

reproached the multitude for coming to arrest Him as a thief. All the apostles, seeing Him in the power of His enemies, forsook Him and fled. Vs. 51-56.

I. The Judges, 57-60.

V. 57. *Led him away to Caiaphas.* From John 18 : 12, 13 we learn that Jesus was first taken, a bound prisoner to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who had been high priest, and still exercised a great deal of the influence belonging to that office. Annas, after examining Jesus, sent Him on to Caiaphas. *The high priest*; the recognized religious head of the Jewish nation. *Scribes and elders*; and also the "priests," v. 59. These three classes constituted the Sanhedrin. *Were assembled*; waiting for Jesus to be brought in. They had planned His arrest (vs. 3-5) and furnished the men to carry it out, John 18 : 3.

V. 58. *Peter followed him afar off*; "mid-way between courage and cowardice." *Court of the high priest* (Rev. Ver.); the open court round which the palace was built. Jesus was in an upper room which looked out on the courtyard (see Mark 14 : 66). *Sat with the servants*; in the place of temptation. *To see the end*; actuated by curiosity and sincere interest in the fate of his beloved master.

Vs. 59, 60. *The whole council* (Rev. Ver.); the Sanhedrin, of which the high priest was president. The present meeting was held in the palace of Caiaphas, instead of the usual place in the Hall of Hewn Stone within the temple precincts, and at an unlawful hour. No legal meeting of the Sanhedrin could be held till daybreak. *Sought false witness.* They desired evidence to justify their determination to put Jesus to death; it mattered not though the evidence was false, so long as it was plausible. To procure false witnesses was an offence punishable with death. *To put him to death*; not to find out the truth, but to destroy Jesus. *Found none*; none whose testimony could furnish an excuse for a death sentence. (Compare Mark 14 : 56.) *Came two*; the number which the law required (see Num. 35 : 30; Deut. 17 : 6). *At the last, two*; who may have been honest men puzzled by the words of Jesus.

II. The Witnesses, 61-64.

V. 61. *This fellow said.* See John 2 : 19.

Mark (see Mark 14 : 58) makes the witnesses declare that they had heard these words of Jesus. *I am able to destroy the temple of God.* This testimony made Jesus appear: (1) to have boasted of supernatural power; (2) to have treated God's house irreverently. But (1) He had not spoken of His destroying the temple, but of the Jews' doing so, and (2) the "temple" to which He had referred was His own body. *Build it in three days.* These words refer to the resurrection of Jesus.

V. 62. *The high priest arose*; in exasperation because the testimony of the witnesses furnished so little reason for a sentence of death. *Answerest thou nothing?* An attempt to draw out from Jesus Himself some statement that would form a ground for a verdict of guilty.

V. 63. *Jesus held his peace*; well aware that no explanation would have satisfied the angry and prejudiced judges. *I adjure thee by the living God.* In this way the high priest solemnly put Jesus on His oath. *The Christ*; the Messiah. *The Son of God*; a recognized title of the Messiah (compare John 1 : 49).

V. 64. *Jesus saith*; answering now because He acknowledged that the high priest, as the head of the Jewish church, was the proper person to put such a question and because silence would have been a denial. *Thou hast said*; equal to our "Yes." Mark has "I am," Mark 14 : 62. *Nevertheless.* Another translation is "Nay, more," as if Jesus had said: "I have something more startling to tell you." *Henceforth* (Rev. Ver.). The Jews' condemnation of Jesus was to lead to His glory. *Ye shall see* (Rev. Ver.); you who are now My judges. *Son of man*; the Messiah. *The right hand of power*; that is, the right hand of God, who has all power. *In the clouds of heaven*; for judgment (compare ch. 25 : 31). Prisoners and judges will then change places.

III. The Sentence, 65-68.

Vs. 65-68. *Rent his clothes*; the usual mode of protesting against a great crime. *Blasphemy*; treason against God, punishable, under the Jewish law, with death. Besides, since the Messiah was to be king of Israel, the words of Jesus might make Him appear to be a rival of the Roman emperor. *They answered*; all together. *Worthy of death* (Rev. Ver.).