



## International Bible Lesson

International Bible Study Commentary

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### Gathering the Children of God

#### John 11:47-57

*And this spake Caiaphas not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad (John 11:51-52—KJV).*

*Now Caiaphas did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad (John 11:51-52—NASB).*

*Caiaphas did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God (John 11:51-52—NRSV).*

Because the crowds might proclaim Jesus was the Messiah, Caiaphas argued that Jesus should die to save their nation and temple from destruction by the Romans, so a council of religious leaders began planning to kill Jesus. These religious leaders in Jerusalem thought mostly in terms of political power and they considered Jesus a threat to their tenuous relationship with Rome. They never understood that Jesus represented the kingdom of God and not a political kingdom. As Jesus told Pilate when questioned, “My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here” (John 18:36). Though Caiaphas thought he argued only in political terms, John explained that God made him foretell

what Jesus would do on a spiritual level that Caiaphas would not believe and could never understand. John explained that Jesus did die for the nation; that is, that those in the nation who believed in Him might have their sins forgiven by God. Then, Jesus rose from the dead that He might draw to himself the children of God that were dispersed throughout the world. Because Caiaphas would have been an unwilling spokesman for the Messiah, God spoke through him to save those who would believe in His Son. Today, followers of Jesus look for opportunities to talk about Jesus and “gather into one the dispersed children of God.”

### Thinking Further

1. What did the council know Jesus was doing and what did they know about the result among many in the crowds who heard and saw Him.
2. What did the council think would happen if everyone eventually believed in Jesus as the Messiah?
3. What did Caiaphas, the high priest, advise the council? Why did he advise this?
4. Why did the Jews go to Jerusalem before the Passover? Did they demonstrate the effectiveness of their preparations later? Why or why not?
5. What were the orders of the Pharisees and the chief priests?

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