

THE HIGH PRIESTS ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS

The Bible states that at the time of the trial of Jesus, there were two high priests, Annas and Caiaphas. Luke 3: 1-3 says the following:

"Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

All the men mentioned in the previous Bible passage including the high priests Annas and Caiaphas are mentioned by the Jewish historian Josephus in his work entitled Jewish Antiquities. He states in the following passages:

"Annas, the son of Seth was installed as high priest by Quirinius. During this time, Herod Antipas and Philip were administering their tetrarchies . . .

The third Caesar was Tiberius who appointed Valerius Gratus to succeed Rufus as procurator over the Jews. Gratus removed Annas from the high priesthood and then appointed Joseph Caiaphas to the office. Gratus retired to Rome after being in Judea for eleven years. He was succeeded by Pontius Pilate." . . . "Herod Agrippa became king and the Emperor Claudius added Judea and Samaria to his rule as well as all lands formerly ruled by Herod the Great, as well as Abilene, which had been governed by Lysanias."

And concerning the high priest Caiaphas, Josephus mentions that his full name was **Joseph Caiaphas**. Archaeologists in 1990 discovered a burial cave on the outskirts of Jerusalem which contained a collection of bone boxes. During the first century, bodies of the dead were laid in caves. After the flesh had decomposed, the bones were gathered and put into boxes, indicating a belief in the resurrection.

One of the casket-like boxes found in the cave was elaborately carved and is inscribed with the words: "**Joseph, son of Caiaphas.**" The box contains the actual remains of the Biblical figure Caiaphas.

THE GREATEST QUESTION ASKED BY CAIAPHAS:

'And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled . . . 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!"

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."

Matthew 26:57-64

ONE MAN DIES FOR THE SAKE OF ALL THE PEOPLE

'Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works

many signs. "If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."

And one of them, *Caiaphas*, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all," nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish." Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.'

John 11:47-52

'And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?"

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: "If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. "This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:5-12

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