

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

## SECOND QUARTER: STUDIES IN MARK.

## LESSON IX. JESUS BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

[June 2,

A. D. 30.]

## Authorized Version.

Mark 14. 55-65. [Commit to memory verses 55, 56.]

55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high-priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing.

62 Again the high-priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

63 And Jesus said, I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

64 Then the high-priest rent his clothes, and said, What need we any further witnesses?

65 And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

66 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy; and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

## Revised Version.

55 Now the chief priests and the whole council sought witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found 56 it not. For many bare false witness against him, and 57 their witness agreed not together. And there stood up certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, 58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build 59 another made without hands. And not even so did 60 their witness agree together. And the high-priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness 61 against thee? But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high-priest asked him, and saith unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 62 And Jesus said, I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming 63 with the clouds of heaven. And the high-priest rent his clothes, and saith, What further need have we of 64 witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be worthy 65 of death. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy; and the officers received him with blows of their hands.

## INDUCTIVE NOTES.

BY PROF. MARCUS D. BUELL, BOSTON UNIVERSITY.

## I. Study of General Features.

SEC. 1. In the last lesson, with Peter and John, we followed Jesus after his arrest, into the palace court of the high-priest. There Jesus was first informally examined by Annas (John 18, 19-24). Then followed the process before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish tribunal to which the Romans relegated all religious and many civil questions. It is to the proceedings in this court that our present lesson introduces us.

SEC. 2. Seek the natural divisions of the lesson. We find three: 55-59; 60-62; 63-65. Consider the following brief statement:

The council can find no valid testimony against Jesus, for the false witnesses who appear cannot agree, even as to an alleged statement of his about the temple. When the high-priest, having vainly sought some reply to the false testimony, asks him the direct question whether he is the Christ, Jesus answers with a solemn affirmative, and adds the prophecy that he will afterward appear with divine honors. This reply the high-priest and the council pronounce to be blasphemous and deserving the death penalty, and immediately treat him with indignity as one already condemned.

Topics: I. False testimony. II. The Inquiry. III. The Condemnation.

## II. Study of Details.

[Parallel] passages, Matt. 26, 59-68; comp. Luke 22, 63-65.]

## 1. False Testimony (vers. 55-59).

**55. Chief priests.** The most influential section of the council. **Sought.** Judges turned prosecutors. **Witnesses.** Testimony from some two or more witnesses who would declare that they had heard him say or had seen him do things forbidden by the law on pain of death. They had doubtless offered large rewards for testimony (Lev. 11; Matt. 28, 12), but in their haste had not sufficiently instructed and trained the witnesses in their parts beforehand. **To put him to death.** Murder was

in their hearts, but they wished to avoid the outward appearance of it. **Found it not.** A hundred witnesses to his deeds of mercy and words of grace could have been found, but no two men or women could agree in saying that they had seen him commit crime.

**56. False witness.** Affirmed they had seen or heard what they had not heard nor seen. **Agreed not together.** As the law required it should, to be valid (Deut. 17, 6; 19, 15). As to real facts they could have agreed; as to imaginary facts they could not coincide.

**57. Certain.** Two, says Matthew. They seemed at the outset to be more promising witnesses than those who had preceded them. **False witness.** Either they only reported hearsay, or else they misrepresented the meaning of Jesus.

**58. We.** The Greek shows that they distinguished themselves from other witnesses. **Heard him say.** On further examination, they might be asked, Where? where? and thus be led to disagree. **I will destroy,** where? and thus he had spoken about the temple as the destruction of "this temple," meaning his body, and had added that he would raise that temple up again. He did not say, "I will destroy," but "I destroy." If he had really proposed the removal of the temple in any literal sense, he might have been legally called to account before this court, as Stephen was afterward (Acts 6, 13). But so far from destroying, he actively cleansed the temple and rebuked those who were defiling it.

**59. Not even so.** Not even with their show of confident assertion. **Agree.** The variations as to substantial points destroyed the legal value of their evidence. The prosecution against Jesus had broken down.

## II. The Inquiry (vers. 60-62).

**60. The high-priest stood up.** He was chagrined and enraged at failure of the plot. Judas and the false witnesses had been bribed in vain, and unless some new charge could be made they would be obliged to release the prisoner. In his excitement he rushes upon the prisoner with a fierce and desperate bravado. **Answerest thou nothing?** It was a weak question. Why should he answer charges which had already refuted themselves? **What is it.** He could not call the testimony important. He would get the prisoner to talking. Perhaps he would incriminate himself.

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