

Grace to You :: esp Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time

Strength for Today

“The chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, in order that they might put Him to death” (Matthew 26:59).

The only evidence of guilt against Jesus was man-made and contrived.

The essence of the Jews' ancient legal system is found in the Lord's words to Moses and Israel: "You shall not distort justice; you shall not be partial" (Deut. 16:19). Therefore, it is truly amazing to consider what twisted measures the Jewish leaders resorted to in their trial of Jesus.

The Council, or Sanhedrin, was authorized to judge only those cases in which charges already had been brought. But in Jesus' case, with no formal charges yet made and with the Jews' rush to judgment, the Council had to act illegally as a prosecuting body to keep the chief priests' murder plot moving forward.

As the sinless Son of God, Jesus was innocent of any wrongdoing. Therefore, the only way for the Jews to convict Him was to obtain false testimony against Him. And to do that, the leaders had to pervert the very heart of their judicial system and endorse the words of liars.

But the Jews quickly found it was not easy even to manipulate and assemble false charges. As is so often the case with liars, what they testified to was not only false but inconsistent. Mark's Gospel notes that even the two witnesses' more usable charges about Jesus and the destruction of the temple were not consistent (14:57-59).

It is one of the strongest affirmations in the Bible to Christ's moral and spiritual perfection that not a single human witness could make an accusation that would convict Him of a crime. After all the desperate maneuvering by the Jews to come up with even the flimsiest testimony against the Lord, He stood innocent of any violation of God's moral or spiritual law. Instead, it is the unjust, hateful group of men that will one day stand before God condemned for their sinful actions in falsely accusing the Savior.

Suggestions for Prayer

Pray for wisdom and integrity in the judges who make decisions in today's courtrooms.

For Further Study

Read Deuteronomy 16:18-20 and 19:15-20. How do these passages show that Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin was based on wrong principles (list several factors)?

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