

THE PROPHECY OF CAIAPHAS

"Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people,
and that the whole nation perish not."
John 11:49-50

I. The BACKGROUND OF THE PROPHECY

- A. It was late Winter or early Spring of the last year of Jesus Christ's earthly life (11:55).
- B. He had just publicly performed the mighty miracle of resurrecting Lazarus (11:1-46).
 - 1. Eyewitnesses told the Pharisees the circumstances of this miracle (11:45-48).
 - 2. The Jews rejected Jesus and miracles by ignorance (John 12:34), blindness (John 12:37-41), envy (Mark 15:10), and error (Ex 7:10-13; Deut 13:1-5; Jn 9:16).
- C. The chief priests and Pharisees gather a council to do something against Jesus (11:47).
 - 1. They were fearful of the influence Jesus was having among the people (11:48).
 - 2. They feared a social upheaval would further aggravate the Romans (11:48), who were bothered with Jewish insurrections (Ezra 4:19; Mark 15:7; Acts 5:36-37).
 - 3. They feared losing place (John 4:20; 12:42; Acts 6:13-14; 21:28) and nation.
 - 4. Consider the actual reason they did lose their place and nation (Luke 19:41-44).

II. The PROPHET OF THE PROPHECY

- A. Caiaphas was the high priest this same year - the same year of our Lord's death (11:49).
 - 1. He was a Sadducee hardened by heresy and God's blindness (Acts 5:17; 23:8-9).
 - 2. God chose him for this prophecy due to his God-given office of preeminence.
- B. He and his father-in-law were high priests when John began his ministry (Luke 3:1-3).
- C. He personally solidified the Jewish leadership against Jesus (11:53,57; Matt 26:1-5).
 - 1. He and his father-in-law personally managed our Lord's "trial" (John 18:12-28).
 - 2. He interviewed Jesus and heard a glorious testimony (Mat 26:57-68). He lived long enough to see a dark crucifixion, an earthquake, the veil torn from top to bottom, a partial resurrection, Christ's resurrection with scared soldiers, Pentecost, bold and gifted apostles, and likely the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - 3. Jesus told Pilate His judgment of the role that Caiaphas had played (John 19:11).
 - 4. Judas had delivered Him to the Jews, but Caiaphas delivered Him to Romans.
- D. He and Annas were privileged to hear of Jesus again (Acts 4:5-10; 5:17-33; 7:1; 9:1-2).

III. The STATEMENT OF THE PROPHECY

- A. Caiaphas ridicules the council for being so worried without a proper solution for Jesus.
- B. He proposes a well-known maxim of politics to sacrifice one life to save the nation.
 - 1. He sought to justify plans against Jesus for the people and their consciences.
 - 2. He reasons that the Romans will have no cause for alarm if Jesus is killed and consequently His influence among the people is brought to nothing.
 - 3. He reasons that the Romans will be satisfied with the Jews if Jesus can be given the blame for a seditious movement against Caesar and then killed.
- C. They accused Jesus to Pilate of being guilty of sedition (Luke 23:1-2; John 19:12).

IV. The INSPIRATION OF THE PROPHECY

- A. The words of this prophecy were from God - neither the apparent natural wisdom nor the supplied spiritual application originated with himself.
 - 1. A dumb ass spake once upon a time not of herself to Balaam (Num 22:22-30).

2. Balaam himself spake not of himself when he blessed Israel (Numbers 23:1-11).
3. God used a king of Assyria to do His will, though he knew it not (Is 10:5-7).
4. Peter's wisdom and words were once also supplied by God (Matthew 16:15-17).
- B. God had chosen the high priest to be His communicator of revelation (Exodus 28:30).
- C. Christ's sacrifice for the people would end the need for any further work of high priests.

V. **The JUDGMENT OF THE PROPHECY**

- A. The wisdom of Caiaphas was to kill Jesus to save Israel from the Romans - the wisdom of God was for the Romans to destroy Israel for killing Jesus (Dan 9:26; Luk 19:41-44).
- B. The wisdom of Caiaphas was to kill Jesus as their own Messiah (Is 53:8-9; Dan 9:26).
- C. The wisdom of Caiaphas was to justify the blood of one man for the nation - yet he would very shortly try to avoid guilt for this blood (Matt 23:34-36; 27:25; Acts 5:28).
- D. The wisdom of Caiaphas did not defeat God's plan, but confirmed it (Pr 19:21; 21:30).

VI. **The INTERPRETATION OF THE PROPHECY**

- A. John interjects two verses of commentary into his history of Christ's life (11:51-52).
 1. Caiaphas's words were important to the crucifixion (John 18:13-14; 19:11).
 2. John informs his readers the statement did not originate with Caiaphas himself.
 3. John also explains the second sense of the words as a prophecy of Christ's death.
 4. Jesus truly did die as a Substitute and as a Scapegoat, just as Caiaphas declared.
- B. Jesus came to save Israel from their sins, and He did so by His death by the Jews.
- C. Jesus also came to save the rest of the children of God from their sins by His death.

VII. **The FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHECY**

- A. It was God's wisdom that the one man Jesus should die for the people (Heb 2:9-17).
- B. John knew that the death of Jesus was for more than the Jews (John 10:16; I John 2:2).
- D. John would know even better later in life of Christ's death for Gentiles (Rev 5:9; 7:9).
- E. Paul taught Hosea's prophecy as fulfilling in the election of Gentiles (Rom 9:23-26).
- F. A council took place in Jerusalem where Gentiles were called God's children (Acts 15).
- G. Paul taught Christ's death united Jews and Gentiles in one (Eph 1:7-12; 2:11-22; 3:1-7).
- H. Christ's death "for the people" was in place of the people rather than because of them.
 1. Jesus died not to confirm His ministry or be an example but in place of sinners.
 2. Jesus died as a substitute for His sinful people (Exodus 12:12-13; Isaiah 53:4-6; Romans 4:25; 5:6-10; II Cor 5:21; I Timothy 2:5-6; I Peter 2:24; 3:18).
 3. Jesus personally experienced the wrath of God, guilt, pain, loneliness, darkness, rejection, separation, agony, broken heart, shame, abuse, torment, insecurity, fear, and so forth that we each personally deserved.
- I. Gentiles not of the Jewish fold were seeking out Jesus in the next chapter (12:20-24).

VIII. **The EFFECT OF THE PROPHECY**

- A. We should tremble and glory at the judgment of Caiaphas (Ps 9:16-17; Matt 23:34-36).
- B. We should reason that if He died for us then we should surely live for Him (Romans 12:1; I Cor 6:20; II Corinthians 5:13-15; Gal 2:20; Col 3:1; Titus 2:14; I John 4:9).
- C. We should believe that any who love not our Lord Jesus are cursed (I Cor 16:22).

Conclusion:

1. It was expedient for you and me that Jesus died for us, so that we would not have to perish. Glory!
2. Let us come together tonight and observe His memorial feast with grateful hearts for His great love.