

Gospel of John - episode 22

Chapter 11 part 2 & chapter 12

Welcome to our sharing on St. John's Gospel where we continue Chapter 11. We come to the very dramatic moment where Jesus goes to the tomb of Lazarus. The Jews said, "see how much he loved him, but there were some who remarked, he opened the eyes of the blind man. Could he not have prevented this man's death? Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb". He went with Mary and Martha, while the others attending the funeral followed. It was a cave with a stone to close the opening. This tomb is in the grounds of Lazarus's estate, because that's the way they buried people in those days. Jesus knew this estate very well. He turned to them and he said, "remove the stone". This produced absolute consternation. I don't think we, who are reading this text, could have any idea of the tension that built up in the group around Jesus made up of the Apostles, Martha and Mary, and their friends and relatives.

So, there's quite a crowd scattered all over the garden where this tomb was. It would have been a shock that Jesus would ask anyone to remove the stone. They built tombs with a stone which could roll because it was in a little crevice. They normally sealed the tomb by putting the stone very tightly towards the opening. It would take quite a bit of strength to remove it. Martha said to him, "Lord, by now he will smell. It's the fourth day". Now, this is the same person who said, 'I know my brother will rise on the last day. I know you are the Son of God. I know you are the One who has come into the world'. But this is different. None of them ever thought that Jesus could speak into a tomb of rotten death and bring life out of death. It was beyond possibility. They were like the present, modern world, that says 'when you're dead, you're dead'. It's all over.

When Jesus said, 'move the stone away', everybody knew that he was going to do something completely unprecedented, and yet he said it so calmly. So, **what is this stone?** You will notice that there's something that Jesus can do, and there's something that we can do. He can bring the person from darkness to light. He can bring the person from death to life. But he asks us to remove the obstacle that is in the way. That obstacle was put there by people, and he tells them to remove it. That's your job. That's what you have to do. So that stone represents whatever it is in our lives that is blocking us from experiencing the glory of God entering into us. It symbolises whatever problem we will not allow the Lord to look at. So, removing the stone translates into 'repent, change your way of doing things'. If you remove the stone, then the living and abiding Word of God can speak into the problem and deal with it. Martha's reaction shows that there was a limit to her faith in Jesus because, naturally enough, none of them could imagine what would happen in his hour of sorrow and glory.

Jesus' response to Martha is one that we all need to pay attention to. This is 11:40: Jesus said, "Have I not told you that If you believe, you will see the glory of God?" The opposite of that is true also. If you don't believe, you won't see anything! How is it that the unbelievers don't seem to know that God exists? They don't seem to know that He is around or anything about the power of his grace. If you don't believe, you won't see anything. Faith is what opens us up to the presence of God and to the action of God in us, and therefore to the glory of God. John is saying to all Christians for whom he is writing this Gospel,

'please open up because his whole Gospel is about truly believing in Jesus'. If we truly believe in Jesus, we will open up to the glory of God, and we will have this testimony that God has entered into the darkness of our lives and called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.

So, there is a challenge for Martha. 'Have I not told you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?' Now for 11:41, which is a wonderful verse. Because of what Jesus said to Martha, they rolled the stone away. Who are they? They would have been the servants in Martha and Mary's house because they owned a large estate which would be run by teams of servants. When Jesus challenges us - even on this programme - to remove the stone, the moment you do it, his glory will move in. So don't just watch this passively and say that this is mere information. It isn't. It's grace coming to you now. So, they took the stone away. Then you have something very interesting. In chapter 7 and 8, Jesus was accused of blasphemy, making himself equal with God. But here, what you see in 11:42 is a very humble, gentle Son of God turning to his Father and thanking the Father for hearing his prayer. Again, he is underlining the fact that the Son could only do what the Father does.

