



MARK 14:27-53

Gethsemane and Betrayal

He has left the courts of heaven, where all is purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that has fallen by transgression. And **He will not turn from His mission.** He will become the propitiation of a race that has willed to sin. His prayer now breathes only submission: “If this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.” (*DA 690.3*)

Having made the decision, He fell dying to the ground from which He had partially risen. Where now were His disciples, to place their hands tenderly beneath the head of their fainting Master, and bathe that brow, marred indeed more than the sons of men? The Saviour **trod the wine press alone**, and of the people there was none with Him. (*DA 693.1*)

But **God suffered with His Son. Angels beheld** the Saviour's agony. They saw their Lord enclosed by legions of satanic forces, His nature weighed down with a shuddering, mysterious dread.

There was **silence in heaven**. No harp was touched. Could mortals have viewed the amazement of the angelic host as in **silent grief** they watched the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory from His beloved Son, they would better understand how offensive in His sight is sin. (*DA 693.2*)

The worlds unfallen and the heavenly angels had watched with intense interest as the conflict drew to its close. Satan and his confederacy of evil, the legions of apostasy, watched intently this great crisis in the work of redemption. The powers of good and evil waited to see what answer would come to Christ's thrice-repeated prayer. Angels had longed to bring relief to the divine sufferer, but this might not be. No way of escape was found for the Son of God. In this awful crisis, when everything was at stake, when the mysterious **cup trembled in the hand** of the sufferer, the heavens opened, a light shone forth amid the stormy darkness of the crisis hour, and the mighty angel who stands in God's presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell, came to the side of Christ. (*DA* 693.3)

The angel came not to take the cup from Christ's hand, but to **strengthen Him to drink it, with the assurance of the Father's love.** He came to give power to the divine-human suppliant. He pointed Him to the open heavens, telling Him of the souls that would be saved as the result of His sufferings. He assured Him that His Father is greater and more powerful than Satan, that His death would result in the utter discomfiture of Satan, and that the kingdom of this world would be given to the saints of the Most High. He told Him that He would see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied, for He would see a multitude of the human race saved, eternally saved. (*DA 693.3*)

No traces of His recent agony were visible as **Jesus stepped forth to meet His betrayer**. Standing in advance of His disciples He said, “Whom seek ye?” They answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus replied, “I am He.” As these words were spoken, the angel who had lately ministered to Jesus moved between Him and the mob. A divine light illuminated the Saviour’s face, and a dovelike form overshadowed Him. In the presence of this divine glory, the murderous throng could not stand for a moment. They staggered back. Priests, elders, soldiers, and even Judas, fell as dead men to the ground. (*DA 694.5*)

The disciples were terrified as they saw Jesus permit Himself to be taken and bound. They were offended that He should suffer this humiliation to Himself and them. They could not understand His conduct, and they blamed Him for submitting to the mob. In their indignation and fear, Peter proposed that they save themselves. Following this suggestion, **“they all forsook Him, and fled.”** But Christ had foretold this desertion, “Behold,” He had said, “the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.” John 16:32. (*DA 697.2*)

JESUS

Jesus entered into controversy with no man. He had a work to do in the world. After His baptism John pointed to Him as “the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” [John 1:29.] Even when in the wilderness of temptation He was met by Satan, **He held no controversy with His foe.** He took His stand upon the written Word.

(12LtMs, Ms 38, 1897, par. 4)

His stainless life was a rebuke, and many avoided his presence; but there were some who sought to be with him because they felt at peace where he was. He was gentle, and **never contended for his rights**; but his own brethren scorned and hated him, showing that they did not believe in him, and casting contempt upon him. (*YI* December 12, 1895, par. 2)

Jesus did not contend for His rights. Often His work was made unnecessarily severe because He was willing and uncomplaining. Yet He did not fail nor become discouraged. He lived above these difficulties, as if in the light of God's countenance. He **did not retaliate** when roughly used, but bore insult patiently. (*DA 89.4*)

