

November 9th 2008: Challenge Is The Best Form of Defence! Mark 14:53-72

The reading.....was about two connected events: **The trial.....Sanhedrin: The denial**
One shows the weakness of man
The other.....the strength and determination.....of the Son....Saviour of

Our focus is on Jesus.....(verses 55-65)

On that occasion when in the midst....darkness...corruption...evil...brutality...
He shines as the light.....He stands as the Powerful One....

For this morning I believe.....we need to **see Jesus** as Mark wants us to see Him
As one who is not surprised by what is happening
But who uses this time....not to defend.....but to challenge those

- **So Mark unfolds the court scene**...in a way that emphasises the urgent agenda..
Now they have Jesus as their prisoner.....they need to settle the issue quickly
He must be executed before the crowds left....and **seen** to be a bad person
A blasphemer.....under God's judgment.....Cursed by being hung

***Caiaphas** and his cronies.....would ridicule the hoo hah over the Bali bombers
Don't procrastinate.....Get rid of your problem ASAP.....before the people elevate
You haven't got enough evidence???....Make it up
Lacking public support ???....Get someone else to do the dirty work 4u*

So we read in Mark....that in a very usual move....the Sanhedrin(court)...met **middle**
And if we had any doubt...about this being more of a lynching mob....than a just court
Mark sets the record right in v55

**"The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence
against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any."**

If the authorities are looking for evidence...after....**Then** there is something rotten...
When they are looking for evidence so that they can.....
Then it not simply "unjust"

Mark also lets us know... because could not find....they are willing to falsify evidence
But the charge is such.....that the level of constructed evidence required.....cannot
...in such a short time.....

And the testimony.....did not agree

For the Jewish authorities.....Such.....not normally have been a huge problem
The witnesses each took the role of prosecution

The accused would be expected to defend.....And the members of the Sanhedrin
would then take the accused words.....and turn them back...**Incriminated** themselves

But Mark tells us in verses 60-61

“Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.”

Of course.....anyone familiar with Isaiah 53:7.....would not be surprised by His silence

He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before her shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

Jesus stood there.....not to defend.....but in order to lay down His life

Indeed it was His silence....that drew forth the question.....that declared the truth that Mark had set out to proclaim....from the first sentence.....of his Gospel

Mark 1:1 “The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

- **For here**.....in His trial before.....**The High Priest** is forced to ask the question that I’m sure he would have preferred not to ask
He puts into words the unthinkable.....Mark 14:61
‘Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"’

It is here that Jesus goes on the attack ;; He projects a powerful challenge

He has nothing to defend.....But He does has a coming judgment to declare

14: 62

"I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

in responding He uses the I AM statement.....**then follows with**.....
2 Old Testament Scriptures:→ Ps 110:1 Dan 7:13-14

The LORD says to my Lord:
"Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet."

"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”

Psalm 110 was accepted.....as referring to the coming Messiah

But it was seen as having reference to a man.....**A king** like David.....
who would rule with power and authority.....as one who sat at the right hand

Jesus had previously challenged that interpretation.....in Mark 12:37

“David himself calls him 'Lord.' How then can he be his son?”

- **There was no doubt however**.....that the One like a Son of Man in Daniel
was indeed Godhaving power...authority...glory...judgment....receiving worship

Jesus here makes a statement about Himself.....that went way beyond....expected
It's no wonder the high priest.....tore.....declared it as blasphemy

For if Jesus is not.....who He claims to be here.....before the religious leaders
then **He is surely guilty**.....But if He is.....then it is the **chief**.....who are guilty

And as Paul states in Romans 1:4

“regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.”

It is His resurrection....that has proven the claim...that Jesus made b4 those religious
That's why Thomas.....said.....My Lord and my God !!!

*Some years ago....Saddam Hussein was put on trial....crimes against humanity
And at first he refused.....on the basis....**Did not accept** the authority of that court...*

Here Jesus proclaims....that the supreme authority lies...not with any earthly court
But with Him

That one day those sitting in judgment.....**will appear** before Him to be judged

Their response was to spit on him....blindfold him.....strike him with their fists
mock him.....before the guards took him and beat him

Will they be held guiltless on that Day ????.....**Not unless...repented disbelief**

For in the end.....**they will be judged** on the same basis.....all will be judged
On the individual's response to Jesus as God

Not so much on whether one has done good or bad

But whether we have responded to Jesus as our Lord.....Saviour.....King

As the One who has promised to come soon.....to Judge the earth