The Son will only obey the Father. So, listen to his prayer: "Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer. I know indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of those who are standing around". Now, the people who are closest to him are, first of all, Martha and Mary, their servants, the Apostles, the friends and relatives, and the Jewish leaders. 'I speak for the sake of all of those around here, that they may believe that it was you who sent me'. At the moment when he is about to do his greatest sign, Jesus shows himself as a very humble, loving, obedient, Beloved Son - that's the image that John gave to us back in chapter one, a very loving, obedient, Beloved Son of God. John reminds us again, as he has done in chapter four and in chapter eight, that there is only One Will between them. I only do the Will of my Father. The Father and I are one.

We are now about to witness the fulfilment of another scripture. We go back to find out what God said in the past. Isaiah 49:9 says, "I will say to the prisoners, 'Come out, ' and to those who are in darkness, show yourselves". That's exactly what Jesus does; the person speaking in that text of Isaiah is God the Father saying, 'this is what I intend doing'. So that's what Jesus does. In 11:43, "Jesus cried in a loud voice, Lazarus! Here! come out!". Every word is important. First of all, all the dead who have died since Adam are waiting for the day of resurrection. They are waiting for redemption, for heaven to be opened to them. They are waiting for the voice of the Son of God to call them from the darkness that they are in into eternal life. Therefore, if Jesus did not say, '**Lazarus**', all the dead who had ever died since Adam would have come out! We are just the same as them; we don't realise who it is we're dealing with. Jesus said, 'Lazarus, **here**'. That means, come here. to me! Because in calling the dead to life, what the dead are expecting is that they will be called to heaven, not to earth!

Lazarus has been called back to earth. Come here. Jesus says, 'come out of where you are to where I am'. It's very important. When we are in crisis and in need of the Lord intervening in our lives, that's what the Lord says to us in grace, in prayer, in the sacraments at Mass, **Come out**. Come from where you are. Come out of your darkness. **Come to me**. Let me be your Saviour and your Lord. Then you have the very simple statement, "the dead man **came out**, his feet and his hands were bound with bands of stuff, and a

cloth was around his face". And Jesus said, "Unbind him and let him go free". Now, there's a lot in that. First of all, we have the creative spirit-filled, life-giving Word of God going into the tomb of death and calling the dead to life. We've got used to that in reading this Gospel. Whatever he says happens because he is the Incarnate Word of God. So, we were reminded of that in the prologue, and that he's the person who gave us the creation in Genesis Chapter 1 also.

So, you have death seen here as a prison, a holding place. Jesus asks the prisoners to come out, but there's only one soul he's interested in right now because it's not the time for calling all the other dead. Jesus himself must die first. This calling out and this command to unbind him and let him go free is the ultimate act of forgiveness on the part of our eternal Father. Because the result of the fall was sickness, sin, death, and Hell. To be called out of that, to be set free from that, and to be given life again, Jesus is demonstrating what he has taught in all the chapters up to now - that is that he is the source of life. We got that in chapter 5. 'The Father has made me the source of life', he said. He said, I can give life to anybody I want. They see it here for the first time. I don't think we could imagine the consternation that would have been in that crowd of people, when a dead man came out of his tomb!

John says that he was bound in the bands of death. They wrapped the bodies up almost like a mummy. Lazarus didn't walk out. His legs would have been completely bound in bands of cloth. He didn't see where he was going because his face was covered in a cloth. His whole body was bound in these bands of death. What they saw was a dead body glide out of the tomb and stand in front of Jesus because that's what Jesus said, Come here, come to me. I don't think we can take on board the enormity of this. It's quite incredible: 'unbind him and let him go free'. Now, as they unbound Lazarus, they would see that while he had had a very debilitating illness, all the sores and wounds that he had in his dying were gone. He was a completely new person in Christ. It is just totally amazing.

Here is a very important comparison between the raising of Lazarus and the raising of Jesus. You will understand when it is pointed out to you that John presented the raising of Lazarus as his way of introducing the Resurrection of Jesus. So, I want to give you what will happen to Jesus and what happened to Lazarus.

