

# “The End Draws Near”

## John 11:45-12:11

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**Teaching Aim:** To examine the response of the Jewish religious leaders when Lazarus was resurrected from the dead by Jesus. To realize, not everyone who calls himself spiritual really is. To see how God turned the wicked intent of the High Priest Caiaphas into a beautiful prophecy of redemption for God’s people. To recognize just how special Mary’s offering to Christ really was.

### **DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)**

#### **Part I: The Jewish religious leaders evil plot to kill Jesus (John 11:45-57)**

1. In **John chapter 11** we follow the story from the death of Lazarus of Bethany until his resurrection. One would think his resurrection should have been a joyous occasion, but for some of the Jewish religious leaders it was not. The resurrection of Lazarus complicated their problems with Jesus as more people were drawn to Him. As we pick up the story today in **verse 45**, we learn that many of the Jews who had come to Martha and Mary’s house had come to faith in Jesus. Why do you think some of the people went to the Pharisees (**vs. 45**)? Do you think this was done out of malice or excitement at the news?
  
2. What was the result of the miracle (**vs. 46**)? Why would this be a threat to the religious leaders? Are there any recorded words of Lazarus of Bethany in Scripture? What are some ways that his resurrection spoke volumes?
  
3. In **verse 47** we find the chief priests and the Pharisees calling a special session of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council. What issue were they facing? What did they admit (**vs. 47**)? Note: J.C. Ryle writes, *“This is a marvelous admission. Even our Lord’s worst enemies confess that our Lord did miracles, and many miracles. Can we doubt that they would have denied the truth of His miracles, if they could? But they do not seem to have attempted it. There were too many, too public, and too thoroughly witnessed for them to dare to deny them.”*
  
4. According to **verse 48**, what were the Jewish religious leaders concerned with? Why would they be worried about the Romans? Are many churches today guilty of compromising with the government to keep the government off their back? When should we compromise and when should we not? (See **Rom. 13:1-7; Tit. 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-14; Acts 5:29**) What were the religious leaders afraid of losing?

5. The statement of the High Priest Caiaphas in **verses 49-50** came out of the wickedness of his heart. According to **verse 51**, how did God sovereignty turn the wicked intent of Caiaphas around for His glory? (See Commentaries) Note: Jesus would not only die for His nation, but for His people, both Jew and Gentile from all parts of the world. (**vs. 52**).
  
6. Jesus had just performed His greatest miracle to this point by raising Lazarus from the dead after being dead for four days. How did the Jewish religious leaders respond to this incredible miracle (**vs. 53**)? Why did they respond this way? Had the hearing in the Sanhedrin been a fair one or were their minds already set? (See **John 5:16; 7:1,32,45; 8:59; 9:22; 10:39**) According to **Mark 14:1-2**, did they want to kill Jesus during Passover?
  
7. How did the Sanhedrin's intent affect the ministry of Jesus (**vs. 54**)? Where did Jesus take His disciples to and how far was this city located from Jerusalem? (See Commentaries) According to **Mark 14:1-2**, how far would the Jews go in order to condemn Jesus to death?
  
8. What major festival was about to take place in Jerusalem (**vs. 55**)? Why were people arriving early to celebrate the Passover Festival? Note: Josephus said there were approximately 2.5 million people in Jerusalem in A.D. 64 & 65 for the Passover. Scholars believe there were at least 2 million people in Jerusalem during the days of Jesus to celebrate the Passover Festival. Does that number surprise you? How do scholars calculate the age that Jesus died? (See **Luke 3:23; John 2:13; 6:4; 12:55; Luke 13:6-9**)
  
9. What was the big question leading into this particular Passover Festival (**vs. 56**)? Why were so many people talking about Jesus (**vs. 57**)? Did the command of the Pharisees to be informants increase or lessen the chatter? How do you feel when the government asks you to be an informant today? The Jewish religious leaders thought they were in control, were they? What can we learn from **Acts 2:22-23**?

