

## PREFACE

This project had its genesis in a paper delivered at a conference at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Hebrew University in March 2001. The topic of the conference was “From Hellenistic Judaism to Christian Hellenism,” and my particular contribution was to be a study of the role of Hellenism in recent historical Jesus research. What came to my attention were the ways in which some—though by no means all—recent scholarship construes Caiaphas the Jewish high priest as an instrument of Hellenism and an opponent of “pure” Judaism. So began my investigation of the numerous portraits of Caiaphas through the ages.

My pursuit of Caiaphas was greatly facilitated by the Institute of Advanced Studies in Jerusalem, where I was a fellow in 2000–2001; the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, through which I held a Standard Research Grant for this project in 2003–2007; the International Consortium for Research in the Humanities project on the Dynamics in the History of Religions, based at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum; and Yale Divinity School, where I completed the manuscript in the spring of 2010. I also made extensive use of the libraries at the University of Ottawa (and RACER, the excellent Ontario system for interlibrary loans), the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Protestant and Catholic Theological Libraries at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, and the Yale University Library system. I wish also to express my appreciation to University of South Carolina Press, especially D. Moody Smith, who edits the series *Studies on the Personalities of the New Testament*.

I have enjoyed the opportunity to teach about Caiaphas at the University of Ottawa (2008) and Brite Divinity School (2009), where the enthusiasm and the insights of my students were a source of inspiration. The project was enhanced by the feedback from colleagues who heard Caiaphas-related papers at the meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature, the Association for Jewish Studies, and the Canadian Society of Biblical Literature. In addition I have benefited in many ways from numerous colleagues, among them Esther Chazon, Paula Fredriksen, Martin Goodman, Pierluigi Piovanelli, Amy-Jill Levine, Ed Sanders, James Shapiro, Fred Tauber, Jan Willem van Henten, and Reinhold Zwick. A special thank you goes out to Christian Stückl and Otto Huber, who shared their time so generously during my stay in Oberammergau in May 2010. My

thanks also to Kyle Green for research assistance, Angela Springfield for assistance with the images of medieval and Renaissance art, to Simcha Walfish for his references to Dante and Oscar Wilde, to Shoshana Walfish for her beautiful drawings, and to Natalie Neill for preparing the indexes and proofreading. Thank you also to Maureen Price for accompanying me to the Church of Saint Peter in Gallicantu in December 2008 and taking such lovely photos.

My family as always has been a source of joy and stability throughout the lengthy process of researching and writing this book. The final stages were enlivened by the arrival of our grandson, Nehemia David, in 2009, and his sister, Adira Hana, in 2010, who have provided tremendous pleasure and a reminder of the miracles of the everyday life. And as always my love and thanks to Barry Walfish, for his unflinching love, his encouragement, and his editorial prowess.

Each page of this book will testify to my reliance on and appreciation of the work of my peers, past and present. Helen Bond's book *Caiaphas: Friend of Rome and Judge of Jesus?* aims to "piece together the story of his life from the fragments in the ancient sources . . . and [to] consider the way in which he was perceived afterwards by the earliest Christian Gospel writers."<sup>1</sup> The first nine chapters provide a detailed reconstruction of the life of the high priest at the time of Caiaphas, in the second and third decades of the first century C.E.; four additional chapters are devoted to the portrait of Caiaphas in each of the canonical Gospels. Although my views differ from Bond's on many points, her study is insightful and fascinating and has proven invaluable to my own musings about the high priest. A second book that I consulted almost daily was James VanderKam's masterful study of the postexilic high priests, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests after the Exile*. VanderKam's clear, detailed, and methodical approach made this book the essential reference for my own work. Finally I wish to mention Raymond E. Brown's *The Death of the Messiah*, which, like all of Brown's work, provides detailed exegetical and historical commentary along with open discussion of the difficult theological issues that are raised by any account of the events of Jesus' life and death.

The present study ranges over a long chronological period and examines a broad range of material, some it far removed from any subject in which I can claim expertise. This study does not by any means discuss all of the references to Caiaphas in all sources. Some have been omitted because of the limits of my knowledge, others as a result of limitations of length. I hope, however, that others will find this subject as interesting to read about as it has been to research.