- 1) The resurrection of Lazarus took place on the third day. The resurrection of Jesus took place on the third day. For the two days before the resurrection of Jesus, all his disciples were in mourning and in tears. They were in terrible distress. They thought Jesus had let them down. That's exactly what you were told about Martha and Mary in the case of Lazarus - that for the two days before Jesus came, they were in total distress, and they really did think he had let them down. The Apostles thought that Jesus should have resisted arrest and showed them his power. Martha and Mary thought that Jesus should have healed their brother and showed his power that way. In both cases, we're told that the Apostles at the time of Jesus's Resurrection and Martha and Mary at the time of Lazarus's raising, couldn't really believe without the help of Jesus. Of course, we'll hear it in John 15:5, "Without me, you can do nothing".
- 2) At the time when Jesus was dying, you hear the Jewish leaders saying, 'Come down from the cross and we will believe in you'. In other words, prevent your death. At the funeral of Lazarus,

we heard the same people say, 'this man could have prevented Lazarus's death', as if that was any solution to anything.

- 3) Jesus was buried in a tomb with a stone rolled across the front of it, just as Lazarus was. When Jesus came forth in the Resurrection, he had none of the burial cloths on him. We're told very specifically that the cloth that was his head was lying neatly folded at the side, and that the shroud that he had been wrapped in was on the bench, that Jesus did not need any of the trappings of Earth because his Resurrection was of a completely different order to Lazarus's. When Lazarus came back, he came back bound in all the clots of death, and he had to be unbound by other people because Lazarus came back to life on Earth, and the poor man had to die a second time!
- 4) When Jesus rose from the dead, this was his final experience of death. He was leaving death completely behind him, and he had total victory over death, and **he was clothed in glory**, and he was going to be clothed in glory for the rest of eternity. Poor Lazarus had to come back and continue life on Earth. So, when you realise that Lazarus had to come back and pick up all the problems and responsibilities of Earth, you realise it's of a lower order. It's a wonderful resurrection, but of a completely lower order than Jesus's one.
- 5) The head cloth of Jesus was a very important sign; Lazarus had it on his face for he did not know the mystery he was experiencing. He couldn't see anything. It was only when they unbound him that he saw Jesus. That is parallel to the blind man; until he looked into the eyes of Jesus, he didn't know he was looking into the Saviour's eyes.
- 6) Jesus's Resurrection was a total sign of life from above, whereas Lazarus's resurrection was merely a foreshadowing of what Jesus was going to give. John has done this in a marvellous way, showing us that one actually prepares for the other.

When Jesus came to his own Hour - which is only a few days away - to die and to rise again, the Apostles had a fresh memory of what happened to Lazarus to help them cope. Therefore, they would be able to begin to take on board the Death and Resurrection of Jesus. So, there's an awful lot here. Just one final word: the command that Jesus gives to the Church is to go out and unbind the whole human race from whatever death they are in, the death of sin, darkness, unbelief, apostasy... whatever it is. Unbind them and let them go free because you have risen from the dead and you are living the life from above.

Now we want to look at the reaction of the Sanhedrin to the raising of Lazarus. Wouldn't you think they would give glory to God for this wonderful sign? No, they did not: 11:45: "Many of the Jews - meaning the Jewish leaders - who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him". Now, that's the amazing thing, that we know that by the time Jesus died, many of the people in the higher echelons of Jewish society and in the Sanhedrin believed in him! But there was a particular group in the Sanhedrin that were completely determined to kill Jesus. Some of them went to tell the Pharisees what Jesus had done. So, 11: 47, they had a meeting at the Sanhedrin. What is their problem? "Here is a man working all these signs, and what action are we taking? If we let him go on in this way, everyone will believe in him". Their problem is that so any go over to Jesus, with the result that they will lose their power base and their privileges. It's completely selfish. Then they said the Romans are worried about all these crowds and the possibility of riots. So, the Romans will come and they will destroy this holy place - meaning the temple,

and our nation. Now, they have stumbled on a real truth. The Romans will come and destroy the temple and the nation because of their political expedience in getting rid of Jesus. Saying that it would save the nation is going to backfire on them.