## Part II: Mary anoints Jesus with a very costly oil of spikenard (John 12:1-8)

1. On what day of the week did **verse 1** take place? (See Commentaries) What village had Jesus travelled to? How far was this village from Jerusalem? Why do you think Jesus went to the house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus? What can we learn about Jesus and His relationship with this family from Scripture? Who else was at the home according to **Mark 14:3**? It appears Jesus healed this leprous man as well or others could not have been there. Is it possible this individual could have been the father of Mary, Martha and Lazarus?
2. What do we find Martha doing as we come to **verse 2**? Is this action characteristic of Martha's behavior elsewhere in the New Testament? (See **Luke 10:38-42**) What can we learn from Jesus' tender rebuke of her in **Luke 10:41-42**? Are you guilty of doing the same?
3. What unusual twofold act did Mary do in **verse 3**? What do we know about the expensive oil called spikenard? (See Commentaries) Mary anointed both the head and feet of Jesus. (See **Mark 14:3-4**) By what unusual means did Mary anoint the feet of Jesus? What made this so humbling? (See **1 Cor. 11:14-15**) Why do you think Mary humbled herself to this extreme? Have you ever given an expensive gift to someone you love? What evidence do you see from **John 12:3** that the apostle John really was an eyewitness to this event?
4. One of the disciples became very upset at this gift of love from Mary, who was it (**vs. 4**)? Why was he upset (**vs. 5**)? Was Judas the only disciple upset? (See **Mark 14:3-4**) Why do you think the love of money is a trap to so many people? (See **Matt. 6:24**) Was this the case with Judas?
5. Did Judas legitimately care for the poor (**vs. 6**)? Why was he upset? J.C. Ryle writes, *"That anyone could follow Christ as a disciple for three years, see all His miracles, hear all His teaching, receive at His hand repeated kindnesses, be counted an apostle, and yet prove rotten at heart in the end, all this at first sight appears incredible and impossible! Yet the case of Judas shows plainly that the thing can be."* Do you think Judas was saved? (See **John 17:12**) Was Jesus aware of what Judas was doing behind the scenes and his wicked heart?

6. How did Jesus respond to Judas' rebuke of Mary (**vs. 7**)? Mary didn't realize the full extent of what she had just done. Why is Mary memorialized in Scripture? How many parents call their son "*Judas*" today? How many parents call their daughter "*Mary*?" Why? (See **Prov. 10:7**)
  
7. What Mary did was more important than feeding the poor, she was anointing Christ's body for His upcoming burial the following week. What truth can we learn about the poor from **verse 8**? How should we react to our poor brothers and sisters in particular? (See **Deut. 15:11**) What should we do if someone refuses to work? (See **2 Thess. 3:6-10**)

**Part III: The Jewish religious leaders plot to kill the resurrected Lazarus (John 12:9-11)**

1. According to **verse 9**, why did so many Jews travel to Bethany? Note: Word spread rapidly that Lazarus had risen from the dead and the masses were coming to see both Jesus and Lazarus. There was no denying this miracle. What did the chief priests do as a result (**vs. 10**)? Why (**vs. 11**)? What crime had Lazarus committed? How about Jesus?
  
2. Was Lazarus of Bethany the same Lazarus that is found in **Luke chapter 16**? The name "*Lazarus*" means "*God has helped*" or "*God is my helper*." What question did the rich man of **Luke 16:27-29** ask father Abraham? How did Abraham respond to him? What plea did the rich man make to father Abraham in **Luke 16:30-31**? Do we find this request being partially fulfilled in **John chapter 11**? Who ultimately fulfills it? How did the religious leaders respond when Lazarus of Bethany was resurrected from the dead?
  
3. Why do you think so many people refuse to listen to the Bible message today? What is the only way that an unbeliever can come to saving faith in Christ? (See **John 3:3,5, 16; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 16:31; Eph. 2:8-10**)

**MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!***

- God in His sovereignty can overrule the plans of evil people, turning them around for His glory.
- Jesus would not only die for His nation, but for His people, both Jew and Gentile.
- Though Jesus was the Son of God, He refused to put Himself in a place of imminent danger.
- Jesus waited until the time of the Passover Feast before presenting Himself as the Messiah.
- Mary, grateful to Jesus for raising her brother from the dead, anointed Him with a very costly oil of spikenard, but she did not realize that she was anointing His body for burial.
- Although a disciple of Jesus Christ, Judas never experienced regeneration (being born-again); he was not saved and will spend eternity in hell.
- Once Lazarus had been raised from the dead, the Jewish leaders wanted to kill him again.