

GOSPEL OF YOHANAN

Chapters 18, 19

The Trial of Our Messiah – Trials 1-3

We will now look at the first three out of the six trials of the Messiah. The first three trials took place under Jewish authorities and the last three under Gentiles authorities. Four men played a key role in these trials. Annas and Caiaphas were Jewish. Pilate and Herod were Gentiles. Each one had their turn in judging the Son of Man. It first began with Annas, then Caiaphas, then Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was composed of seventy men, 24 chief priests, 24 elders, 22 scribes plus the high priest, which is a total of 71.

After these three trials Pilate took over, then handed Jesus over to Herod Antipas, who sent Him back again to Pilate. Pilate was then the one who gave the last stroke.

But little did these four men know that the Son of God willingly put himself into their hands, so that He could die on the cross. He freely allowed them to mistreat Him and to falsely judge Him. He also made sure that no circumstances hindered their evil scheme, so that He could go to the cross at the proper day and at the proper time. In fact, He was crucified at the very same time the Pascal lamb was to be sacrificed. Furthermore, with regard to His death and resurrection, hundreds of prophecies were fulfilled, all at the appropriate time.

The period that we are about to cover is one that was prophesied by **Isaiah**, where God the Father and God the Holy Spirit sent The Son of God to do His ministry.

Isaiah 48:16

Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me.

The purpose of His coming was to come and die on the cross and resurrect. Some 700 years earlier, the same prophet was given to perceive and appraise this situation that we are about to see. **Isaiah 53:4-5**

Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

One thing we are going to learn is that there was nothing anyone could find that could condemn Jesus. He was completely innocent and this is why He could die for our sins. Thus, the first trial was at Annas house. According to Josephus, Annas was a money hungry man who took the tithes that belonged to the priests, by violence.

Edersheim, a Messianic Jewish commentator from the 1800's, said of this man that "He enjoyed all the dignity of the office, and all its influence also ... without either the responsibility or the restraints which the office imposed."

Annas had been appointed high priest by the Roman legate Quirinus in the year 6 A.D. Seven years later, he was discharged from his high office by the Roman procurator Valerius Gratus for imposing and executing capital sentences which had been forbidden by the imperial government. The Romans wanted to have sole jurisdiction on executing people. As high priest, Annas had freely executed people, and he was about to do the same with Jesus.

Let's read **John 18:19-23**, where we see Jesus being tried by Annas.

The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine.

Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing.

"Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said."

And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, "Do You answer the high priest like that?"

Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?"

Thus, this trial begins with many irregularities. Because there were no lawyers in the Jewish court cases, it was the work of the judge to ensure that the rights of the accused were respected and that the accused was not abused. But here, the judge is already far from fulfilling his role, as we already see him as the prosecutor. Not only is he taking the role of the prosecutor, but he is even asking the Accused to furnish him information so that he could indict Him—because there was no formal accusation against Him. This mock trial had started with many illegalities.

It was back in the 1700's when Joseph Salvador, a Sephardic Jewish physician living in Paris, produced a work entitled *History of the Institutions of Moses and the Hebrew People*. One chapter of this production addressed the administration of justice among the Jews of the time. A portion of that section was designated "*The Trial and Condemnation of Jesus.*" Salvador went through the trial of Jesus and found that the two High Priests, Annas and Caiaphas, had broken a great number of their own laws—the laws of the Sanhedrin—in order to convict Him. Many have picked up on this study and came up with as much as 27 laws that were broken by these men, in order to indict the Messiah.

His study was later sent to a Jewish lawyer at Harvard, Simon Greenleaf, who was considered one of the world's foremost authorities on the nature of legal evidence and also a chief figure in the foundation of the Harvard Law School faculty. I believe that his portrait is

still hanging in a hall leading to the library of this university. This man published a remarkable book titled: *The Testimony of the Evangelists Examined by the Rules of Evidence Administered in Courts of Justice*. This book is still on sale today; it includes the study of Joseph Salvador.

Both of these men show how this trial was conducted with many illegalities, which would not be admitted in a normal court session. For instance, one of these irregularities is the fact that Annas conducts his trial in the comfort of his own house, instead of in a public place that was designated by the Sanhedrin. This in turn shows that this trial was a secret one, away from the eyes of the public. Secret trials are characteristic of dictatorships and this is precisely what the religious institution had become to the people of Israel.