“One of them who was Caiaphas, who happened to be the high priest of that year said, you don't seem to have grasped the situation at all. You fail to understand that it is better for one man to die for the nation than for the whole nation to be destroyed”. John says that as a high priest, he prophesied. Now, the people associated prophecy with the office of the high priest. Even though this man was unworthy of his office, God would still use him because of the office that he held. That's why it's very dangerous to be in high office, because if you are unworthy of it, it can bring judgement on yourself. He knew that Jesus would die, but not for the nation. Jesus would die for them. He would die to save them.

John said that the high priest didn't get it all. Jesus was to die not only for the people of Israel, “not just for that nation only, but to gather together in unity the scattered children of God”. Caiaphas has no idea what he is saying. He doesn't even realise it's prophetic. But John, looking back on the whole event, having seen all that happened and the Church now established among the Gentiles, knows that Jesus really is the Saviour of all the world. Jesus was about to gather the scattered children of God from all nations, from all generations and all times. He was going to bring them into his flock, and that he would be the one Shepherd over all of these people coming from different time zones, nations, languages, tribes, people and cultures. He was going to bring them all in. John finishes this chapter by telling us that the Sanhedrin was determined to kill Jesus. Therefore, Jesus could no longer go openly among the Jews. He had to go into the area bordering on the desert and hide from them until it was the right time. We end this chapter with an extraordinary thing; Jesus raised a man from the dead, the Sanhedrin decides to put Jesus into the tomb.

That's why I said at the beginning that it was life for man and death for the Son of Man - that the price Jesus would pay - not only to call Lazarus out of the tomb, but to call all of us out of the death of unbelief and death of sin and the world - whatever it is - that Jesus had to pay the price for that. At the end of Chapter 11 we should be in adoration, praise and thanksgiving for our Saviour who would do so much for us.

Thank you for listening. Goodbye. God bless you.

INTERVAL

We now come to Chapter 12 which completes the first half of John's Gospel. It brings all the drama of the first half of this Gospel to its pinnacle. We began with a very special week in which John speaks about each day of the week. Well, the strange thing is that the next eight chapters, before you reach the Passion, John has another week, **the final week of Jesus's life**. John tells us what happens every single day, just as he gave you what happened every single day in the first week. The difference is that the time for the signs which proved Jesus was the Messiah, is over. Jesus has given seven signs to prove who he was.

The first sign was Cana of Galilee, when he gave the overflowing gift of wine, the gift of salvation for us all.

The second sign was given in Chapter 4, the cure of the nobleman's son, that the Beloved Son came to die to give us this new life.

The third sign was what I call the 'man on the mat' in Chapter 5, that Jesus himself is the source of life.

The fourth sign was given in chapter 6, the feeding of the 5,000. Jesus is the bread of life, that he himself is the manna from heaven.

The fifth sign was also given in chapter 6, that Jesus is the master of the wind and the waves, that he walked on water, so that he is divine and that it is God himself who has come to save us.

Then the sixth sign was given in chapter 9, the cure of the man who was born blind, so that Jesus is our light and our salvation as the Psalms had celebrated.

Finally, we looked at the seventh sign, which was the raising of Lazarus, and that is that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Everything has been said, everything has been done.

There is only one thing left - that Jesus would offer himself as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. This is the fulfilment of Isaiah 63:8-9, "truly, these are my people. They are sons. They are not rogues. The Lord proved himself their saviour in all their troubles. It was neither messenger nor angel. It was his own presence that saved them. In love and in compassion, he redeemed them himself". Jesus has been demonstrating that in these seven signs. Now, he goes to accomplish the Redemption itself. So, from Chapter 12, we are starting the famous Passover of 30 AD, when Jesus was killed. John declares - and he has been telling us for most of the gospel - that this is Jesus's HOUR.

