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**Box 07, Folder 31 - " A Gangster's Life of Christ" : "How Christ
Handled Gangsters - Round One: A Clash With the Sadducees" [9
pages Ch.1] (E.M.S.)**

Edwin Mortimer Standing

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Chapter I
Round One:

A Clash with the Sadducees

It was a bright and sunny morning in the Temple of Jerusalem ^{that} in the Spring of the year 30 a. d. The High Priest, Caiaphas, in all his magnificent robes, ~~his morning duties done~~, was sitting on an elaborately carved seat

overlooking the Court of the Gentiles, ^{this was} the largest ~~of those~~ areas ^{ing} that surrounded the impressive temple building itself ^{was the only place open to non-jewish people.}

Caiaphas, was in a good humor, surveyed the scene before him with a mixture of admiration and satisfaction. And well he might, for the Temple of Jerusalem was one of the seven wonders of the age, ~~or indeed of any age.~~ It had been built by Herod the Great with lavish ~~and~~ splendor some thirty years before this. It was the same Herod, by the way, who had ordered the slaughter of all the children in Bethlehem ~~of two or under~~ two years of age ^{or under.} about thirty years

^{The Temple glittered in the sunlight} before this. With its golden roofs, its ^{shining} golden pinnacles, its massive doorways ^{adorned} of ^{with} beaten brass brackets, ^{glittered in the sunlight} (one of which took 22 men to open and shut)

^{rested} wide courts paved with colored marble tiles, ^{paved its wide courts.} its magnificent covered porticoes resting on hundreds of pillars each 30 feet high, and each made of ^a one single

block of stone ^{so huge it took 3 men holding hand to hand to reach around it.} With ^{with its architectural lines and magnificent decorations} these and many other magnificent architectural ^{The Temple} duties it was the most splendid place of worship of its age.

^{with its Temple was the political and religious center for} The Temple of Jerusalem was the center of the Jewish religion, indeed ^{people.} of the Jewish nation; and was served by some 20,000 priests who took turns to carry out the many functions which daily took place within it. He, Caiaphas, was the ^u undisputed head of this great institution, and hence with the possible exception of his father-in-law, Annas, was the most important man in all Jewry.

From behind him where he sat Caiaphas could hear the sound of trumpets ^{beat in unison} and the sound of sacred music ^{chant of the priests offering sacrifice at the huge altar.} around the huge altar where a dozen priests offered up sacrifices on behalf of those persons who had requested them to be offered for

^{people often requested peace offerings, animals to be sacrificed as peace-offerings for themselves and their families.}

The cost of the sacrifices depended on

~~themselves and their families. These sacrifices were paid for in accordance with the~~
size and value of the animals slaughtered and offered up on the great altar.

from
But the Court of the Gentiles ~~in front and below him~~ the ears of the high priest were
assailed by a very different set of sounds, ~~with~~ *As could be seen* the loud and continuous lowing of
oxen, the bleating of hundreds of sheep, and the raucous voices of men recommending
their wares to the passersby, or shouting at each other as they bargained over their
sales, ~~in the immemorial custom of the East.~~

In fact the sounds that came from the Court of the Gentiles resembled ~~exactly~~
those one hears from a busy market in the center of a city. ~~And this is no wonder,~~ *But*
~~because that is exactly what it was,~~ *for* a busy market, not in the center of the city but
rather within the sacred precincts of the Temple itself. (To gain some idea of what
was really happening, one would have to imagine a market set up in the quiet and
consecrated ground of a church yard close up to the church itself where services
were being held.) *omit?*

This incongruous combination of a market with a place of worship did not ~~however~~
~~in the least disturb~~ *in the least,* the equanimity of the high priest, although he was responsible
for all that took place in the Temple and its courts. On the contrary, he surveyed
this noisy hubbub, the shouting and confusion, with an increased satisfaction. ~~And~~
~~for good this reason.~~

~~As in most of the great religions of the world,~~ *in* the offering of a sacrifice was an
essential part of the Jewish faith. ~~But there was this important difference,~~ *as it was in most of the other religions of the world,* *among*
~~for the Jews,~~ *sacrifices could be offered at only one place,* there was only one place where he could offer his sacrifice, that was in the
Temple of Jerusalem. This was the reason ~~why hundreds and thousands of Jews~~ *that why*
came ~~annually~~ *here* to offer their sacrifices. They came not only from the cities and
villages of Palestine, but from ~~all over~~ *every corner of* the great Roman Empire. They came from
places as far apart as Spain and Persia, Greece and North Africa, Rome and Babylon.

