



John 11

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Tape #8079
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn in our Bibles to the eleventh chapter of the gospel according to John.

Now there was a certain man who was sick, who was named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha (11:1).

We read in another place where Jesus came to the home of Martha. It was the town, though, of Mary. Martha was a homebody. She was a real home person. Martha was, I would say, busybody in a nice sense. She was one who was just, knew everybody. Everybody knew her. So it's interesting it says, the town of Mary. It's the house of Martha but the town of Mary.

(It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick (11:2).)

John in the twelfth chapter will tell us about the anointing with ointment. John is writing years later and so as he is identifying her, he says, It's that one who anointed Jesus with this costly perfume. Matthew's gospel tells about it in the twenty-sixth chapter and how that Jesus said she had anointed Him for His burial. But we'll get that in chapter twelve, the first part. We come to the anointing of Jesus by Mary.

Now this is not to be confused with the anointing of Jesus by the sinful woman when He was at the house of a Pharisee whose name was Simon. The woman came up and she stood at His feet and her tears falling upon His feet, she wiped them with her hair and then she anointed His feet with perfume. You remember Simon the Pharisee said, If this man were really a prophet, He would have done something about that because the woman is a sinner. He wouldn't let her touch Him. But Jesus, demonstrating to Simon His knowledge of her, and yet His willingness to let her touch Him, He said, Simon, I have something to ask of you. He said, Go ahead. And Jesus said, There was a certain man that had two servants. One owed him a thousand dollars, the other owed him fifty dollars. He forgave both of them their debts. Which one loved him the more? Oh I suppose the one he forgave the more. Jesus said, That's right. Then He started to rebuke him. He said, But I came to your house, you didn't kiss Me, which was the custom, the oriental greeting. You didn't wash My feet. But this woman has kissed My feet. She has washed them with her tears. She has put the perfume on them. Now I say to you, Her sins which are many are forgiven (Luke 7:36-47).

So this is not that Mary. This is a different, we don't know that woman's name. But this is the Mary who just before the crucifixion of Jesus, just a short while before, anointed His feet. And then she, of course, poured the perfume on His head and wiped His feet with her hair. John identifies her, we'll get that in the twelfth chapter.

Therefore his sisters [sisters of Lazarus] sent unto Jesus, saying, Lord, behold, he whom you lovest is sick (11:3).

The word "lovest" there is the Greek word "phileo". It's actually more of an emotional kind of a love that you have. Jesus loved him. He loved the family. It was a place where Jesus often would stay. He didn't have His own home. He didn't have His own bed but there was always the welcome mat out at the house of Martha and her sister, Mary and brother, Lazarus. And Jesus often when in Jerusalem would stay there with them. He loved them. And so it says, "Lord, the one whom You love is sick." Notice, it's just information. There's not really a request here at all. It isn't really saying, Jesus, come, because they knew Jesus and they knew His love and they knew that He would respond to their need. They didn't feel it necessary to make a request. Just informing Him, the one that you love is sick.

When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby (11:4).

Jesus is saying that death is not going to be the final issue. In reality, Lazarus was already dead. It is a day's journey, that is, if you really are moving from the area of the Jordan river on up to Jerusalem. Usually

they took it in two days. They usually figured ten miles as a good day's journey. It's a little over twenty miles from the Jordan river up to Jerusalem. So if it took a day for the messenger to come down, Jesus waited two days before He began to go to Bethany. If He made it there in a day, this is only three days. He heard the message, He went there, it means that Lazarus was already dead but yet Jesus is saying, "This sickness is not unto death," meaning that death is not going to be the final issue. But there is a purpose in this. God has a purpose in this sickness. And the purpose is that God might be glorified and that the Son of God might be glorified through the sickness.

God has a purpose for the things that happen in our lives. He doesn't operate apart from a purpose and a plan that He has for us. And God said through the prophet, "I know my thoughts concerning you. They are good, not evil, to bring you to an expected or desirable end" (Jeremiah 29:11). So Jesus is saying, There's a purpose for this.

Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus (11:5).

Here is a different Greek word. The one that you love is "phileo." Emotional thing. Now Jesus loved, this is "agapao," from which we get, of course, the agape. The "agapao," Jesus was devoted to them. He loved them divinely, spiritually. There was a deep, deep love for Martha and Mary and Lazarus.