Everybody will see it as the Hour of Darkness, but in actual fact, **it is Jesus's Hour**, and he is the victor. Jesus himself told us about this in Ch3:14-17. Now, before I go on, I have to go back. I've been saying that to you all the time, that to go on to the next chapter in John, you have to go back to understand what John is about to reveal. Back in Chapter 3, Jesus had said, that the Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that anyone who believes in him may have eternal life. We have been well-warned about this. Jesus is now going to pay the price so that we could have this life. As the gate of the sheepfold, he is going to open the gate for us. All the things that he promised are now going to be fulfilled.

As we approach this final Passover, the two camps that we have watched developing during the Gospel are very clear, because at the beginning of Chapter 12 Jesus's friends gather in love while his enemies gather in hate, and decide to kill him. When we keep this focus, we will be able to accompany Jesus in his sorrow and suffering and persevere with him to the very end. He will show us - meaning the Church and the community of all the beloved disciples - that we ourselves also have a way of suffering and sorrow to take as we bring his message to the ends of the Earth. But if we walk with him and do everything through him, with him and in him, yes, we will have the victory. So, let's read: "Six days before Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom he had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there. Martha waited on them, and Lazarus was among those at table". Now, notice the way John emphasises that Lazarus has come back to normal life. Lazarus hosts a banquet for Jesus, which

includes his disciples also. They were rich people. So, they host a banquet and we are told that Lazarus is there at the meal.

“Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard, and with it, she anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair. The house was full of the scent of the ointment. Then, Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, the man who was going to betray him, said, ‘why wasn’t this ointment sold for 300 denarii (300 days wages) and the money given to the poor?’” This sounds good. But is it good? John says, “he said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he himself was a thief. He was in charge of the common fund and used to help himself to the contributions. So, Jesus said, Leave her alone. She had to keep this sent for the day of my burial. You will have the poor with you always”. This is Deuteronomy 15:11, so they have known that for centuries. Just looking at the way the Cosmos (unbelieving world) works, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. That’s because there is no justice in the Cosmos. There, people look out for themselves. They don’t mind stealing from others. So, you know which camp Judas is in!

“You have the poor with you always, Jesus said. You won’t have me always with you”. That is, in the Incarnation, he is in his final week of living on this Earth. Let’s have a look and see what we can glean from these verses. We have Lazarus’s sister Mary, the one who loves throwing herself at the feet of Jesus, and she brings in the most costly ointment that she has, which tells you, of course, that they were very wealthy people. I mean, how many of us could buy ointment that cost 300 days wages? She brings this, and she literally lavishes it on the feet of Jesus. In John’s gospel, you must watch every detail. Why does she anoint the feet? Well, you must know that in those days, if you were anointing a living person, you anoint the head. Priests were always anointed on the head, for example. But if you are going to anoint a dead person, you anoint the feet. Now, somebody could argue, Oh, but she’s a woman, and maybe they wouldn’t have been allowed to anoint his head. But in this private situation of the family where Jesus met with all his disciples and among his own closest people, that wouldn’t work.

So, you have to ask, why is she anointing the feet? Now, I’ve showed you as we took the journey throughout the Gospel that people unconsciously either say or do the right thing. In other words, they are led to do something, and they themselves don’t know the significance of it. Like the woman said to Jesus in Chapter 4, ‘Give me some of that water’. The people said in Chapter 6, ‘Give us some of that bread’. They don’t realise what they’re saying, and yet they are drawn to ask the right thing. Jesus is the only one who can explain that this woman has anointed him for burial because none of them have taken it on board that Jesus is going to die in a few days’ time. They cannot register that. John wants us to know that Jesus will offer himself as the Passover Lamb to save us, therefore he will be badly ill-treated. But nothing will happen that the Father hasn’t permitted. So, what John says is that the Father insisted on Jesus being anointed as a King before his sacrifice, and that he was buried as a King afterwards, and that he was declared a King during his sacrifice on the cross. His royal kingship will be brought out strongly in the Passion narrative. So, in this little detail you can see another example of what Jesus said, ‘the Father loves the Son’, and therefore looks after him. He will allow the Son to make this sacrifice because it’s necessary for the Redemption of the world.