Thus, this trial was conducted outside public view, with no initial valid charge and no valid witness present. The accused was treated as guilty before any accusation was placed against him, or any judgment was yet pronounced. This is all contrary to the Jewish Law that states that everyone is innocent until proven guilty. This would not hold in any justice system. It was the beginning of the ridicule.

Let me bring you to what is written in the Talmud, in Sanhedrin 9b, where the teaching reflects the beliefs of the religious institution of the time of Jesus. Here the Talmud agrees with the Scriptures, when it says:

“A criminal cannot be executed unless he was cautioned by two who witnessed the crime, for it says: At the mouth of two witnesses or three shall he be put to death.”

The Law further states that:

Every man is considered a relative to himself, and no one can incriminate himself

Annas was breaking this law, as well, when he asked Jesus to answer his questions. He was trying to get Jesus to incriminate Himself.

See what is happening here. This trial begins with the High Priest, who is supposed to act as a judge. Instead, he takes on the role of the prosecutor and asks the accused to provide evidence so that he can be judged and executed, because there was no witness or any valid accusation. This is what the system of justice had been reduced to, because an innocent was about to be falsely accused and executed.

I believe this is why Jesus tells him in **John 18:21**

Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them.

Yeshua brought this man back to order. His question goes further and asks: where are the witnesses? Or on which ground is He being judged? What are the indictments?

So, this is the way this first trial begins and ends. Of the words of Annas, this question is all that is reported to us in the Gospel of John. He must have said many more things, but it was not worth reporting. The only thing we see is that the whole trial begins as a travesty of law. Notice how Jesus answers Annas, when asked about the doctrines and followers of Jesus: *I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing.*

This is the second time Jesus is reminding them that He spoke openly. The first time was in the Garden.

Luke 22:52-53:

*Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs?
"When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."*

God never spoke in secret. We see this throughout the Old Testament. For instance, in pleading with Israel, God said in **Isaiah 45:19**

I have not spoken in secret, In a dark place of the earth; I did not say to the seed of Jacob, 'Seek Me in vain'; I, the LORD, speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

That's how Jesus was on earth. He spoke openly. He never hid from them and was always there to be questioned or confronted. Here, Jesus sets precedence for us. Christianity should be an open religion with no secretive, clandestine or pretentious knowledge given only to an elite group, because this is the mark of other religions. The Bible is open for investigation. It is open to anyone who wants to know who Jesus is and who we are.

After all this, one of the officers, a Temple guard, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand. That incident is reported in **verse 22**. This is the first of many mistreatments that the Messiah was to endure. Notice the way He answers the officer in **verse 23**. After being struck, the Messiah does not revile nor despise the officer, but He gently turns back to him and tells him:

If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?

Why this answer?

One thing we are going to notice throughout this trial is that Jesus leaves His mark of love with every soul that comes in contact with Him. "Have I spoken evil?" he asks the officer, as if to say to him: "Can you tell Me where is the evil in what I said?"

By addressing Himself directly and gently to this man, he bids him to personally assess the situation. He further tells him to bear witness of the evil. Where did the evil lie, on which side? That too must have pressed on the officer to look deeper into this situation. In conclusion, Yeshua goes even further in telling him that if he did not find any evil, then why did he use force?

This short interaction, I believe, must have left the man to deal with an important dilemma. Many other things must have happened at the same time and many words must have been pronounced at this very time, but the Spirit of God focused on that particular man and this particular situation. Was this man acting out of sincerity, as Paul did when he persecuted the church?

Were the Words of Jesus on the cross, when referring to the Roman soldiers in **Luke 23:34**, applied to this Jewish officer as well?

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.

Many people are mentioned during this trial, such as Malchus and this officer and we do not know what became of them. But concerning this officer, this short interaction must have surely left him thinking about his action; after all he hit the Messiah. I would love to believe that this officer and perhaps Malchus as well, were part of the 3000 Jews who came to believe in **Acts 2**. But the Scriptures say nothing about that.

Considering this incident with the officer, who within Israel was really responsible for rejecting the Messiah?

This was previously answered through the prophet **Micah**. Just before the fall of Israel, in **Micah 3:1-7**, God holds responsible two groups of people that comprise all the leadership of Israel. These are the civil authorities and the religious authorities.