Caiphas noted that the
On this particular morning the Feast of the Passover was imminent and ~~already~~ *that*
thousands of pilgrims ~~in their varied~~ *dressed in* and colorful garments had ~~arrived~~ *already* in the Holy
City, ~~and hundreds of thousands were still on their way.~~

All of these pilgrims had one objective--the Holy Temple in Jerusalem--just as Mahometans today converge on Mecca, Catholics on Lourdes or Fatima. Every house in Jerusalem was packed to overflowing, and the hills ^{to} surrounding the city were ^{dotted} filled with tents and hastily erected booths, ^{Jerusalem could accommodate} At this rate almost a million persons would be accommodated. It was ^{remote} obvious that pilgrims coming from ^{remote} countries so remote could not bring with them their own animals for the sacrifice, so it had become a custom--^{developed} approved by the temple authorities--that the buying and selling of ^{the} victims ^{to} the pilgrims of the temple at Jerusalem ^{was a profitable business.} The exchange took place in ^{the} victims for the altar took place in the Court of the Gentiles, ^{the area those} so-called because it was the only part of the Temple open to ^{people} people who were not Jews. The high priest approved of this arrangement ^{because he shared} for the very ^{practical} reason that it brought in an ^{brought in for the temple.} immense revenue for the Temple of which he took a very substantial share.

Besides his commission on the sales of every oxen, heifer, sheep or goat that was sold the high priest received an additional revenue from the market in the following manner. It was the rule that the purchase of animals for sacrifice could be purchased only be made through the medium of Jewish money. ^{Since} And the pilgrims who ^{from other lands} came from various countries of the Roman Empire brought with them money that was used in the local currencies where they lived. To surmount this difficulty, therefore, here and there ⁱⁿ all over the Court of the Gentiles could be seen the tables of the ^{one could see neat piles of coins stacked on the} tables of professional money changers, each table with its neat piles of coins ^{of} of various kinds shining in the morning sun. At these tables the pilgrims changed their foreign money into Jewish shekels; and ^{was charged.} On each such exchange of money a certain percentage had to be set aside for the Temple, ^{Supposedly it was set aside for the upkeep of the temple, but the high priest} and went through the all too ready hands of the ^{high priest who took his own substantial rake-off.} high priest who took his own substantial rake-off. ^{enjoyed complacency}

Presently the ^{high priest} meditations of Caiaphas was interrupted by the arrival of another ^{high priest} priest evidently ^{was} a personage of some importance, because he ^{was attended} came attended by a retinue of temple officials. Caiaphas ^{rose} rose to greet the newcomer with an obsequious respect; for it was none other than Annas, his famous father-in-law, the only man in Jerusalem who had a greater influence than Caiaphas himself. Annas was well-known ^{to most of the pilgrims.}

to most of the pilgrims.
[Handwritten scribbles]

→ interesting to remember that the Temple coins carried the inscription "Jerusalem, the Holy"

not only because ~~he had~~ ^{had} himself occupied the post of high priest, but because after his ^{his notoriety grew even after} ~~tenure~~ year was completed, ^{he} ~~he had~~ ^{he} ~~contrived~~ ^{successfully} to get no less than five of his ~~sons~~ ^{relatives} (or sons-in-law) elected to that distinguished office, one after the other. Though an elderly man, Annas still had a tremendous and forceful personality, and through these five members of his family he ~~had been able to exercise~~ ^{position of importance} and still exercised ~~a~~ ^a paramount quality in the affairs of the Temple.

