

The Hearings of Jesus, Part 2

A book was published in 1881 in which a famous professor of law at Harvard University cites an eminent lawyer of the French bar on the Sanhedrin trial procedure. After a careful examination of what the lawyer had written, the conclusion was one of astounding unbelief.

The conclusion reads: “Once you analyze the procedure of a Sanhedrin trial, you could easily conclude that any individual accused of a crime was safe in the Sanhedrin’s hands. They had a tremendous sense of justice mixed with mercy. Built into their system were safeguards to protect the innocent party. The accused had abundant opportunity to bring in new testimony. That bearing false witness was such a serious crime acted as a good preventative. Add to that the judges’ day long fast and the period of reflection, and a trial before the Sanhedrin appears to be a winning proposition for any wrongly accused individual.

But the Sanhedrin never was a safe environment for Christ. In His trial the Sanhedrin violated every single law governing proper procedure in a criminal trial. As such, the trial of Jesus Christ is the most unjust trial in human history. The great Sanhedrin condemned to death the only completely innocent person who ever lived. It was a mockery of justice. The axiom of the Sanhedrin was to save, not to destroy life. But that ideal was jettisoned in the case of Christ. No criminal trial was to be conducted at night, but Christ’s trial was. Before condemning a criminal the judges were to fast a day before execution, but those who condemned Christ didn’t – they killed Him the same day. Witnesses were required to testify against the accused, but none were found who had truthful testimony against Christ. The accused had a right of defense, but that wasn’t allowed in the case of Christ.”

Jesus basically received two trials: one religious, carried out by the Jews and the other secular, carried out by Rome. The Jews were an occupied people. Only Roman courts had the right to execute anyone. The Jewish leaders could condemn Jesus to death, but they couldn’t execute Him. Whatever verdict they rendered in their religious hearing had to be one recognized by Rome. That is the reason that we have two trials – one religious, and one secular.

The Jews had to present the evidence from their trial before Rome. Then Rome examined the evidence to determine if a crime had been committed. And if a crime had been committed, sentence would follow. But in the case against Christ no true crime was ever brought forth. Yet, they put him to death.

Jerry W. Arnold
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