they be obeyed, but not to be imitated: **"Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not"** (Matthew 23:1-3).

Thus the decisions of the Great Sanhedrin were binding upon all Jews everywhere. Just think of their person and responsibility.

The axiom of this body was "The Sanhedrin is to save, not destroy life."

The President of the Sanhedrin at the very outset of the trial was to solemnly admonish the witnesses concerning the preciousness of human life, and to carefully and calmly reflect whether they had not overlooked some circumstance which might favor the innocence of the accused.

For capital offenses the verdict of acquittal could be given on the same day, but the verdict of guilty had to be reserved for the following day. Therefore, such trials could not commence on the Sabbath or a feast day, nor on the day preceding them.

No criminal trial could be carried through the night, nor could one begin in the night, not even in the afternoon.

The Judges who condemned a criminal had to fast all day. The condemned was not executed the same day on which the sentence was passed. The property of the accused was not confiscated, but passed over to his heirs. Voting was from junior members to senior so that the lower members might not be influenced by the highest.

If the Sanhedrin voted unanimously for a verdict of guilty, the accused was supposed to be set free since the necessary element of mercy was lacking.

The Sanhedrin's code of jurisprudence was the finest ever developed anywhere in the world.

THE DARKEST NIGHT OF HISTORY

With this background we approach the darkest night in history.

"Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, And led him away to Annas first; for he was Father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.

Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

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. 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. 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. 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.

The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. 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. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

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?

Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. 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" (John 18:12-24)

WHO IS ANNAS?

What does he have to do with this whole situation?

He is one of the most notorious figures in Jewish history. He had the office of High Priest for only five or six years -- twenty years before this time, and must have been now at least in his eighties. He had no fewer than five of his own sons fill the office after him besides his son-in-law, Caiaphas and one grandson.

He had come originally from Alexandria in Egypt on the invitation of Herod the Great. He and his family became ambitious, arrogant and powerful. As their members multiplied, they promoted themselves into all the important offices.

Annas and his family had become intensely unpopular as far as the populace was concerned, but they were feared as greatly as they were despised.

The Temple-booths were known as Annas' Bazaars. He and his sons controlled everything that went on in the Temple, and, because of their greed, had developed a nice little system that worked to their personal benefit.

According to the Law, when the people came before the Lord, they could not come empty-handed, but must give a free will offering to the Lord. Of course, heathen money could not be given, but had to be changed into Temple coins. Thus there were the moneychangers who made this transaction. But they soon began to make an exorbitant profit from their transaction, not giving a just return in Temple currency.

The profit came also another way. It was possible for an Israelite to bring his own animal to sacrifice to the Lord -- the best of his flock. But the priests were required to examine each animal to be sure no blemishes or other irregularities disqualified the animal: **"Thou shalt not sacrifice unto the Lord thy God any bullock, or sheep, wherein is blemish, or any evilfavouredness: for that is an abomination unto the Lord thy God"** (Deuteronomy 17:1).

Certain priests were set aside for this work, but the service was not free, and it just might be that they would pronounce the animal unfit for sacrifice. However, all this trouble could be avoided by going to the regular market within the Temple-enclosure, where sacrificial animals of each type could be purchased. These had already been duly inspected and passed and all fees paid before being offered for sale.

The entire setup was such that the market couldn't lose, or better, Annas couldn't lose for he received his cut of all that was taken in.

This is why we have CHRIST's hatred of this operation, and His work at the first of His ministry, and at the close, to cast them out (Matthew 21:12-14; Mark 11:15-17; John 2:13-17). For this reason, Mark writes: **"And the scribes and the chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him . . ."** (11:18).

What were they fearing?

They were fearing that the status quo would be upset, and their lucrative business would be toppled.

The real problem was that Annas was upset. He was the political boss of Jerusalem. Everything had to be cleared through Annas.

This is why the next day after CHRIST overthrew the money changers, "**there came to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and say unto him, by what authority doest thou these things?** [that is, move into the Temple and overthrow the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of them that sold doves] **and who gave thee authority to do these things?**" (Mark 11:28).

Annas was the boss of Jerusalem and he actually controlled the operation of the Sanhedrin, and the Sanhedrin controlled Israel; therefore, just who are You, and what is Your authority?