Unfortunately, we have to look at Judas Iscariot! He is the agent of darkness in the community. We have this phenomenon always in the church - that some would be in the church, but not of it. We've had many Judas's down the centuries - people who were in the church and were actually its enemies. He complained that what the woman was doing was a complete waste. You see, the realm of below, the Cosmos, thinks that anything you give to God is a complete waste! It's extraordinary that when young people decide to give their lives to God, that people will say to them, 'You're wasting your life. You're wasting it on nothing'. In other words, you won't have money, sex, or power. They think that's the important thing. They don't know anything about the glory of being a beloved disciple and even of being a martyr for the Lord. Judas therefore, speaks for the Cosmos and the way it thinks. John is the only one of the four evangelists who tells us that Judas was in fact a thief - that he didn't care about the poor - and that therefore, he was using the money that the community needed to get their daily essential needs. He was using some of that for his own benefit. Therefore, if this ointment was sold, Judas would benefit. Would the poor? They might! So, the statement which on the outside looks okay is in fact hypocritical, deceitful and dishonest. John is warning us not to take everything at face value, that like Jesus, we must discern. We must try and find out what is behind the statement. When Jesus defends Mary, it is actually the Synoptic Gospels that tells us that what Mary did was going to always be remembered in the Church, and that that was Jesus's way of rewarding her for this humble, loving gesture in front of the others.

So, between Mary and Judas, we have another example of the two types of children that God has, and also the two journeys that we've been looking at. Some people coming towards the light, some going towards darkness. We've been looking at this for quite some time now in John's Gospel. Mary represents the sinner who goes towards salvation. Judas, the person who seemed to be saved, going towards damnation. I need to give you the background to this to let you appreciate it, so that you don't think that this is just my idea. The Book of Ezekiel, Chapter 18. The first paragraph I'm going to read fits Mary, and the second fits Judas. This was given a couple of hundred years before Christ. "But if the wicked man renounces all the sins he has committed, and he respects my laws and is law-abiding and honest, he will certainly live. He will not die. All the sins he has committed will be forgotten. From that time onwards, he shall live because of the integrity that he has embraced and practised. That fits Mary. She was a sinner, and now she's on her way to becoming a great saint.

Now we look the Judas problem. "But if the upright man renounces his integrity, commits sin, copies the wicked man, and practises every filth, is he going to live? All the integrity he has practised, will be forgotten from then on. But this is because he himself has broken faith and he has committed sin. He will die". Poor Judas will be the first of them all to die. He will die before Jesus. Unfortunately, he will die at his own hand, which is really tragic. But Mary's love for Jesus will be remembered forever in the Church. What precisely is it that the Church remembers? We have to understand that you don't look at things superficially, so you don't look at the ointment on the feet. You look at something much deeper than that. Mary becomes a model for all future disciples. Jesus has shown incredible divine love in becoming Incarnate and giving himself.

There is an obligation on us to reach back and to give love. What Mary shows is that love can be repaid by love alone. That's a statement of St. John of the Cross (16th century). Love can be repaid by love

alone. Mary knows that. So, what the Church remembered was that we should lavish love on the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ is the Church. So, this is our service to the Church and to other people because of his love. We will hear this again in John 15:9, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you, so you are to love one another". Mary's gesture here became a symbol of that. There is another thing also, which I think is beautiful: when the heart of Jesus is opened on the cross, his inexplicable, limitless, immeasurable love will send the perfume of his divine love filling the entire Cosmos. So, Mary's scent, wonderful and beautiful that it is, filled the whole house where they were. That became a symbol of the love, power and grace which came out of Jesus and filled the whole Cosmos for all time. Her love is a little sign of his. Mary is the one who reveals that our personal response to Jesus should be love and adoration in prayer, and that it should be generous, serious service and sacrifice also.