When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he stayed two days still in the same place where he was (11:6).

He didn't just say, Let's take off. But He remained there for two days.

Then after that He said to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again (11:7).

It was as though He wasn't going to respond at all to the need. Staying there for just a couple of days. And then He says, Now let's go to Judaea.

His disciples said to him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone You; and You're going to go there again (11:8)?

In the last chapter we remember they were taking up stones to stone Him because they said He was claiming to be the Son of God. But He escaped out of their hand. Now the disciples say, Lord, You want to go back up there again? The last time we were there, You remember they were going to stone You.

Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walks in the night, he stumbles, because there is no light in him (11:9,10).

Jesus said, I know what I'm doing. You walk in the daylight because you can see where you're going. Jesus is more or less saying, I know where I'm going. I know what I'm doing. I'm aware. I'm not walking in darkness. I'm not oblivious to what's going on. He was in control of the situation.

These things He said: and after that he said unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleeps, he's probably getting better. Howbeit Jesus was speaking of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. And so Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus died (11:11-14).

It's actually there in the past tense, "Lazarus died." It's interesting that the term "sleep" has been used for the death of the child of God to distinguish it from the death of a sinner. If you're a child of God, you really don't die. It's more like sleeping than death. And so to distinguish between the two. It's really wrong to say concerning a child of God, He died last week. No, he moved last week out of a tent and into the house. Someday you might read in the paper, Chuck Smith died. Don't believe that. That's poor reporting. To be accurate, they must write, Chuck Smith moved out of an old worn out tent into a beautiful new mansion. "A building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1).

So they used the term "sleep." You remember when the daughter of Jairus had died. When Jesus came to the house, they were wailing and He said, She's not dead. She only sleeps. And they laughed Him to scorn. So He put them all out. Now He is using the same term concerning Lazarus and the disciples don't understand it. They said, If he's sleeping, he's probably getting better. And so Jesus just said plainly, He died. But then He said,

I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that you might believe; nevertheless let us go to him (11:15).

When Jesus does come, they say, Lord, if You'd only been here, my brother would not have died. And they were probably correct. Had Jesus been there when he was sick, He probably would have healed him so that he would not have died. But Jesus is saying, I'm glad for your sake I wasn't there. Remember He is in this state for the glory of God that the Son of God might be glorified. This is the sixth of the signs that John gives to us to prove that Jesus was the Messiah.

On two other occasions, Jesus raised the dead, little Talitha, the daughter of Jairus, but she had just died. She wasn't dead very long. There was the widow's son of Nain. They were carrying the body out for burial when Jesus stopped the funeral procession and healed him or brought him back to life. It would probably be better to say, resuscitated them rather than resurrected them because they came back into the same body. In the resurrection, we're going to have new bodies, different bodies. But they came back into the same body. Their spirits returned to the same body.

The interesting thing is that Jesus in all of the cases talked to the dead. Now you wouldn't think of doing that, would you? He said to her, Little maiden, arise. Or little gazelle, arise. And He said to the son of the widow to arise. Later on, we'll find Him saying, Lazarus, come forth.

So Jesus is now deliberately waiting so that there will be no question. You could say, Well, maybe they hadn't really fully expired. Maybe she had just gone into a coma and it appeared that she was dead and maybe. In fact, there are some commentaries that suggest when Jesus came up to the casket and saw the widow's son, He saw a flicker of his eye or something and realized that he really wasn't dead so He called him forth. And so these kind of commentators wouldn't have an opportunity to really deal with this issue. He waited two days so that by the time He arrived, he had been dead for four days so that there could be no mistaking that this guy is really gone. And then the miracle becomes even more prominent because of the time that lapsed between his death and between the resuscitation by Jesus.

"I'm glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that you might believe." Purposes of God in this is that it might confirm the faith of the disciples in Jesus. "Nevertheless," He said, "let us go to him."

Then said Thomas (11:16),

And Thomas is sort of that douer kind of a guy,

which is called Didymus [which means a twin], unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him (11:16).

In other words, they're going to kill Him. They were ready to stone Him and they're objecting. Lord, don't you remember they were ready to stone You. And so Jesus said, Let's go. And Thomas says, Let's go, fellows, we might as well die with Him. This is the end kind of a thing.