Dismissing his retinue Annas sat down beside his son-in-law on the elaborately ornamented seat. For some minutes ~~they~~ ^{he} sat in silence ~~watching~~ ^{observing} the busy scene below ~~them~~ ^{and} Annas enjoying the warmth of the Spring sun on his aging shoulders. There was a complete understanding between these two men, ^{Annas & Caiphas} each realizing ^{ed the importance of the} how important the other was for the fulfillment of his own plans. The son had been placed in his high position through the influence of his father-in-law, and the ~~other~~ ^{old} man knew that he could still wield a great influence in the temple affairs through his ~~relations~~ ^{relative}, without whom it would have been impossible to do so. ^{Caiphas.}

~~Though they were~~ ^{men were} both ambitious men in their way, and both enjoyed the sense of power which was ~~theirs~~ ^{his}, indeed looking round the Temple with all its manifold activities, ~~with its~~ ^{and} processions, ~~its~~ ^{and} music, its rising columns of sacrificial smoke, ~~its~~ ^{and} gleaming towers, its gilded roofs, ~~its~~ ^{and} milling crowds, they could collectively have said, "We are monarchs of all we survey." They both belonged to the small aristocratic, well-to-do sect of the Sadducees. Further ^{And their wealth continued to increase from} more these two were automatically getting richer every day, as the ^{daily that came} commissions on the sales kept coming in like "Pennies from Heaven," as the saying goes. They were at the zenith of their power, the undisputed leaders of the Jewish people.

Little did either of these men realize that ~~there~~ ^{apower greater than theirs, a mysterious almost intangible power,} was already closing in upon them a ~~power~~ ^{It would} greater than theirs, a mysterious almost intangible power that was to shake their throne to its foundations, ~~and set up a new kingdom of its own~~ ^{they would}. Indeed ~~at that very~~ ^{soon see} moment the first manifestations of that power were about to be made visible under their ~~very~~ ^{with their own eyes.} eyes.

"Business is brisk this morning," said Annas, breaking the silence.

"It will be ^{soon} brisker still ~~soon~~," replied the son-in-law, "I hear that all the roads

leading to Jerusalem are packed with pilgrims."

It was just at that very moment that the two priests became aware of something unusual and unexpected was happening down there in the court below them. The vast crowd of animals and men had begun to move slowly in one direction--towards the western gate of the Court of the Gentiles, and already a congested and quickening stream of cattle and sheep, pushing and shoving, had begun to crowd through towards the large exit into the streets of Jerusalem. Amazed and almost stupefied the two high priests, past and present, watched the scene below. Arising tide of anger mingled with their surprise was another emotion, a rising tide of anger, because someone below was ing to give it upon themselves to do this, to give commands in the Temple Court, a privilege which belonged solely to them? And furthermore to do this openly under the very eyes of the priests themselves, ~~was~~ displayed the height of arrogance.

As Annas, was the stronger personality of the two and, as he watched, his face set hard with an expression of cold bitter determination that boded ill to the perpetrator of such an outrageous crime as to interfere with the Temple program. Acting quickly, he summoned one of the temple guards who was standing nearby and ordered him to run swiftly down into the Court of the Gentiles and bring back word what it was all about. The scene displayed before them ~~was~~ concerning

By the time this man returned, bringing another with him, the court was nearly empty except for the tables of the money changers and the hurdles which had formed the enclosures where the various farmers had kept their cattle. ~~The hurdles that had served in the cattle enclosures~~ with a witness to the proceedings

"This man saw it all, Your Holiness," said the guard. "He was there from the beginning and saw everything."

At this the priest turned to the newcomer expectantly.

"Everything was going fine," said the latter, "And just as usual, until that new teacher from Nazareth turned up, that man that everybody is talking with now. He came in through the western gate and was followed by a group of His disciples. He was the cause of all the trouble."

"And what did he do?" interposed Annas at this point.