Let me bring you straight to the religious authorities—the false prophets and the priests.

Micah 3:5-8

Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets Who make my people stray; Who chant “Peace” While they chew with their teeth, But who prepare war against him Who puts nothing into their mouths:

Therefore you shall have night without vision, And you shall have darkness without divination; The sun shall go down on the prophets, And the day shall be dark for them. So the seers shall be ashamed, And the diviners abashed; Indeed they shall all cover their lips; For there is no answer from God.

As you consider the whole trial, it was indeed the leadership that condemned Yeshua, in the same way that the leadership was held responsible for the fall of Israel.

It is the same prophet, **Micah**, who gives a messianic prophecy that was fulfilled right here in **John 18**. The prophecy is in **Micah 5:1** where we read:

Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops; He has laid siege against us; They will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek.

What Micah is saying is that they will strike the True Judge of Israel on the cheek, as opposed to Annas, who was considered as the highest judge at the time. This was followed by an even stronger prophecy that not only spoke of the place where the Messiah was to be born, but of His very nature. We read in **Micah 5:2**

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.

Here, Micah tells us that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem and that His origins are *from everlasting*. Thus reminding us that the one that is smitten is *The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting*.

John said the same thing when He said that the *Word was with God and the Word was God*.

Here again, we see the contrast of the two natures of the Messiah; one that brings His humanity, the other His divinity.

Only John mentions the first hearing before Annas. This was how the first trial began and ended, as it was conducted in all illegalities. We saw Yeshua well composed and in full control of the situation, seeming to be more preoccupied with the fate of the officer than with His own suffering that He was about to endure.

This trial ends with **John 18:24**

Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

It is estimated that Jesus was brought before Caiaphas at about 2 a.m. Now, this second trial is about to begin with another tyrant. Joseph Caiaphas had been appointed to the office of high priest by Valerius Gratus in the year 18 A.D. He remained high priest for many years, the longest of any of the family of Annas. Caiaphas carried his name better than his father in law, Annas. In Hebrew, *Annas* means *humble*—something he was not—but the name *Caiaphas* means *the oppressor*, and he responds very well to his name.

This trial is not reported by John, but only briefly mentioned. Luke begins by giving us some information on this trial. According to **Luke**, the trial was held in Caiaphas's home.

Luke 22:54

Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed at a distance.

Again, as with Annas, not only was this trial secretive but it also took place in someone's home. **Mark** gives us the initial stage of this trial which began with the seeking of witnesses. That was an attempt to make this trial look good.

Mark 14:55-56

Now the chief priests and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none.

For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.

Of course they did not, because there was nothing to say against the Messiah. But we read that they *sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death*. What we learn here is that the judgment was rendered before the trial. This was not a trial. It was an attempt to find legal causes to make the verdict appear lawful.

Furthermore, it says that “all” the council—all of the people there—condemned Him.

According to Joseph Salvador, the strangest rules of law ever known were one in the Hebrew legal system: This rule says that a person could not be convicted on a unanimous vote of the judges.

This we see in the Talmud (Mas. Sanhedrin 32a), where we read:

IN MONETARY CASES, ALL MAY ARGUE FOR OR AGAINST THE DEFENDANT;
WHILST IN CAPITAL CHARGES, ANYONE MAY ARGUE IN HIS FAVOUR, BUT
NOT (ALL) AGAINST HIM.

The reason for this rule is simple. It was the duty of the judges to defend the man, and at least one of them had to do it, otherwise he had no one on his side to see that he received justice.

But here, every single one was against Him. So what this trial will achieve is to further show the innocence of the Messiah.

Concerning witnesses, we read that many false witnesses came against Him. But their testimonies did not agree until the leaders managed to come up with two witnesses who were finally saying basically the same thing. See what one of them says in Mark **14:58**
We heard him say, I will destroy this Temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.

But this is hardly good enough for a death sentence. This was in accordance to

Deuteronomy 17:6

"Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness.

But these were hardly witnesses. Besides, how can you condemn someone to death for having said that?

It is interesting to first see what Jesus really said and spot what was added by this witness in **Mark 14:58**.