And when Jesus came, he found that he had already been in the grave for four days. Now Bethany was near to Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off (11:17,18):

A furlong is about an eighth of a mile so Bethany is just a little less than two miles from Jerusalem.

And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother (11:19).

Quite often when a person would die, they even have professional mourners. People who were particularly adept at wailing. And they would hire them and you would have to stay in the house for seven days wailing after the death of a person to really demonstrate your love. And so Mary and Martha were there in the house and other Jews had come to wail with them over the death of their brother, Lazarus.

And Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming (11:20),

Broke protocol. You weren't to leave the house for seven days but she broke protocol.

and she went out to meet Him: but Mary remained there in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if You would have been here, my brother would not have died (11:20,21).

I think, though we can't be dogmatic, I think that with Martha there was surely disappointment and perhaps even a slight rebuke of Jesus. It was more or less saying, Lord, what took you so long to get here? Surely by our message You realized it was serious. If You'd only come earlier, if You'd only come more quickly, You could have averted this tragedy. You could have averted our sorrowing and our grief. If You'd only have been here, things will be different. But then she said something interesting,

But I know, that even now, whatsoever You will ask of God, God will give it to you (11:22).

That's quite a statement. Is she suggesting that Jesus could actually raise her brother from the dead? Or

that God could if He would just ask Him? “I know that whatsoever You ask of God, He will give it to You.” It would appear that that’s what she was perhaps suggesting. However, when they came to the tomb and Jesus said to roll the stone away or to take the stone away from the entrance to the tomb, it was Martha who said, “O Lord, you better not because he’s been dead there for four days and it’s smelly.” So sort of an ambivalence. I think we all understand that.

There is with each of us sort of an ambivalence at times where we say, O Lord, we know You can do anything but Lord, don’t you realize what’s really happening here? It’s sort of, the faith sort of wavers.

Jesus saith unto her, Your brother will rise again (11:23).

I believe that Jesus is telling her, I’m going to raise him. But she understands Him to be talking of the resurrection of the last days. The one that Daniel prophesied.

So Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am (11:24,25).

And this is the sixth “I am” of Jesus. “I am,”

the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And he who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this (11:25,26)?

She had said, “Lord, I know that whatever You ask the Father, He will give it to you.” And now He is making this statement, radical statement indeed. “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” Lazarus had believed in Jesus. Though he was dead, yet he will live. “And he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” Jesus in that second part, “He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die,” is referring to spiritual death which is the separation of a man from God. The separation of a man’s consciousness from God. That’s spiritual death. To live without the thought of God, without the consciousness of God. To live your life without consulting God. Thinking about God. You’re spiritually dead. “If you live and believe in Me,” Jesus said, “you will never die.” That is, you will never be consciously separated from God.

Paul the apostle teaches that “we know that when this earthly tent, the body in which we presently live, is dissolved, goes back to dust, we have a building of God,” a new house, this is a tent. You never think of a tent as a permanent place to stay. Couple weeks vacation. But boy, it’s nice to get home. “We have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. So then, we who are in these bodies do often groan, earnestly desiring to be freed from them. Not to be an embodied spirit but to be clothed upon with the body which is from heaven: For we know that as long as we are at home or living in this body, we are absent from the Lord. But we would choose rather to be absent from this body, that we might be present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:1,2,3,6,8) Never consciously separated from God. Paul the apostle said, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I’m in a strait between two.” I’ve got these mixed emotions. “I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: And yet I know that you still need me. And so I’m held here, the desire to continue to minister to you and to strengthen you. But I would choose rather to just depart and be with Christ which is far better” (Philippians 1:21-25).

So Jesus is saying, You live and believe in Him, you will never be separated from God’s love. Consciously separated from God. “Do you,” He said, “believe this?” Notice that she didn’t really affirm her belief in His being the resurrection and the life. She affirmed her belief that He was the Messiah, the Son of God.

She said unto him, Yes, Lord: I believe that You are the Messiah, the Son of God, which should come into the world (11:27).

A little less than what He had said.

And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and He is calling for you (11:28).

