

Mark 14:53-72
The Rejected Messiah

Introduction

1. As we've been working through the final days of Jesus' earthly life we've seen Him as the Sacrificial Lamb and the Stricken Shepherd
2. Today, we will see Him as the Rejected Messiah
3. The Old Testament prophesied that the Messiah would be rejected:
 - a. In Psalm 118:22-23 King David wrote: **"The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes."**
 - b. In Matthew 21:42-43 Jesus quotes this passage when He rebukes the religious leaders for their rejection of Him
4. This theme of rejection is one that Jesus brought up often:
 - a. Mark 8:31: **"He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again."**
 - b. Mark 9:31: **"For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, "The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later."**
 - c. Mark 10:33-34: **"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles. 34 "They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again."**
5. Our passage today is Mark 14:53-73 which revolves around His trial by the Sanhedrin and reveals His rejection as the Messiah:
 - a. He will be rejected by Annas, a former High Priest
 - b. He will be rejected by the Sanhedrin, the ruling body in Israel
 - c. He will be rejected by Caiaphas, the current High Priest
 - d. And, He will ultimately be rejected by Peter, one of His closest friends and followers

A. The Messiah rejected by Annas (John 18:13-14, 19-24)

1. After Jesus was arrested, He was first taken to the house of Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the current High Priest (Annas served as high priest before Caiaphas and he is still referred to in that way)
2. This is recorded in John 18:13-14, 19-24 (READ)
 - a. He questioned Jesus about **"His disciples and His teaching"**
 - b. Jesus answered that He had done everything out in the open in public view, so Annas could discover anything he wanted to know by asking nearly anyone
 - c. The officer standing next to Jesus didn't like the response so he struck Jesus
 - d. Unsatisfied, Annas sent Jesus off to Caiaphas the current High Priest

B. The Messiah rejected by the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:53-59)

1. The first thing we see here is that Jesus was tried by the Sanhedrin in a rather clandestine way: (53): **“They lead Jesus away to the high priests; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together.”**
 - a. The Sanhedrin was essentially the Supreme Court of Israel, and it was made up of 71 members, including priests, scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees
 - b. According to different sources, the Sanhedrin guaranteed at least three things when it came to trials:
 - 1) A public trial
 - 2) The right to a defense
 - 3) A solid case based on evidence from more than one witness

2. The second thing we see is that almost immediately the first of these guarantees was completely ignored:
 - a. First, the trial was held in the wee hours of the morning
 - b. In addition, instead of being held in the normal judicial halls of the Temple, according to John and Matthew it was held at Caiaphas’ house instead of the judicial halls of the temple where trials were normally held
 - c. The whole thing was held in secret

3. The third thing we see is that the entire thing was a sham (55-59):
 - a. R.T. France states that this was **“a hearing in search of a charge, not a trial based on an already formulated accusation. While the charge was not yet decided, the verdict was!”**
 - b. We see they already planned to put Jesus to death and were simply looking for the evidence needed to do so (55): **“Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, and they were not finding any.”**
 - 1) Matthew states that they were actually trying to find “false testimony” so they could put Him to death (Matthew 26:59)
 - 2) So it should be no shock when Mark tells us that many false witnesses came forward (READ 56-58)
 - c. It appears that they were trying to portray Jesus as a terrorist, someone who was out to destroy the Temple, which would have been a capital offense regarding Roman law
 - d. However, they ran into a problem: none of the testimony was consistent!

