

The Chosen S5, E6: “Reunions”

Biblical Highlights

- *Last Supper (opening) – Jesus says:*
 - *This is the final Passover he will share with the disciples until the new kingdom; the bread is his body and the wine is his blood.*¹
 - *He is the vine and his followers are the branches.*²
 - *One of the disciples is not clean and will lift his heel against Jesus.*³
- Judas agrees to deliver Jesus for money (30 pieces of silver).⁴

Other Highlights

- Caiaphas
 - Makes a deal with Judas, who says he believes Jesus “most likely” is the Messiah.
 - Strains his relationship with Pilate.
- Nicodemus
 - *Eight months earlier: After a long trip, he catches up on John the Baptist and Jesus and sends Matthias⁵ on an assignment.*
 - He asks Mary Magdalene why Jesus is making enemies. After he and Matthias profess belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Mary asks Nicodemus to act on Jesus’s behalf.
 - Yussif warns Nicodemus of an upcoming special Council meeting.
- Atticus tells Z Barabbas will be crucified and leaves him two swords

Questions

- What are your thoughts on the conversation between Judas and Caiaphas?
- Why does Caiaphas want Jesus arrested and killed?
- Why does Pilate seem resistant to Caiaphas’s plan?

Caiaphas

Since the emergence of the Pharisees and Sadducees around 160 BC, the High Priest always was a Sadducee. As a result, Caiaphas was a Jerusalem elitist who focused on the Temple and did not believe in resurrection or a Messiah.

After Lazarus was raised, the Council (Sanhedrin) met to decide what to do about Jesus. At that meeting, Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation. (See John 11:45-53.)

issue/characteristic	Sadducees
class	elitists/aristocrats
primary roles/influence	Temple power base
High Priest	always (hereditary)
the Law	Torah only
application of the Law	literal, Temple-oriented
Greek culture	Incorporate into daily life
belief in resurrection	no (not in Torah)
belief in a Messiah	No
legacy	Disappeared after 70 AD ⁶

As High Priest, Caiaphas had a palace in Jerusalem. It was there that the Council met after Jesus was arrested. And it was in the courtyard of the palace where Peter denied three times that he knew Jesus.

Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas The Gospel of John says that Caiaphas was high

¹ Luke 22:14-20

² John 15:1-11

³ John 13:10, 18 (citing Psalm 41:9)

⁴ “money”: Mark 14:11, Luke 22:5; “30 pieces of silver”: Matthew 26:15

⁵ Matthias will replace Judas in the Twelve – see Acts 1:21-26.

⁶ And none of their writings survived, so we know of them mostly from their opponents and the Bible.

priest “that year,” and Luke/Acts implies that Caiaphas and Annas traded High Priest duties, possibly annually. Many biblical scholars explain the oddity by saying that, even though Caiaphas took over for Annas, Annas – and even others in his family (see Acts 4:6) -- wielded a great deal of influence. The historian Josephus (first century) says that Annas’s son Jonathan was appointed (by a Roman governor) to replace Caiaphas in 37 AD.

Pontius Pilate

Pilate was the prefect of Judea from 26 to 36 AD. Britannica says he “was a Roman equestrian (knight)” appointed prefect “through the intervention of Sejanus, a favorite of the Roman emperor Tiberius.” (I can’t find original sources for this profile.)

In *Jewish Antiquities*, Josephus mentions that Pilate condemned Jesus to death but focuses more on two events, one near the beginning of Pilate’s time as prefect and one near the end:

- When moving troops from Caesarea to Jerusalem, Pilate also moved busts of the emperor to Jerusalem. Jews implored Pilate to remove them. When he had soldiers pull swords on those Jews, they bared their necks. Pilate relented and moved the busts back to Caesarea.
- A “demagogue” persuaded a mob of armed Samaritans to amass at the base of Mount Gerizim. Pilate had troops block their ascent. In the ensuing clash, some armed Samaritans were killed, and Pilate subsequently executed the ringleaders. The Samaritan council went to the Syrian governor, Vitellius, and accused Pilate of massacre. Vitellius had Pilate replaced and sent back to Rome. (Vitellius also replaced Caiaphas.)

The earliest – and most reliable – historical information on Pilate portrays him as loyal and dutiful Roman governor whose main aim is to protect the interests of the emperor by ensuring peace. So why do the Gospels portray Pilate so sympathetically (and with so much detail)? Here’s a combination of the accounts in all four Gospels: [Matthew](#), [Mark](#), [Luke](#), and [John](#).

Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. So Pilate went outside to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this man?” They answered him, “If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.” The Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.”

And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no guilt in this man.” But they were urgent, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.”

When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. . . . And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate. . . .

So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?” Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.” Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth

listens to my voice.” Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”

Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. I will therefore punish and release him.”

Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands.

Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.” So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!”

When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him.” The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.”

When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?” Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”

From then on Pilate sought to release him . . . he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha.

Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. And he answered them, saying, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.”

But they all cried out together, “Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas”— a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, but they kept shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!” A third time he said to them, “Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him.”

He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”

So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.” And all the people answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.