Jesus said in **John 2:19**

..... *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."*

What is interesting is that this witness adds: *I will build another made without hands.*

Where did he get that from? Why *made without hands*?

For anyone who was familiar with the prophecies concerning the Messiah, at that time, these words are significant. They will lead one right back to the prophet **Daniel**, where we see the same words *without hands*. Both, in Aramaic and Greek, these words mean the same thing. In **Daniel 2:45** these words are attributed to the Stone that destroyed the statue, which represented the world's gentile empires. This Stone represents the Messiah Himself. In **Daniel 2:34-35** we read:

You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.

Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."

But what is more significant here is that Daniel has another vision, where this Stone represents the Son of Man, a figure that was well known at the time of Jesus.

Daniel 7:13-14

I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

This is the verse that Yeshua quotes to Caiaphas in **Matthew 26:64**

*Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see **the Son of Man** sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."*

The Stone without hands is the Son of Man who was Yeshua Himself. How this witness came out with these words, we don't know. But they are so appropriate to the situation. It was perhaps another attempt from the Spirit to wake up some of the people attending this trial and bring them to consider that Yeshua was truly the Son of Man on trial.

At this point the High Priest could not take it anymore. Maybe he was starting to realize that the net was closing in on him. But this accusation of destroying the temple, or the

destruction of Jerusalem, was an accusation made against the prophets of God. Because they brought about the prophecies of the fall of Jerusalem, they were also often falsely accused of speaking against the Temple and Jerusalem. Let me give you an example in **Jeremiah 26:11** *And the priests and the prophets spoke to the princes and all the people, saying, "This man deserves to die! For he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your ears."*

The same with Jesus, as well as Paul, in **Acts 21:27, 31**

Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him,

As the outcome, they sought to kill him.

Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

Today things have not changed much. The Messianic Jews, like Jeremiah and like Paul are now being accused of working against the Jewish people in trying to bring people to Christ. One thing they say is that our ministry is a form of anti-Semitism that attempts to empty out the Jews from Israel in converting them to Christianity. This accusation is similar to accusing Jeremiah of having prophesied against Israel.

What the Messianic Jew is doing is trying to show the Jews the road back to their true Jewishness, which is the Word of God, to become fulfilled Jews.

As God said, through Jeremiah, in **Jeremiah 6:16**

Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'

The old path is the Word of God that precedes all the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees and all religions within Judaism.

As for the trial, **Mark 14:59** makes it very clear.

But not even then did their testimony agree.

This frustrated Caiaphas, thus he took the matter into his own hands and it is at this point that he does something really silly. Because there was nothing in what the witnesses were saying that could be used against Yeshua, he now stands up and literally asks Yeshua to indict Himself. This is the same thing his father in law, Annas, did in desperation.

See **Matthew 26:62**

And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?"

So desperate was he that he became irrational, asking Jesus to testify against Himself. But Jesus says nothing.

This is where Caiaphas goes as far as placing the Messiah under oath. See the following verse, **Matthew 26:63**

But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

After all the attempts to condemn Jesus had been exhausted, now anything is good enough to indict Him.

Jesus makes it easy for him and says to him: Yes you are right, I am the Messiah. After all, time was running out and the crucifixion had to occur in a few hours. If Jesus would have left the leadership to these men, none of us would have been saved.

This is where Jesus tells him in **verse 64**

..... It is as you said.

The High Priest dramatized the little proof that he finally got from the Messiah and tore his clothes. This High Priest had lost his mind. As time went on, he and the others became even more irrational.

Jesus did not receive a real trial. By definition, according to the Encarta dictionary, a trial is "...a formal examination of the facts and law in a civil or criminal action before a court of law in order to determine an issue."

So by now, we had completely passed this point. There were no facts, so there could be no more examination. Now we see the High Priest and the others racing to send the Messiah to the cross, at all cost. Indeed, little did they know that the cost is tremendously high.

The High Priest then charges the Messiah with blasphemy, without much proof for such a major charge. We find in the law, **Leviticus 24:16**

And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the LORD, he shall be put to death.

Where is the blasphemy? The fact is that they were the ones doing the very thing they were accusing Jesus of doing—blasphemy. The Word incarnate was in front of them and they accused Him of blasphemy. This is similar to the sin against the Holy Spirit. This is blasphemy to its highest degree. Also, concerning the tearing of his clothes, according to the Scriptures the High Priest was not to tear his clothes.