Again and again He was asked, **Why do You submit** to such spiteful usage, even from Your brothers? It is written, He said, "My son, forget not My law; but let thine heart keep My commandments: for length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: so shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man." Proverbs 3:1-4. (*DA 89.5*)

From the time when the parents of Jesus found Him in the temple, His course of action was a mystery to them. **He would not enter into controversy**, yet His **example** was a constant lesson. He seemed as one who was set apart. His hours of happiness were found when alone with nature and with God. Whenever it was His privilege, He turned aside from the scene of His labor, to go into the fields, to meditate in the green valleys, to hold communion with God on the mountainside or amid the trees of the forest. The early morning often found Him in some secluded place, meditating, searching the Scriptures, or in prayer. From these quiet hours He would return to His home to take up His duties again, and to give an example of patient toil. (*DA 89.6*)

- He brought a **purser atmosphere** into the home. (Chapter 9 *DA*)
- His life was as **leaven** working amid the elements of society.
- **Harmless and undefiled** he walked among the thoughtless, the rude, and the uncourteous, as well as among the unjust publicans, the reckless prodigals, the unrighteous Samaritans, the heathen soldiers, the rough peasants, and the mixed multitude.
- When he saw men weary but compelled to bear heavy burdens, he spoke a **word of sympathy** here and there. He **shared their burdens** and **repeated to them the lessons** he had learned from nature of the love, the kindness, and the goodness of God.

- He taught all to look upon themselves as endowed with **precious talents** which if rightly employed would secure for them eternal riches.
- By his example he taught that **every moment of time** is fraught with eternal results and is to be cherished as a treasure and to be employed for holy purposes.
- He **passed by no human being as worthless** and sought to apply the saving remedy to every soul.
- In whatever company he found himself, he presented a lesson that was **appropriate to the time and the circumstances**.

- He sought to **inspire with hope** the most rough and unpromising with the assurance that they might become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character that is manifest in the children of God.
- When he met those under Satan's control who had no power to break from his snare and were discouraged, sick, tempted, and fallen, he would speak **words of tenderest pity** that were needed and could be understood.
- When he met those who were fighting a hand-to-hand battle with Satan, he encouraged them to **persevere**, that they would win, for angels of God were on their side and would give them the victory.

- He was the **healer of the body and the soul**.
- Every phase of suffering came to his notice, and to every sufferer he brought relief. His kind words were a soothing balm. None could say that he had worked a miracle; but **virtue—the healing power of love**—went out from him to the sick and distressed.
- And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. (Luke 8:46)
- In an **unobtrusive way** he worked for people, and this is why, after his public ministry began, so many heard him gladly.

- He **did not attack** the precepts or practices of the learned teachers, but when reproved for His own simple habits, he presented the word of God in justification of his conduct.
- Yet Jesus walked alone. In purity and faithfulness, “he trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with Him. He carried the awful weight of responsibility for the salvation of men. (*DA* 92.2).



There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat*. But when his disciples [John 12:4] saw *it*, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her. Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him. (Matthew 26:7–16)

Judas reasoned that if Jesus was to be crucified, the event must come to pass. His own act in betraying the Saviour would not change the result. If Jesus was not to die, it would only force Him to deliver Himself. At all events, Judas would gain something by his treachery. He counted that he had made a sharp bargain in betraying his Lord. (*DA* 720.4)



- Judas did not, however, believe that Christ would permit Himself to be arrested. In betraying Him, it was his purpose to teach Him a lesson [to treat him in the future with respect]....Judas knew not that he was giving Christ up to death....Since He had escaped so many snares, thought Judas, He certainly would not now allow Himself to be taken....If Jesus really was the Messiah, the people, for whom He had done so much, would rally about Him, and would proclaim Him king. (*DA* 720.5–721.1)