C. The Messiah rejected by the High Priest (Mark 14:60-65)
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1. When the High Priest realized their attempts to incriminate Jesus were not working, he approached Jesus Himself—this, too, might have been a violation of the rules because the judge was generally prohibited against speaking unless defending the one charged
2. He first attempts to get Jesus to answer the charges made against Him (60-61a): **“The high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, “Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You? But He kept silent and did not answer.”**
3. He then cuts to the heart of the matter and asks Him outright whether He was the Messiah (61b): **“Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?”**
 - a. This is a rather remarkable question for a few reasons
 - 1) First off, it reflects back on Mark’s two goals for his gospel—to reveal Jesus as both the Christ and the Son of God

- 2) Second, it clearly reveals that the High Priest was aware that the Messiah would also be the Son of God
 - 3) Third, Jesus avoided making such claims about Himself publicly and even when He did with His disciples He warned them not to tell anyone
 - 4) And, therefore, finally, it suggests that others had attributed to Jesus these two roles based on what they had witnessed
- b. Just as remarkable as the High Priest's question is Jesus' response (62): **"And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."**
- 1) It's remarkable because up until now Jesus has kept His identity fairly secret from anyone other than His closest disciples
 - 2) Here, He reveals in direct, unequivocal language that He is both the Messiah and the Son of God: ἐγώ εἰμι ("I am")
 - 3) Jesus then combines two Old Testament verses, Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13, which are Messianic references
4. As we expect, however, the High Priest rejects Jesus' claims (READ 63-65):
- a. The High Priest accused Jesus of blasphemy
 - b. The Sanhedrin condemned Him as deserving death
 - c. They even began to beat, spit on, and mock Him

D. The Messiah rejected by Peter (Mark 14:66-72)
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1. We learned back up in v. 54 that Peter had followed Jesus **"at a distance"** to the High Priest's home
2. Mark now returns to Peter who is warming himself by a fire in the courtyard (66-72):
 - a. A young servant-girl approaches Peter (66-67): **"As Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came,"**
 - b. Now, if you remember, Jesus warned Peter that He would deny Him three times before a rooster would crow twice, but Peter was adamant that He wouldn't and that He would die with Jesus if necessary
 - 1) We see the first time in v. 67-68: **"and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Nazarene." 68 But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about." And he went out onto the porch, and a rooster crowed."**
 - 2) We see the second time in vs. 69-70a: **"The servant-girl saw him, and began once more to say to the bystanders, "This is one of them!" 70 But again he denied it."**
 - 3) We see the third time in vs. 70b-71a: **"And after a little while the bystanders were again saying to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean too." 71 But he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this man you are talking about!" 72 Immediately a rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had made the remark to him, "Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times. And he began to weep."**
 - a) Matthew and Luke record that **"wept bitterly"**
 - b) They also record that Peter left the courtyard and went out onto the porch

- c) I suspect one of the reasons he left the courtyard was because of something Luke recorded that Mark does not (Luke 22:61)—immediately after Peter’s third denial, **“the Lord turned and looked at Peter.”**
- Can you imagine what that must have been like?
 - You are part of Jesus’ inner circle and one of His closest friends
 - He warned you that you would betray Him, but you argued that there was no way
 - But then you do, and just as the words come out of your mouth you look up and see Jesus looking at you from a distance, face all bloodied and bruised from the slaps and punches, spit dripping off His chin
 - Do you think you could stand to stay in the courtyard where He could see you or would you run away and hide from His presence as well?

Conclusion

1. Obviously, if you know Jesus it’s hard for you to put yourself in the shoes of His enemies who rejected Him
2. It’s a bit easier for us to put ourselves in the shoes of Peter
3. I think if we were to be honest, those of us who love Jesus and claim to be His followers can sometimes find ourselves in Peter’s shoes
 - a. Peter obviously didn’t intend to deny Jesus—after all, he was adamant that he would die for Jesus if necessary
 - b. However, fear got the best of him and he did something regrettable, something that brought him to tears and shame
 - c. Maybe we’ll never face a situation like that and deny Christ outright, but there are more subtle ways we can deny Him
 - 1) Maybe we don’t share the Gospel because we’re too embarrassed or worried that we might offend
 - 2) Maybe we back down or remain silent when confronted over Biblical values or principles
 - 3) Maybe we act or speak in ways that defy our position in Christ, and therefore deny Christ by our behavior
 - d. If we deny Him in these more subtle ways, how can we be assured that we won’t deny Him when confronted in more challenging ways like many of our brothers and sisters face all over the world?