

The Prevailing Good

Key Verse: *“The chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.”*
—Mark 14:55

Selected Scripture:
Mark 14:53-65,
25:1-5

WHEN JUDAS BETRAYED

Jesus into the hands of a great multitude in the Garden of Gethsemane, all accompanying him were armed with swords and staves. “They laid their hands on him and took him. And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. And they all forsook him, and fled.”—Mark 14:46-50

He was led away to the palace of the high priest to be arraigned before the Sanhedrin. (vs. 53) Jesus had told his disciples earlier that he “must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” (chap. 8:31) “Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.”—chap. 14:54

The goal of the Sanhedrin was to put Jesus to death, but the plan was met with confusion. They could not find sufficient testimony against Jesus to warrant putting him to death. Those who testified falsely against

him could not get their stories together. The Law required more than one witness to put a person to death. (Num. 35:30) "Many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together." (Mark 14:56) For example, they asked, "What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body." (John 2:18-21) His answers had not met the legal requirements of being from a minimum of two witnesses whose testimony agreed. When the high priest accused Jesus, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus confessed, "I am." (vss. 61,62) This statement by Jesus brought immediate condemnation by the high priest. He "rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death."—vss. 63,64

We also might be led to greater faithfulness when the times of testing come, if we would decide in advance not to be surprised by such trials, and also to decide that, come what may, we will seek to be faithful. The Apostle Peter said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."—I Pet. 4:12-16 ■