SO WE UNDERSTAND NOW WHY JESUS WAS BROUGHT TO ANNAS FIRST

He was the one who had given the orders to have Him brought in this night.

The Roman soldiers were now dismissed for their work was done. They are not mentioned again. Annas wouldn't want them around, for he wants Pilate to know only what he wants to tell him.

The proceedings before Annas were entirely informal. It allowed time, however, to gather the Great Sanhedrin together.

With this background, we are now able to look in detail at the first trial of CHRIST.

CHRIST is going to experience six trials. There will be three that may be called religious or ecclesiastical, and there will be three that may be called political or civil. The total time for all the trials is less than 5 hours. Some have wanted to say that there were only two trials -- one religious and one civil -- with both trials having three different parts. This, however, doesn't answer to all the facts. Each one was a trial in itself.

The trial before Annas was the first one, but it is the only religious trial as such that John gives in his Gospel. The reason is because the case was actually decided by Annas and the other two ecclesiastical trials were only carrying out what Annas had already decided should be done.

At the first reading of John one would not realize that the trial mentioned here was the one before Annas. This is because John uses the term "**high priest**" for both Annas and Caiaphas. This is proper, however, because Annas was once the "**high priest**" and the title was conveyed upon him for that reason.

Annas was the first of a long line of high priests with 5 sons, 1 son-in-law and 1 grandson filling the office after him. Now the Law made the office of high priest a lifetime position. But the Romans had forced Annas to give up the position -- at least theoretically -- for they felt it invested too much authority in one man for too long a time.

This made the situation where there were, in fact, two high priests. Annas was still

looked upon by Judaism as the true high priest as far as the Law was concerned. Caiaphas "**was the high priest that same year**" as far as the Romans were concerned.

Who is the high priest that John mentions: Annas or Caiaphas? From a very careful reading it is Annas, and the place is his home. The events that take place in this private home are, first of all, getting Peter inside. In the process he gives a denial that he was one of CHRIST's disciples to the maid, or servant girl, who guarded the entrance to the courtyard (John 18:17). This never happened when Peter enters the courtyard of Caiaphas.

Peter warmed himself at both places: "**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 . . . Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. 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**" (John 18:18, 25), but it was only at the latter fire that he denied CHRIST before the men. Here at this fire Peter only stands; at the fire in the court of Caiaphas Peter sat.

Finally, there is no record of Caiaphas ever examining CHRIST in the manner stated here in John, nor of the servant smiting CHRIST with the palm of his hand with the resultant statement of CHRIST. After this private interview of CHRIST before Annas, He was taken bound to the home of Caiaphas. Now with this comprehension we are able to look at the events of this trial with a deeper understanding of what is going on.

THE TRIAL BEFORE ANNAS BEGINS

The Law required that trials be conducted before judges: "**Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days**" (Deuteronomy 19:17) and "**And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried**" (Deuteronomy 21:5). For anyone to judge by himself, sitting alone, was strictly against the Mosaic law.

"**The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine**" (John 18:19).

Annas begins to question CHRIST to try to form an accusation to charge against Him. Annas is taking the place of what a grand jury does today. This then is a preliminary trial.

:19 -- There were two points that Annas specifically wanted to know about:

- (1) His disciples.
- (2) His doctrine.

Annas wanted to know "How many disciples do you have?" "How widespread is your movement" and, therefore, the dangers involved to us in doing away with you. He also wanted to know what CHRIST's teaching was in reference to the law and the prophets.

In place of interrogating JESUS respecting positive acts done, with their circumstances, and respecting facts personal to Himself, Annas interrogates Him respecting general facts respecting His disciples (who should have been called as witnesses had he desired information) and His doctrine, which has no bearing on the case as long as no external acts contrary to established law issued from it.

What Annas was trying to get CHRIST to do was to testify against Himself.

CHRIST recognizes this and doesn't reply, for neither Jews nor Romans required a man to testify against himself or stand as a witness against himself. The Lord's reply characterizes Him who is truth. He gives what we would say today is the lawful use of the 5th Amendment.