- In amazement he saw that the Saviour suffered Himself to be led away. Anxiously he followed Him from the garden to the trial before the Jewish rulers. At every movement he looked for Him to surprise His enemies, by appearing before them as the Son of God, and setting at nought all their plots and power. But as hour after hour went by, and Jesus submitted to all the abuse heaped upon Him, a terrible fear came to the traitor that he had sold his Master to His death.
- As the trial drew to a close, Judas could endure the torture of his guilty conscience no longer. Suddenly a hoarse voice rang through the hall, sending a thrill of terror to all hearts: He is innocent; spare Him, O Caiaphas! (*DA* 721.3–.4)



- Judas now cast himself at the feet of Jesus, acknowledging Him to be the Son of God, and entreating Him to deliver Himself. The Saviour did not reproach His betrayer. He knew that Judas did not repent; his confession was forced from his guilty soul by an awful sense of condemnation and a looking for of judgment, but he felt no deep, heartbreaking grief that he had betrayed the spotless Son of God, and denied the Holy One of Israel. Yet Jesus spoke no word of condemnation. He looked pityingly upon Judas, and said, For this hour came I into the world.
- A murmur of surprise ran through the assembly. With amazement they beheld the forbearance of Christ toward His betrayer. Again there swept over them the conviction that this Man was more than mortal. (*DA* 722.2–.3)



- Perhaps the priests and rulers used some deception in how they presented their desire to acknowledge Jesus. They may have acted like they wanted Judas to “help” them accomplish putting Jesus in a better position. So Judas may have agreed to cooperate with them not realizing the malicious plans they were hiding, something like Herod tried to get the wise men to tell him where baby Jesus was so he could worship him.



MARK 14:53–72

The Trials

- First, before Annas, the father-in-law to Caiaphas, the high priest (John 18:13)
- Appointed high priest by Quirinius, governor of Syria. Annas had five sons, each of whom became high priest, as did also his son-in-law Caiaphas. The office was held by members of his family off and on for some 50 years after he himself was deposed. Though he no longer served as high priest during the ministry of Jesus, he was still considered the legitimate high priest by a majority of his countrymen (Acts 4:6).

- Next, sent to Caiaphas, the high priest (John 18:24)
- *Caiaphas*. Son-in-law of Annas. Appointed high priest by Valerius Gratus about AD 18 or 19, he continued in office till about AD 36. He was thus officially the high priest throughout the ministry of Jesus. He was a Sadducee, proud and cruel, overbearing and intolerant, but weak and vacillating in character (see John 11:49, 50; *DA* 539, 540, 703).

So, as the priests, the rulers, and the elders gathered for consultation, it was their fixed determination to silence Him who did such marvelous works that all men wondered. Pharisees and Sadducees were more nearly united than ever before. Divided hitherto, they became one in their opposition to Christ. (*DA 538.3*)

Yet the members of the council were not all agreed. The **Sanhedrin** was not at this time a legal assembly. It existed only by tolerance. Some of its number questioned the wisdom of putting Christ to death. They feared that this would excite an insurrection among the people, causing the Romans to withhold further favors from the priesthood, and to take from them the power they still held. The Sadducees were united in their hatred of Christ, yet they were inclined to be cautious in their movements, fearing that the Romans would deprive them of their high standing. (*DA 539.1*)

MEMBERS OF *GREATER* SANHEDRIN —THE HIGHEST JEWISH AUTHORITY

- Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*. (Matthew 26:3–4)
- The high priest of the Council during the time of Christ was Caiaphas. After him the next chief priest was Ananias (Acts 23:2). The high priest was the president of the Council (Mark 14:53, 60–64). He was the principal agent for the people in dealing with Rome. Gamaliel, Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea were members of the council. Was composed of 71 members, according to the Mishnah.
- High Priest and chief priests
- Scribes
- Sadducees
- Pharisees

