

Matthew 26:57

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

Analysis

And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled (Οἱ δὲ κρατήσαντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπήγαγον πρὸς Καϊάφαν τὸν ἀρχιερέα, ὅπου οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι συνήχθησαν)—The verb ἀπάγω (apagō, 'to lead away') was used of leading to execution (27:31; Acts 12:19). They brought Jesus to Καϊάφας (Caiaphas), ὁ ἀρχιερεύς (the high priest, AD 18-36). John 18:13 mentions a preliminary hearing before Annas (Caiaphas's father-in-law, former high priest). At Caiaphas's residence, the Sanhedrin (γραμματεῖς 'scribes' and πρεσβύτεροι 'elders') had assembled (συνάγω, synagō).

This night assembly violated Jewish law—trials for capital offenses couldn't occur at night or during festivals. But they orchestrated an illegal trial to achieve predetermined verdict. The συνήχθησαν (had gathered) shows premeditation—they assembled before Jesus arrived, revealing this was show-trial, not legitimate jurisprudence. The religious establishment that claimed to represent God now plotted to kill God's Son. Institutional religion can become greatest obstacle to true faith.

Historical Context

Caiaphas was Sadducee high priest, appointed by Roman prefect Valerius Gratus. He served longer than most (18 years), suggesting political acumen. His role in

Jesus's execution demonstrated collaboration with Rome. The high priest's house was likely in Jerusalem's upper city, where wealthy lived. The Sanhedrin normally met in the temple's Hall of Hewn Stone, but this night session (illegal) met at the high priest's residence for secrecy. Archaeological remains suggest large courtyard where Peter later denied Jesus (v. 69).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does the religious leaders' illegal night trial teach about the corrupting influence of power on religious institutions?
2. How do modern church leaders sometimes resemble Caiaphas—using religious authority to oppose rather than serve God?

Interlinear Text

Oι	δὲ	κρατήσαντες	τὸν	Ἰησοῦν	ἀπήγαγον	πρὸς	
G3588	And	they that had laid hold	G3588	on Jesus	him away	to	
G1161		G2902		G2424	G520	G4314	
Καϊάφαν	τὸν	ἀρχιερέα	ὅπου	οἱ	γραμματεῖς	καὶ	οἱ
Caiaphas	G3588	the high priest	where	G3588	the scribes	and	G3588
G2533		G749	G3699		G1122		G2532
πρεσβύτεροι	συνήχθησαν						
the elders	were assembled						
G4245		G4863					

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 26:3 (Parallel theme): Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

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