

What Happened Between the Garden and the Cross

The soldiers arrested Jesus and bound Him, and brought Him first to Annas.

JOHN 18:12-13

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Most people know about Gethsemane and the Cross.

Few know what happened between them.

For four days a lamb lived in Jewish homes.

Children named it.

Hugged it.

Fed it.

Played with it.

The parents watched it closely-

Looking for

a limp,

a dull eye,

a cough that lingered.

And when the sun set on the fourth day,

the father carried the lamb to Jerusalem.

In the Temple courts the priests would receive it.

The father would place his hand on the lamb-

feel its warmth,

its breath,

its trust.

Then he would take its life with a practiced motion.

Its blood drained into a bowl,

then poured at the base of the altar-

just as God commanded (Lev. 1:5).

The life of the lamb returned to God.

And you may not know this about Jesus,
but at the same time
all this was unfolding
in Jewish homes
and in the Temple courts,
another inspection had begun
in another home.

The Lamb of God was arrested,
bound (John 18:12),
and led to the home of Annas (John 18:13),
the former high priest,
father-in-law of the current high priest.

There the examination began.

Annas pressed Jesus about His teaching
and His disciples (Jn. 18:19).

Jesus answered with a question:

"Why ask Me? Ask those who heard Me" (Jn. 18:21).

He didn't need to defend Himself.

Crowds had heard Him teach.

And His disciples?

Any soldier in that room
could report how they scattered
into the dark (Mark 14:50).

Instead of an answer,
a guard slapped Him across the face (John 18:22).

"Is this how You answer the high priest?"

Jesus calmly said,

"If I've spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong.

If not, why do you strike Me?" (Jo. 18:23).

In that moment
the Lamb of God exposed the examination itself.
Every question they asked
only revealed their own violations-
and His innocence.
There was no charge that could stand.
No blemish they could name.

This was the first of six trials-
three religious (Jn 18:12-24; Mk 14:53-65),
three civil (Lk 23:1-25).

The verdict:

Jesus was examined
and found without sin (Heb 4:15).

The Lamb of God-
a spotless sacrifice (Jn 1:29).