:20 -- **"I spake openly in the world."**

The whole operation of the Lord was the everything He did was done openly. Since He had nothing to hide he had no reason for operating any other way.

"I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort."

This was the Lord's operation and no one had ever been able to prove He had taught anything contrary to the Old Testament law or to established authority even though men had many times been present to trick Him and trap Him in His speech.

"in secret have I said nothing."

How different had been the actions of CHRIST in comparison to the man who was sitting before Him. Everything this man did was in secret.

:21 -- **"Why askest thou me?"**

CHRIST had a lawful right to ask this question because this was a preliminary trial in which He was asked to convict Himself.

"ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said."

In any trial it is necessary to produce witnesses.

CHRIST says, Call your witnesses whether they be friend or foe, and let them testify because they know exactly what I taught. The point is why had they arrested Him if they did not know what He had said and done, and had witnesses.

His words have again been truth; but truth before error makes the error appear all the more wrong, and there is only one thing to do. Make the truth look as if it is the wrong.

:22 -- And when he had thus spoke, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?"

Here is the first maltreatment of the Lord JESUS CHRIST, and it gives the pattern and procedure for all that follows.

The servant well knew that the high priest was embarrassed by the direct and forceful truth that CHRIST had stated. The cruel blow was the only way that presented itself to the servant to rescue the high priest from the corner that he had been backed into by the reply of CHRIST.

All logic pointed to the fact that it was totally unjust, but as so often is the case, when the argument is weak, the actions and voices must be the loudest to make up for the other lack. Whatever they want to do to Him, they are able to do. In the rebellion of Korah, who rebelled against Moses, the earth opened up and swallowed them alive; but not here.

King Jeroboam had his hand withered: "And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him" (I Kings 13:4), but not this man.

Why? Because this was their hour.

:23 -- "Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?"

CHRIST spoke to the servant concerning the misdemeanor that he had committed. After all, this was a trial. No judge is to allow violence in a trial.

But the judge never censured this servant. Why? Because he approved of it being done and he became an accomplice to it, especially when this violence was committed under the pretense of avenging the alleged affront to his dignity.

How different was JESUS' treatment of the High Priest's servant in the garden that Peter smote as this servant of the High Priest that now smotes Him.

CHRIST addresses the servant: **"If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil."**

The man had no right to commit this act. He had only one right -- bear witness, if he could, of evil that CHRIST had spoken.

He still had that right. Why didn't he exercise it? Because CHRIST had not spoken evil to Annas, but rather the truth.

CHRIST had previously said: **"As they have done to me they will do to you also"**

(John 15:20).

Paul experienced almost the same thing: **"And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth"** (Acts 23:2).

This is all Annas can take. He is being shown wrong before his own servants, and he has absolutely no defense.

There is only one thing to do. Send this case on to Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin for trial.

They will have to find witnesses to witness against Him, and this, we will see in the next trial, is the very first thing they seek to do. Understand, however, JESUS has already been found guilty by Annas. The other trials will just try to clean up loose ends.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ON THIS FIRST TRIAL

But let us remind ourselves that the only reason you need witnesses is because you are conducting a trial. If this were murder -- as Edersheim says -- kill Him and get it over with. but not so if you are conducting a trial. They are going to give the Lord a trial -- a trial where every point of their own code of jurisprudence is broken.

The first trial is over, and we may examine the case and ask ourselves, "How did JESUS fare?"

He stands perfect in innocence Himself, and He has condemned His accuser.

"Then Annas sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest."

It was customary to loose a prisoner when he was on trial, but to bind him again once again when he was to be escorted to another place.

CHRIST had been bound at the arrest, but was released as He stood before Annas. He was now bound again and led away.

F. W. Krummacher makes the statement:

"JESUS bound! Can we trust our eyes? Omnipotence in fetters, the CREATOR bound by the creature; the Lord of the world, the capture of His mortal subjects! How much easier would it have been for Him to have burst those bonds than Manoah's son of old!"

We might add: But this He did to fulfill all righteousness; or better, to fulfill all unrighteousness; for this was the hour of darkness, and it is still night as they lead Him through the streets of Jerusalem to the house of Caiaphas to be tried by the highest court in Israel.

~ end of chapter 4 ~