John does not record the full conversation with Martha because it doesn’t record that Jesus said, Go, get Mary. Nor does it record where Jesus said, If you can believe, you will see the glory of God. And later Jesus said to her, Don’t you remember I said, If you will believe, you would see the glory of God. So John doesn’t record that but we know that He did say that to Martha. So we’re getting an abbreviated account of their conversation.

And the Jews which were with her in the house, who were comforting her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, they followed her, saying, She going to the grave to weep there (11:31).

Or to, the word “weep” is “wail there.”

Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet (11:32),

Typical of Mary. The worshipper. You remember on an earlier occasion when Jesus was at their house and Martha was busy in the kitchen fixing things and getting things prepared. Where was Mary? She was “sitting at the feet of Jesus. Just talking to Him. And Martha said, Lord, send my sister in here to help me. She has left me to do all the work. And she’s just sitting there and talking to you. And Jesus said, O Martha, Martha, you’re cumbered with many things: But Mary has chosen the better part” (Luke 10:39-42). Typical for Mary at the feet of Jesus. Next chapter we’ll find her anointing Jesus and wiping His feet with her hair. Typical of Mary, the worshipper. And so she fell at the feet of Jesus.

And she said unto Him, Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died. She said the same words that Martha said. I think that this reflects that they had talked about that. When Lazarus died, I’m sure that they kept talking about it and said, If the Lord had only been here. If the Lord had only have made it. He wouldn’t have died if the Lord was only here. I’m sure that that was one of the subjects that they were talking about when Lazarus died. Oh, how disappointing. If He’d only been here, he wouldn’t have died.

So Mary is saying the same thing as Martha. However, you really don’t know what a person is saying often unless you hear the tone of voice. I think that Martha’s tone of voice was sort of a rebuke. Whereas Mary’s is just sort of, Oh Lord, You could have done it, I know You could have. It wasn’t so much of a rebuke, just a declaration and one of just affirming her belief in His powers and in His ability.

When Jesus therefore saw her wailing, and the Jews also wailing which came with her, He groaned in His spirit, and was troubled (11:33),

The Greek there is interesting, it was, “He was filled with indignation.” He became angry. Not at their wailing. But He became angry at the consequences and the result of sin. When He saw the pain that sin brings. When He saw the grief and the sorrow that has been brought upon mankind by sin. He was troubled, He was angered, He was filled with indignation seeing the consequences of sin. What sin does, the sorrow and the grief that sin brings.

And He said, Where have you laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see (11:34).

And there that short verse. When you were in Sunday School and they asked for a scripture memory verse, this is one we all knew, wasn’t it?

Jesus wept (11:35).

The word here, “Jesus wept,” is different than their weeping which I mentioned was wailing. This just speaks of tears began to course down His cheeks. He wasn’t weeping as they supposed because Lazarus was dead. Because He knew that in a few moments He was going to glorify God by raising him from the dead. But again I believe He was weeping because He could see in the sorrow and in the bitterness the pain that sin does bring.

In another occasion we find Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. And it was for the same cause. He could foresee what their rejection of Him was going to cost them. He began to prophesy the destruction that was going to come upon Jerusalem by the Roman soldiers. He began to talk about how the children were going to be dashed in the streets and how the Roman army was going to encircle Jerusalem and how it was going to destroy the city and how the temple would be destroyed. And as He looked over Jerusalem, He saw the desolation and the devastation that their rejection of Him was going to bring. And He wept. Not because they were rejecting Him, but He wept because He could see the consequences of that rejection.

Again, weeping over the consequences of sin. The sorrow, the pain, the suffering that it brings. We are brought by Jesus into the heart of God. You remember He said, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). And we see the Father weeping over the pain and the suffering that sin brings into a person’s life, into the world. The effects and the consequences of sin. The pain, the suffering that sin brings. Jesus wept.

The Jews, misunderstanding said, Look how much He loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man would not have died (11:36,37)?

They're, more or less, saying, If He had only been here, maybe He could have kept him from dying.

Jesus again groaning in himself came to the grave. It was a cave, and there was a stone that was laying upon it. Jesus said, Take away the stone. And Martha, the sister of Lazarus that was dead, said unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: he has been dead for four days (11:38,39).

They didn't have any embalming. In fact, even to the present day, the Jews do bury the body the day the person dies. They don't have the same kind of procedures that we have here, the embalming the body and lying in state and so forth. They just take the body out and bury it immediately the day they die, the person is buried. And so the decomposition of the body had started. He's been dead for four days.

