

Pastor Jim Jackson, 3/1/26
Days With Jesus, Day 35—Showdown of the High Priests
John 11:45-57

Difficulty exposes heart QUALITY

The public saw Jesus as a good man and excellent teacher who could do supernatural acts, so he was massively popular and influential. But to the religious leaders, Jesus was a deceiver who could incite a riot and make the Romans take away their ‘place’ (the Temple—which happened in 70 AD; Matt. 24:1, 2) and ‘nation’ (scatter them outside Israel—which happened later).

Unsubmissiveness to God’s plan can lead to removal by God’s hand! By wanting to remove Jesus, they traded spiritual freedom from God for physical slavery to Rome. Lazarus’ resurrection gave opposite reactions, exposing each person’s heart. *The same water that grows the flowers can’t penetrate the rocks* (Luke 11:34-35; Eph. 4:18)!

The human High Priest goes LOW

The original High Priest of Israel was Moses’ brother, Aaron, whose lineage was to continue forever (Ex. 28:1, 43). But, by Jesus’ time, it had devolved into being run by powerful political men like Annas, whose son-in-law was Caiaphas. As High Priest, Caiaphas probably grew very wealthy from the racketeering taking place at the Temple. *Sometimes those with the lowest character end up sitting in the highest places!* As Jesus had recently cleansed the Temple of his money-making scheme, Caiaphas had jealousy and hatred for Jesus (Mark 11:15-18). So, he united the Sanhedrin to kill their Messiah. He argued it was smarter to destroy one man than to have him lead a rebellion where Rome would then destroy the nation. *God often uses the ungodly to help the godly do God’s work* (Gen. 50:20)!

The divine High Priest goes HIGH

Instead of destroying Jesus and his influence, God used his death to save humanity and change the world (John 3:16, 17). Jesus became the Great High Priest mediating between a perfect God and sinful mankind (1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 4:14-16). Ironically, Caiaphas devised the murder of the only High Priest who could save him from God’s judgment! *Man’s plan can’t stop God’s plan!* Like the death of Jesus for the good of saving the world, God will allow tragedies to test faith and bring about unseen good for God’s people (Rom. 8:28). Final judgment is God’s, so trust that He will do what is right (Rom. 2:6-8; 12:19). *We can trust a good God even in bad times!*