Now let us go into the other camp for a minute. This is 12:9-11: "Meanwhile, a large number of Jews heard that Jesus was there, and they came to see him, not only on account of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus who had been raised from the dead". Here you have curiosity aroused in people. They want to see a man who has come back from the grave, who has been on the other side. Would he, in fact, tell them what life was like on the other side? But Lazarus didn't speak about it! There's no evidence anywhere that Lazarus spoke about it. He gave all his attention to the Lord. Mary wasn't the only one in that household who was a saint. There were three saints. All of them gave their attention completely to the Lord.

In fact, the banquet was Lazarus's lavish love to Jesus also. He gave all his attention to Jesus. It's very wonderful seeing this entire family as a model for everybody else. But other people who are coming just to look at this man coming back from the dead - that's only vile curiosity - and it shouldn't be responded to. I think it's sad that Lazarus had to put up with that, but he had something else to put up with also. 12:10-11: "Then the chief priests - that is the Sanhedrin - decided to kill Lazarus as well, since it was on his account that many of the Jewish leaders were leaving them and believing in Jesus". So, you can see that Jesus did, in fact, have a lot of people in the higher echelons of society who believed in him. But there was a particular group in the Sanhedrin who were determined to get rid of him. Now they decide to get rid of Lazarus also! Poor Lazarus! He's only barely out of the tomb when they want to put him back into it.

Can't you see the futility of this jealousy against Jesus? If Jesus has taken Lazarus out of the tomb, do you think he's going to allow them to put him back in?! Now, here is one of the miracles that's not acknowledged in the Gospels; I'll give it to you: Jesus worked a very quiet miracle. He said nothing to anybody, but he made absolutely certain that Martha, Mary, Lazarus, all his friends, and all his disciples were completely secure in all of the trouble that led to his own death. It's one of the quiet miracles. People just don't look at it because it's not written down in black and white for them. Jesus was also aware of the fact that when they got him, that they would come to the conclusion that all the disciples would disperse and that the whole 'Jesus movement' would just fizzle out. In other words, when they got what we call the big fish, that the little ones would just swim off. They were in for a shock because in getting Jesus and killing him they were only the agents of letting the explosive grace, power and glory of the Resurrection explode out into the Cosmos.

They were going to miss everything because they don't want it, and because they refuse to acknowledge that what Jesus is doing has any value - that's the only reason why they're going to miss it - because he is offering himself for everybody. You see, God wants everyone to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. You'll find that stated in the Acts of the Apostles and in 1 Timothy 2:4. When the Church went out into the Roman Empire, they knew these Romans were their political enemies, but once Jesus died and rose again, the Church woke up to realise, 'Our enemies are not flesh and blood'. This is a battle between light and darkness between good and evil. so, they never again looked at the Romans in the way they did before. When you truly get to know Jesus, you realise that every person is a child of God. That person has ultimately come from Him and will return to him. It changes the way you think, absolutely. They (the leaders) were only going to miss out because that was their choice.

I now want to come to the very dramatic moment where we were told in the great controversies that came before now that the Jewish leaders were saying to Jesus, "Tell us plainly who you are. Don't leave us in suspense anymore". They all knew that if the Messiah was here, that he would make a triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Imagine their shock when Jesus made a triumphal entry into Jerusalem! I want to at least begin to look at this now. This is 12:12-19: I want you to notice something, 'the next day'. Here you have John saying, This is what happened on this day and this is what happened on the next day, because this is the **final week of Jesus's life**. "The next day, the crowds that had come up for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, and they took branches of palm and went out to meet him shouting, Hosanna, blessings on the King of Israel who comes in the name of the Lord". Now, this is interesting. In the first week of Jesus's life, he was called the King of Israel. In this last week of his life, he is hailed as the King of Israel. That is the King of the whole nation, not just King of the Jews (Judeans) - in other words, the Messiah. But the strange thing is that when the Romans crucify him, they will put a notice over his head saying that he's the King of the Judeans only. That was their way of getting back at the Sanhedrin, that this is what you've done to your own King. So, the people shout, "Hosanna, blessings on the King of Israel who comes in the name of the Lord". Jesus is now going to make the most dramatic entry into Jerusalem, and we will look at this when we return in the next episode. Thank you for watching. goodbye. God bless you.