

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life**

#### **Part XXX: Trusting In Christ For The Sovereign Way God Used His Foes To Advance His Plan Of Grace (John 11:45-57)**

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. The Apostle John wrote in John 1:14 that Jesus' disciples beheld Christ's glory as the *monogenes* Unique Son of the Father, full of **grace** and truth, U. B. S. Greek New Testament, 1966, p. 321.
- B. The **GRACE** of God is marvelously, abundantly shown in the sovereign way the Father used Jesus' enemies and their works to further His work of grace, and John 11:45-57 reports on that great work of God as follows:

##### **II. Trusting In Christ For The Sovereign Way God Used His Foes To Advance His Plan Of Grace.**

- A. Jesus' raising of Lazarus at Bethany on the east side of the Mount of Olives close to Jerusalem (John 11:1, 43-44; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 313) created a stir in the area: many who came to comfort Mary over Lazarus' death and saw Jesus raise him believed on Him, but others reported it to the religious leaders, John 11:45-46.
- B. This news troubled these men, so they called for "an emergency session of the Sanhedrin," 70 men responsible for "religious decisions and also, under the Romans, for civil rule," John 11: 47a; *Ibid.*, p. 315, 280.
- C. The members of the Sanhedrin expressed a sense of futility in continuing their efforts to check Jesus' influence by "(o)fficial disapproval, excommunication and counterteaching," for if stronger action were not taken, Jesus' influence would expand until the Romans would come and crush what they perceived to be a Jewish revolt and remove both these leaders' "place (i.e., the temple) and . . . nation," John 11:47b-48; *Ibid.*, p. 315.
- D. The high priest and head of the Sanhedrin at that time was Caiaphas, and he expressed contempt for the council's ignorance on how to handle Jesus, saying, "Ye know nothing at all!" (John 11:49 KJV)
- E. He then said that it was better for them as leaders that one man should die "on behalf of" (*huper* with the genitive case for "the people" [*tou laou*], U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 374; Theol. Dict. of the N. T., v. VIII, p. 507-508) the people of Israel, that the whole current nation of Israel thus not perish, John 11:50. From Caiaphas' ungodly viewpoint, he held that Jesus was to "be sacrificed if the nation was to continue in Rome's favor. The alternative was destruction of the Jewish nation in war (11:48)," *Ibid.*, B. K. C., N. T., p. 315.
- F. However, John "by God's Spirit recognized a deep irony in Caiaphas' words. As the high priest, Caiaphas pointed to the last sacrificial Lamb in a prophecy he did not even know he had made," John 11:51-52; *Ibid.*:
  - 1. God sovereignly used Caiaphas' words to refer to the substitutionary atonement of Christ, the great work of the cross whereby Jesus would atone for Israel's sins, John 11:51; Isaiah 53:4-5; *Ibid.*
  - 2. However, John added that though Caiaphas spoke only of delivering the nation Israel via Jesus' death, God intended that Christ's death atone not only for Israel's sins, but for the sins of the whole world (cf. 1 John 2:2; Isaiah 52:15a), that God might gather believers of all nations, Jew and Gentile alike, into one Body, the Universal Body of Christ, though they were scattered throughout the world, John 11:52; Eph. 2:11-22.
  - 3. Indeed, Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 **twice** wrote that Christ died "on behalf of" (*huper*) "all," the same preposition Caiaphas used in John 11:50 of Christ's death for Israel, but Paul **twice** used it in 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 to teach the atonement of Christ for the sins of the whole world, the unlimited atonement of Jesus Christ [opposite five-point Calvinism!], *Ibid.*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 631; *Ibid.*, T. D. N. T., p. 509.
- G. John added that from that day forward, the Sanhedrin took counsel to put Jesus to death, John 11:53.
- H. Since it was not yet time for Him to die, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but withdrew to Ephraim 15 miles north of Jerusalem, John 11:54; *Ibid.*, p. 316.
- I. The time of Passover was near, so many of the pilgrims going to the feast looked for Jesus there, John 11:55-56a. They spoke of Him in the temple, asking one another, "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?" due to the threat that was on His life by the religious leaders who had given a command that if anyone knew where Jesus was, he was to show them that they might arrest Jesus, John 11:56b-57.

***Lesson:*** *Though Israel's evil religious rulers with the high priest, Caiaphas' leadership reacted to Jesus' growing influence by plotting to kill Him to save Israel from destruction by Rome, God sovereignly and in His great grace used their plan and Caiaphas' words to advance His own great plan that Christ atone for the sins of the world!*

***Application:*** *(1) May we trust in Jesus to be saved, John 20:31, (2) May we trust our sovereign God to prevail over the most evil efforts of religious or world rulers to further His great plan in Christ! (3) May we like John confidently hope in God's control of current events, not despair over them due to the great sins of human rulers!*