"Well, as soon as He and His followers came right into the market, this Jesus ~~He~~ with his followers

looked around Him with an expression of anger. He seemed to take the whole scene in at a glance. Then, acting swiftly, He made a ~~sort of~~ ^{ropes} whip out of some cords He found lying about, and at ^{suddenly} a ~~once~~ without more ado He began driving the cattle and sheep before Him towards the western gate. His face was stern and His eyes blazed with ~~anger~~ ^{holy indignation}. The animals turned and fled before Him--oxen, sheep and goats--in an ever-increasing stream which almost became a ~~torrent~~ ^{stampede}, by the time ^{they} it reached the gate, ~~through which the animals thronged bearing everything before them.~~

When He came to the chairs on which the men placed their cages of turtle doves ~~(for those who could not afford to buy other animals)~~ He turned to the dealers and said, "Take these things away, ~~take these things hence~~ and do not make my Father's house a place of barter." He spoke ^{with} in a voice of such authority that none dare ^{d/} disobey. He was less gentle when He came to the tables of the money-changers. He went right up to them and then suddenly--Bang! Bang! He hit out this way and that way, right and left. Up went their tables with all their glistening piles of carefully counted money.

~~The coin was of no value in all directions.~~
~~arranged in order scattering here and there everywhere amongst the straw and filth which covered the colored marble tiles of the court.~~ Then addressing the whole group of those who had been trafficking in the temple, this Jesus ^{with a voice Ringing out judgment as he said:} said and His voice rang out like a judgment, "Is it not written that my Father's House shall be known among all nations as a House of prayer? And you have turned it into a den of thieves."

Furthermore He would not allow anybody to use the Temple court as a shortcut from one part of the city to another; and He sent back those who were carrying their wares across the court and, strangely enough, they meekly obeyed Him."

The High priest and his father-in-law listened to this account without a word of comment, but ^{inside they were} ~~it was easy to see that they were both visibly affected by it.~~ ^{boiling inside.} The anger which filled their hearts was ~~of a very different nature~~ from that which had burned in the heart of this new prophet, ^{causing Him to tend to the Temple court.}

^{His Father} This was a just anger which sprang from the love and reverence for the God in whose honor the Temple had been built, the anger of the priests was the fury of thwarted greed ^{human = of stated human authority.} and of frustrated pride and ~~authority which had been flouted.~~

It was time for action--swift prompt and decisive. After ^{brief} conversation in which ^{flouted}

Annas ^{directed} took the lead, the two high priests made their way toward the beautiful gate at the easter^m end of the Court of the Women. ^{On the way} As they went they summoned half a dozen or ~~more of the~~ temple guards for it was obviously their intention to arrest this impudent disturber of the peace and to put Him in prison. Meanwhile, Jesus and His followers had moved ~~on towards the far side of the Court of the Gentiles~~ to the magnificent "Solomon's Porch" ^{ch"} as it was called, ^{with} a double columned marble pillar supporting a golden-studded roof. There He was addressing a large crowd most of whom had witnessed ~~the cleansing of the Temple.~~ ^{what happened to the buyer and sellers in the Temple.}

The high priest in all his pontifical robes and his father-in-law, Annas, together with the ~~group of~~ Temple guards, approached the spot where Jesus was teaching. ~~It soon became obvious that~~ they were coming specially to speak to Him, ~~the cause of~~ ^{about} all the commotion that ^{He caused} had taken place that morning. The air became suddenly tense and electric as everyone realized that an encounter was about to take place before them. The Carpenter Prophet of Gallilee made no attempt to avoid the approaching party; in fact when it was quite clear that the high priest was coming to speak to Him, He quietly rose, and took a few steps forward to meet him.

