

Series: Archaeology and the Bible
Time Frame: 7 weeks (week 6 of 7)
July 8, 2020

Lesson: [Ossuaries of Caiaphas and Pilate's Stone](#)

[Zoom](#) Instructions:

- Our meeting is set to 40 minutes. If we run over, use the same login info to come right back in.

Quick Game:

- The 25

Opening Question:

- **How hard is it to do the right thing? Explain.**

Study:

- **Who were some of the big players during the specific event of Jesus's arrest, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection?**
- Caiaphas
 - Jewish, high priest
 - Specifically named in **Matthew 26:57-60; John 18:12-14**
- Pilate
 - Roman prefect/governor
 - All 4 Gospels mention him (Matthew 27, Mark, 15, Luke 23, John 18-19)
 - Held as a saint in the Ethiopian church
- **Have you ever been a situation like this?**
- The Lesson:
 - Contrasting images
 - (one manufacturing charges while the other "couldn't find any faults" in Jesus)
 - Both men made fun of Jesus
 - Both men had opportunities to do the right thing and didn't
 - (so don't let Pilate off the hook)
 - Both were concerned about their respective power and authority (people pleasers)
 - **Questions:**
 - **What conclusions can you draw from a comparison between these two leaders?**
 - **What stood out to you or was memorable?**
 - **What was challenging, hard to understand, accept or believe?**
 - **What are people like in the passages? What are they called to be like?**
 - **What is God like this passage? Father? Son? Holy Spirit?**
- Archaeology
 - [Caiaphas Ossuary](#)
 - Ossuary – box to hold bones of the dead after decomposition
 - 1990 in the Peace Forest section of Jerusalem 12 ossuaries found and one with an inscription of "Joseph son of Caiaphas"
 - Josephus – notes that Joseph Caiaphas as known as Caiaphas (Ant. 18.95)
 - Connects time period of Caiaphas and Pilate (Ant. 18.33-35)

- Challenges
 - Lack of reference to High Priesthood
 - Caliber of script: formal, deep vs informal, light (probably added by family members)
 - No doubt 1st century origin
 - Carvings consistent with elite members
- [Mariam Ossuary](#) – granddaughter of Caiaphas (connects to a long line of Jewish priests); corroborates previous lessons from other ossuaries, rabbinic literature, and the historian, Josephus.
- [Pilate Dedication Stone](#) | Other article [HERE](#)
 - Found in 1961 in Caesarea Maritima
 - References Pontius Pilate in the worn inscription
 - Shows he is a real person
 - [Challenge](#): Pilate is a made-up literary character; describes him as simply “the one wearing the spear”
- [James Ossuary](#)
 - Announced in October 2002
 - Reference to James, the son of Joseph and the brother of Jesus
 - Challenge
 - Question of forgery – locked in a seven-year lawsuit to verify authenticity
 - No evidence that it was forged but ruled that did not prove its authenticity either
 - ****Question of link to something called the Jesus ossuary****

So what:

- The discoveries lend credence to the accuracy of the Bible
- It is also a reminder that we have to be careful because there is a lot of debate about accuracy and authenticity of all items.
- The right thing sometimes is very hard to do.

Other thoughts/questions??

Prayer time

Next Week: Jesus