GREATER AND LESSER SANHEDRIN

- There was only one greater Sanhedrin, composed of 71 members (the number is derived from the 70 elders plus Moses), and it met daily (except Sabbaths and other holy days) in the temple complex. This is what convened to plan the death of Christ after the resurrection of Lazarus.
- Each city could have a lesser Sanhedrin, composed of up to 23 members. A city could have a 23-member Sanhedrin as well as a smaller Sanhedrin of 3 members. The smaller group would decide cases such as burglary and theft or crimes involving animals. They also considered questions on the interpretation of law, such as vows, second tithe, and family law. Cases involving the death penalty were decided by the 23-member Sanhedrin, as well as cases the smaller group could not decide.
- The greater Sanhedrin would judge a tribe, a false prophet, an apostate city, and a high priest. (The punishment of a false prophet was death—Luke 11:50–51.) It is the body that declared war, made decisions concerning land additions to Jerusalem or enlarging the temple courtyards. Anything of national importance came before them, as well as case referrals that couldn't be decided by lesser Sanhedrins.



A Sanhedrin council concerning Jesus had taken place after the resurrection of Lazarus.

(SDA BC indicates a few weeks occurred between the resurrection of Lazarus and the arrest of Jesus—“Their plans were now rapidly taking more definite shape, particularly since the resurrection of Lazarus a few weeks prior to this time” (SDA BC vol. 5, p. 465).

Bethany was so near Jerusalem that the news of the raising of Lazarus was soon carried to the city.

Through spies who had witnessed the miracle the Jewish rulers were speedily in possession of the facts.

A meeting of the **Sanhedrin** was at once called to decide as to what should be done. Christ had now fully made manifest His control of death and the grave.

That mighty miracle was the crowning evidence offered by God to men that He had sent His Son into the world for their salvation. (*DA 537.1*)

While the council was at the height of its perplexity, Caiaphas the high priest arose. Caiaphas was a proud and cruel man, overbearing and intolerant. Among his family connections were Sadducees, proud, bold, reckless, full of ambition and cruelty, which they hid under a cloak of pretended righteousness. Caiaphas had studied the prophecies, and although ignorant of their true meaning, he spoke with great authority and assurance: “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.**” Even if Jesus were innocent, urged the high priest, He must be put out of the way. He was troublesome, drawing the people to Himself, and lessening the authority of the rulers. (*DA 539.3*)

At this council Christ's enemies had been deeply convicted. The Holy Spirit had impressed their minds. **But Satan** strove to gain control of them. He urged upon their notice the **grievances they had suffered** on account of Christ. **How little He had honored their righteousness.** He presented a righteousness far greater, which all who would be children of God must possess. Taking **no notice of their forms and ceremonies,** He had encouraged sinners to go directly to God as a merciful Father, and make known their wants. Thus, in their opinion, **He had set aside the priesthood.** He had **refused to acknowledge the theology of the rabbinical schools.** He had **exposed the evil practices of the priests,** and had **irreparably hurt their influence.** He had injured the effect of **their maxims and traditions,** declaring that though they strictly enforced the ritual law, they **made void the law of God.** All this Satan now brought to their minds. (*DA 540.3*)

SATAN URGED UPON THEM THE GRIEVANCES THEY HAD SUFFERED

- How little he had honored their righteousness.
- He took no notice of their forms and ceremonies.
- By doing the above he had set aside the priesthood.
- He refused to acknowledge the rabbinical schools.
- He exposed the evil practices of the priests and had irreparably hurt their influence.
- He injured the effect of their maxims and traditions by declaring that they, the leaders, had made void the law of God.
- Then Satan told them that in order to maintain their authority they must put Jesus to death.
- The Sanhedrin received the words of Caiaphas as the words of God. (*DA 541.1*)

The Saviour understood the plotting of the priests. He knew that they longed to remove Him, and that their purpose would soon be accomplished. But **it was not His place to hasten the crisis, and He withdrew from that region**, taking the disciples with Him. Thus by His own example Jesus again enforced the instruction He had given to the disciples, “When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.” Matthew 10:23. There was a wide field in which to work for the salvation of souls; and unless loyalty to Him required it, the Lord’s servants were not to imperil their lives. (*DA* 541.2)