Jesus said unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if you would believe, you would see the glory of God (11:40)?

As I said, John didn't record Jesus saying that to her but Jesus is reminding her. Don't you remember I said to you, If you would believe. She had expressed earlier, "Lord, I know that whatsoever You ask of God, He will give it to You. She said, I believe that You are the Messiah, the Son of God. Now though in practical reality, her doubts are coming forth. Lord, he's been dead for four days, we better not. And Jesus said, Didn't I say to you, If you would just believe, you would see the glory of God?

How true this is. If we would just believe, we could see the glory of God.

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard me. And I know that You hear me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that You have sent me (11:41,42).

His own little personal conversation with the Father. "Father, I know that You heard Me, I know that You always hear Me. It really isn't for My, it's not for Me, but for the people's sake that I say it, that they might know that You have sent Me."

And when he had thus spoken with the Father, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth (11:43).

Quite often, the witch doctors and all sort of mumble incantations over the dead. Soft little incantations that you can't understand. Jesus didn't just sort of mumble, "Come forth," in case nothing happened. Nobody would know. But He said it with a loud voice so that they could all hear. And I can imagine. And again notice, He's addressing a man who's been dead for four days. He's calling him by his name, commanding him, speaking to the dead. And He commands him to come forth in a loud voice that all can hear. And don't you know for a moment there was great tension. I'm sure that those that were wailing suddenly stopped with their mouths still wide open. What is He saying? He's putting it on the line. He said, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Now He's putting it on the line. Is that just an empty boast? Or is it reality? He's putting it all on the line right here. In a loud voice, He says, Lazarus, come forth. Now if Lazarus doesn't come forth, then we can discount all He said. If Lazarus does come forth, then we better pay attention to what He said. What happened? And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth."

And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go (11:44).

You remember when Jesus rose from the dead, it was different. The graveclothes were still lying there in place and the napkin was folded and lying separately. But here, Lazarus, still bound hand and foot in the graveclothes, probably had to sort of jump out. And Jesus commanded, "Loose him, let him go."

Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them the things that Jesus had done (11:45,46).

They went and reported Him.

In the sixteenth chapter of Luke, Jesus tells the interesting story of a rich man and Lazarus and how that they both died but were separated in the grave or in hell by a gulf. Lazarus was being comforted in Abraham's bosom and the rich man was tormented. Seeking that Abraham would send Lazarus with water to touch his tongue to alleviate the torment of that heat. And Abraham said, Son, remember you in your lifetime had the good things, Lazarus the evil. And now he is comforted while you are tormented. Beside that, there is this gulf between us and it's impossible for those that are there to come over here, or those that are here to go over there. And he said, I pray thee then, if Lazarus cannot come to me, send him back to the

earth that he might warn my brothers lest they come to this horrible place. Abraham said, They have the law, they have the prophets. If they will not believe them, neither will they believe even though one comes back from the dead (Luke 16:19-31).

We have, I think, a mistaken notion that if our friends could just see a miracle, then they would believe. If you are disposed not to believe, if you are determined and you've set your mind not to believe, no amount of miracles is going to convince you. It takes the Holy Spirit to convince us of sin and to plant faith in our hearts.

And so, here are those, there were those that did believe, but there were those that actually ran to tell the Pharisees. He's at it again. To report Him.

So there gathered together the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and they said, What shall we do? for this man is doing many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation (11:47,48).

Notice that they were interested in their positions. And Jesus was a threat to their positions. They were lording over the people in a religious manner. They were profiteering over the people's religion. They were using it to set themselves up in an aristocracy. They lived in the finest homes in Jerusalem. They were wealthy because of the way they had manipulated the religious practices so that they could profit from them. And Jesus was a threat for their positions.

You remember later when Paul was preaching in Ephesus. It was Demetrius, the silversmith, that stirred up the crowd against Paul. He got together with the other silversmiths and said, Look fellows, these people are converting the people to Christianity and telling them that these little gods that we're making, these little silver gods that we're making and selling to the people, that they're not really gods. And so many people are believing them. Our business is being threatened. We're apt to be out of business, no one will be buying the little silver idols of Diana. And so they stirred up a riot against Paul and against those that were working with him because their trade was threatened (Acts 19:24-27).

