

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life Part XL: Trusting In Christ For His Upright Conduct Before Annas (John 18:12-23)

I. Introduction

- A. John's Gospel presents Jesus as the Son of God (John 1:18) and "full of grace and truth," and His conduct before Annas, a deposed high priest, and that under trial, reveals that enormous grace and truthfulness.
- B. We view that event for our insight and edification (as follows):

II. Trusting In Christ For His Upright Conduct Before Annas, John 18:12-23.

- A. After He had been arrested, Jesus was led bound first to Annas, father in law to Caiaphas who was the high priest at that time not according to the Biblical directives, but by Roman authority, John 18:12-13:
 - 1. Though Scripture decreed the eldest, Biblically qualified son of the sitting high priest would be the next high priest for life (Num. 3:2-4; 20:24-28), the Romans who ruled Israel in that era tried to minimize the influence of a lifetime appointment of a Jewish high priest to keep control of the nation as they themselves appointed at will others to be high priests, Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, v. One, p. 170.
 - 2. Thus, though Annas was appointed high priest from A. D. 6-15 by Quirinius, governor of Syria, he was deposed and replaced by Valerius Gratus, procurator of Judea first with Annas's son, Eleazar for A. D. 16-17, and later with Annas's son in law, Caiaphas for A. D. 18-36; Ibid.; Bible Know. Comm., N. T., p. 362.
- B. However, the Jews highly regarded Annas, so he wielded great influence among them in Israel (Ibid.).
- C. On the other hand, God used Caiaphas' counsel that one man, Jesus, should die for the nation to predict the substitutionary atonement (John 18:14), so Jesus was in a delicate position as to which man He was to heed.
- D. Regardless of this complexity, Jesus conducted Himself aright in His trial before Annas, John 18:15-23:
 - 1. First, when Peter was brought near and began to deny Him in fulfillment of Christ's prediction to that effect, Jesus worked to shield Peter and the other disciples while questioned by Annas, John 18:15-21:
 - a. Peter and John had followed Jesus at a distance when He was led before Annas for questioning, and since John was known to the high priest, Caiaphas, he gained access with Jesus into the palace of the high priest (John 18:15), and got access to the palace courtyard for Peter, John 18:16.
 - b. The damsel John addressed to let Peter in the palace suggested Peter was one of Jesus' disciples, but Peter denied it amid peer pressure as he had joined the group warming itself by a coal fire, John 18:17-18.
 - c. Though Peter had thus begun to deny Him under peer pressure, Jesus did not retaliate against him, but when asked by Annas of His disciples and His teaching, He answered that He had spoken openly to the world, be it in the synagogue, the temple or wherever the Jews resorted, that He had not taught any secret doctrine not heard by the Jews, John 18:19-20. Thus, Jesus asked why Annas asked about His teaching, for Annas could easily verify the matter by interviewing those who had heard Jesus teach, John 18:21.
 - d. Jesus accordingly deflected Annas' attention away from His disciples to shield them while also directing Annas's attention on His teaching as witnessed by the many Jewish people who had heard Him.
 - 2. Second, when His answer to Annas was met with a disciplinary striking from an officer standing nearby, Jesus defended His answer as respectful and truthful, John 18:22-23:
 - a. Thinking Jesus by His answer had shown disrespect for Annas who was considered the nation's spiritual leader though deposed by the Romans, one of the nearby officers struck Jesus in a disciplinary action, asking Him why He had replied as He had to the question by the "high priest," John 18:22.
 - b. Though one could debate if Annas was the real high priest as he Biblically may have qualified but had been deposed and replaced by Caiaphas, a man whose prophecy God Himself had sanctioned, since Annas was yet highly regarded by the Jews, Jesus respectfully answered him, saying if He had spoken sinfully, the soldier should testify to that evil, but if He had spoken aright, why was he chastening Him, John 18:23.

Lesson: Before Annas, Jesus **GRACIOUSLY** shielded His disciples though Peter was then sinfully denying Him, and He **RESPECTFULLY** spoke the **TRUTH** before Annas, a man held by the Jews to be their high priest though he had been replaced by the Romans with Caiaphas whose prediction God Himself had honored.

Application: (1) May we believe in Christ as the **GRACIOUS, RIGHTEOUS, TRUTHFUL** Son of God to be saved, John 3:16. (2) May we as Christ's followers mimic His gracious, righteous, respectful truthfulness in our conduct, being careful to honor all men even if their authority or credibility is in question, cf. 1 Peter 2:17.