Annas was the head of the officiating priestly family, and in deference to his age he was recognized by the people as high priest. His counsel was sought and carried out as the voice of God. He must first see Jesus a captive to priestly power. He must be present at the examination of the prisoner, for fear that the less-experienced Caiaphas might fail of securing the object for which they were working. His artifice, cunning, and subtlety must be used on this occasion; for, at all events, Christ's condemnation must be secured. (*DA* 698.2)

Christ was to be tried formally before the Sanhedrin; but before Annas He was subjected to a preliminary trial. Under the Roman rule the Sanhedrin could not execute the sentence of death. They could only examine a prisoner, and pass judgment, to be ratified by the Roman authorities. It was therefore necessary to bring against Christ charges that would be regarded as criminal by the Romans. . . . If Jesus could be proved a blasphemer, He would be condemned by the Jews. If convicted of sedition, it would secure His condemnation by the Romans. (*DA* 698.3)

Christ suffered keenly under abuse and insult. **At the hands of the beings whom He had created, and for whom He was making an infinite sacrifice, He received every indignity.** And He suffered in proportion to the perfection of His holiness and His hatred of sin. His trial by men who acted as fiends was to Him a perpetual sacrifice. To be surrounded by human beings under the control of Satan was revolting to Him. And He knew that in a moment, by the flashing forth of His divine power, He could lay His cruel tormentors in the dust. This made the trial the harder to bear. (*DA* 700.3)

He who could have doomed His enemies to death bore with their cruelty. **His love for His Father**, and **His pledge**, made from the foundation of the world, **to become the Sin Bearer**, led Him to endure uncomplainingly the coarse treatment of those He came to save. It was a part of His mission to bear, in His humanity, all the taunts and abuse that men could heap upon Him. The only hope of humanity was in this submission of Christ to all that He could endure from the hands and hearts of men. (*DA* 700.5)

Annas ordered Jesus to be taken to Caiaphas. . . . He himself, though wanting in force of character, was fully as severe, heartless, and unscrupulous as was Annas. He would leave no means untried to destroy Jesus. It was now early morning, and very dark; by the light of torches and lanterns the armed band with their prisoner proceeded to the high priest's palace.

Here, while the members of the Sanhedrin were coming together, Annas and Caiaphas again questioned Jesus, but without success. (*DA* 703.2)

When the council had assembled in the judgment hall, Caiaphas took his seat as presiding officer. On either side were the judges, and those specially interested in the trial. The Roman soldiers were stationed on the platform below the throne. At the foot of the throne stood Jesus. Upon Him the gaze of the whole multitude was fixed. The excitement was intense. Of all the throng He alone was calm and serene. The very atmosphere surrounding Him seemed pervaded by a holy influence. (*DA* 703.3)

Even now Pilate was not left to act blindly. A message from God warned him from the deed he was about to commit. **In answer to Christ's prayer**, the wife of Pilate had been visited by an angel from heaven, and in a dream she had beheld the Saviour and conversed with Him. Pilate's wife was not a Jew, but as she looked upon Jesus in her dream, she had no doubt of His character or mission. She knew Him to be the Prince of God. She saw Him on trial in the judgment hall. She saw the hands tightly bound as the hands of a criminal.

She saw Herod and his soldiers doing their dreadful work. She heard the priests and rulers, filled with envy and malice, madly accusing. She heard the words, "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die." She saw Pilate give Jesus to the scourging, after he had declared, "I find no fault in Him." She heard the condemnation pronounced by Pilate, and saw him give Christ up to His murderers. She saw the cross uplifted on Calvary. She saw the earth wrapped in darkness, and heard the mysterious cry, "It is finished." Still another scene met her gaze. She saw Christ seated upon the great white cloud, while the earth reeled in space, and His murderers fled from the presence of His glory. With a cry of horror she awoke, and at once wrote to Pilate words of warning. (*DA 732.1*)