There was ^{in the} something about the mien of this new teacher, so calm and majestic, so sure of himself yet without a trace of ostentation, ^{made} that the high priest hesitated, and ^{reconsidered} seemed for a moment to think the better of his original intention ^{of} which was to arrest ^{ing} Jesus and take Him prisoner. And he was confirmed in his hesitation when he ^{noted} realized how considerable ^{size of} was the crowd that were ^{surrounded} with Jesus; and it was clear ^{saw} by the expression on their faces that their sympathies were ^{lay} entirely with Him and that they might rally to ^{different course of action.} the defense of their new hero and cause ^{Caiphas decided on a} an ugly scene, the attempt but not the deed ^{not clear} would confound Him and would only make the matter worse.

Instead, therefore, ^{at the} of signing to the guards to arrest Jesus, the high priest, as soon as he ^{faced} came face to face with Him ^{and} said in a loud clear voice, "What sign do you show us as a warrant that you do these things."

And ^{spoke} as he said this he waved his arms towards the deserted market place behind him. In other words ^{he} it meant "What is ^{By what} your authority ^{do} that you dare to take upon yourself ^{his action} to act in this way?"

There was a moment of ~~intense and~~ dramatic silence ^{the} the silence heavy with suspense and expectancy, ~~not to say of crisis and of coming doom.~~ Then in a strong clear voice the Galilean Prophet, ~~as many thought Him so to be,~~ replied, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will build it up again."

This ^{unexpected & extraordinary} reply ~~was so unexpected and so extraordinary~~ that both the high priest ^{and} his party and the crowds around Jesus, ~~seemed for a few moments as if they were stunned into silence.~~ Looking around Caiaphas pointed first to the actual temple buildings in all their ~~morning~~ splendor, and then to the various courts and finally to the two hundred and fifty ~~enormously~~ massive pillars ^{supporting} that supported the Port of Solomon ~~just~~ above them and said, "Six and forty years was this temple in building and will you raise it up again in three days?"

Jesus made no attempt to ^{elaborate} ~~elaborate~~ His ~~remarkable and~~ enigmatic statement, but ~~remained in dignified silence.~~ He was completely master of the situation and ~~it was~~ He -- not the high priest -- ~~who, by quietly moving away,~~ indicated that the interview was ~~at an end.~~

~~Left to themselves~~ A few minutes later the two priests' ^{discussed} the incident. "What do you suppose He meant?" ^{asked} said Caiaphas.

"I do not know, said the elder man, "But I know one thing, we have not seen the last of this Carpenter Prophet; He is a dangerous fellow."

"The man must be mad to make a remark like that," said the son-in-law, "and yet He did not look or behave as though He ~~was distracted in His wits.~~"

"Mark my word," said Annas, "if that Man is mad there is method ^{to} his madness. I am certain ~~that~~ His words had real meaning and significance, which ^{one} day will become ~~more~~ clear to us, meanwhile such madness must not go unwatched."

Then turning to ~~one~~ of the guards he said, "Go ^{at once} and fetch me Amon of Beth shida; ~~at once;~~ you'll find him operating at the far side of the big altar, and ~~tell him to come to me~~ immediately."

About ten minutes ^{after} Amon arrived -- he was also a priest but of a lesser ~~degree~~ -- he bowed deferentially to his superiors,

"Amon," said Annas, "I have a special assignment for you ~~(to do).~~"

Excellency - below

"Yes, Your Holiness."

Do this
"You know that Jesus of Nazareth that everyone is talking about?"

Excellency
"Yes, Your Holiness, I have seen Him several times."

"Well, I want you to ~~give up~~ *leave* your present work in the Temple ~~and having dressed~~
~~like a layman,~~ *as a layman. Then* and disguise yourself to follow Him wherever He goes. And every now
and then, as the occasion offers, you will send me a written report about Him and
His doings, *especially regarding* and with a special reference to His effect on the common people. I
will arrange with the Temple Treasurer to provide you with all that is ~~necessary~~ *the money for* necessary for
~~your~~ expenses. But you are to remember that you are doing this incognito and no one
is to have the slightest suspicion that you are a Temple spy, do you understand?"

"Yes, Your Excellency, I understand."

"Very well then, you can begin tomorrow."