Leviticus 21:10

He who is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes

But some have found a way out of this law. We read in the Talmud, the body of teaching that these people adhered to: Talmud - Mas. Horayoth 12b Mishnah.

“A High Priest rends his garments from below and an ordinary Priest from above.”

What they are saying is that a High Priest could tear his garments, as long as it is below. As one rabbi put it, a High Priest *must rend below, at the extreme part of his garment, near his feet; and as for what is written, nor rend his clothes; the meaning is, he shall not rend as other men do, above, over against the breast, near the shoulder, as the rest of the people.*

Obviously Caiaphas was not in his priestly garments and it is not a question here of the tearing of the High Priestly garments, but it is a question of ordinary garments. Nevertheless, all this was a dramatization of a meaningless proof that brought the highest Jewish authority in Israel—the High Priest—to condemn the Messiah of Israel.

Now we come to the third trial of the Messiah. This drumhead trial took place in daylight, as opposed to the first two. It took place where it should have been, not in the privacy of the home of the High Priest. But this was an attempt to make it kosher. See what **Luke 22:66-71** reports to us:

As soon as it was day, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their council, saying,

"If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will by no means believe.

"And if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go.

"Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God."

Then they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?" So He said to them, "You rightly say that I am."

And they said, "What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."

Since the trials conducted at night were not considered valid, they waited until day break and had yet another trial. But they had nothing with which to condemn Him. Those whom they thought were witnesses were gone and there was absolutely nothing left for them to present against Him. Even Judas Iscariot was gone as he had committed suicide by this time. What they resorted to do was to simply accuse Him of claiming to be the Son of God. This was the best they could come up with. That is the sum of it all, here. But, is this enough to condemn someone to death?

In fact, Caesar was thought to be the son of god, but with Jesus it was different. What we see here is that they came to the point of not having anything to say against Yeshua and so they were forced to condemn Him for who He truly was—The Son of God—and nothing else.

We could hear the echo of the Words of God in Micah, when He said in **Micah 6:3**

"O My people, what have I done to you?"

They put Him on trial, but they could not find anything.

Notice again **verse 71**

And they said, "What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."

Which testimonies were they referring to? Inexistent ones! No one came up with anything. Furthermore, what exactly did they hear that was fit for condemnation? The Sanhedrin had gone mad. They were actually forced to use the words of the Accused as grounds for condemnation.

The irregularities are multiplying. Notice that they condemned Him on the same day, contrary to their own law which demanded two sessions to be held a day apart when it is a case of condemnation. Their law also stated that in the case of a death sentence, the sentence could not be pronounced until the afternoon of the second day. Thus they broke their oral law which we find in the Mishnah in the Talmud (Mas. Sanhedrin 32a), which says: "Capital charges may be concluded on the same day with a favourable verdict, but only on the morrow with an unfavourable verdict."

The Mishnah further adds:

"Therefore trials are not held on the eve of a Sabbath or festival."

This trial was concluded on the eve of a Sabbath; hence they broke this law as well. The trial of Jesus occurred on the day before both the weekly Sabbath and the Yearly Passover, which was a ceremonial Sabbath. This day was considered, by the Jews, to be a "double Sabbath" or a "high day." It was illegal for them to try Him on that day.

The Talmud refers to this day as a *Great Sabbath*. This is why in **John 19:31** we read: *Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*

In a double sense the proceedings against Jesus were conducted illegally.

The entire proceedings took place on the fourteenth of Nisan, the first lunar month of the Jewish year. Thus, His condemnation occurred on the biblical New Year. This is the same day that the Pascal Lamb was to be sacrificed and whose blood was to be poured on the door posts and lintel of every Jewish home.

Pastoral prayer and benediction:

Almighty God, we serve a Risen Saviour! We worship a Living Lord, and we come to You in His name today, full of thanksgiving and praise, adoration and dedication, singing and praying with joy in our hearts that Yeshua Ha Messiah our Saviour is risen from the dead.

May we feel His presence near. **May** we see Him with our hearts. **May** we feel Him with our souls. **May** we trust Him with our needs. **May** we share Him with our mouths. Grant us, Lord, to see His empty tomb today, and may that emptiness fill our hearts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:5, 6).