They had been thriving and prospering off of the religious superstitions of the people. And they knew that the gospel of Jesus Christ would bring an end to that.

Unfortunately, there are those who have learned since how to profit off of these things. But Jesus was a threat to their position. "If we leave Him alone, the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."

And one of them, whose name was Caiaphas, he was the high priest that same year, he said unto them, You know nothing at all (11:49),

Here they are, having this big discussion, and of course, this guy says, Hey, you know nothing at all. Boy, that immediately just puts down everybody, doesn't it?

Nor do you consider it that it is expedient for us (11:50),

That word "expediency." How many horrible things have been done in the name of expediency? Today they call it political correctness. Expediency. "Don't you realize that it is expedient for us,"

that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not (11:50).

This is politics at its worst. Politics is bad, but this is at its worst. Notice how he says it in such a politically correct way. He didn't say, Don't you realize we got to kill Him? Now that's what he's saying. But he couches it, Don't you realize it's expedient that one should die for the people, that the whole nation doesn't. The national interests are greater than individual persons. It's hypocrisy, it's politics.

But the interesting thing is that though this was a politicized kind of a speech, because he was the high priest, there was a certain kind of anointing of God that went with the office. And this man was actually uttering a prophesy not even realizing it. And so John tells us in verse fifty-one,

This he spake not of himself: but being the high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation (11:51);

Prophesying that Jesus wasn't going to die for Himself, He was going to die for the nation.

And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad (11:52).

That Jesus would die for the world. He didn't realize that that's what he was predicting. And that's

exactly what was going to happen in not many days.

Then from that day forth they took counsel together to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went from there unto a country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples (11:53,54).

In the previous chapter, it was in the wintertime that Jesus was in Jerusalem at the feast of dedication, December 25th, when He healed the blind man which resulted in this confrontation with the Jews in which they were going to stone Him. He then left, went on down to the Jordan river until summoned by Mary and Martha because of their brother's illness. He came, raised Lazarus from the dead, but then He then returned to Ephraim to be away from the Jews because He knew that His crucifixion was to take place at the passover as He would fulfill all of the symbolism of the passover. And that took place in April. So these events are taking place between the first of the year and April, the first couple of months. We don't have just the exact dates. But He goes to Ephraim and there He waits until six days before the passover, when He comes back to Jerusalem for the final time.

Now the Jews' passover was nigh at hand (11:55):

In other words, we now are moving and how long He was there at Ephraim, we don't know. But not too long. How long He was at the Jordan river before Mary and Martha called, we don't have. We just know that this is compacted into a space of about two months or three months, January, February and March. So "the Jews' passover was at hand,"

and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, that they might purify themselves (11:55).

It was necessary to go through the rites of purification in order to be able to participate in the temple precincts on the feast days. So they would go early so that they could go through the purification rites.

Then they sought for Jesus, and they spoke among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What do you think, will He show up at the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where Jesus was, he should show it, that they might arrest him (11:56,57).

So word was out. Know where He is, report Him. We want to arrest Him. The plot was hatched. They were ready to put Him to death. The conspiracy has been established. And so the people were wondering. The buzz around. You suppose He'll show up?

And so as we move into chapter twelve, we find that Jesus does show. Not in secret, He comes riding in on a donkey amidst the shouts of His disciples. So our next study will take us into chapter twelve. And again we always encourage you to read in advance what we will be studying.

Once in a while when I read the newspapers and I see the tragedy that sin has brought into the world, I see the grief and the pain and the suffering. I understand a little bit the heart of Jesus who wept over the pain that sin brings. And I'm sure that you also must feel that way sometimes when you read of what's happened and what is happening. The pain, the sorrow that sin brings. But Jesus came that He might cancel out the results of sin. And in your life as you surrender your life to Him, He can cancel out the pain and the sorrow and the suffering that sin has brought. And He can give you, as the prophet said He would, "beauty for ashes and the cup of joy for mourning" (Isaiah 61:3). Oh how I love Him, how I appreciate His love for me.

May you go in the love of Jesus. May you be enriched in the love of Jesus. May you become very conscious and aware of His love, of His presence with you this week. Sustaining you, helping you, guiding you, keeping you steadfast in His love.