

# John 11:45-52. Caiaphas Proposes That Jesus Should Be Slain.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*The sermon explores Caiaphas' proposal for Jesus' death, revealing the interplay of human wickedness and divine purpose in redemption.*

**Scripture:** John 11:45-47, John 11:49, Ephesians 1:9

**Topics:** "Jesus' Death", "God's Sovereignty"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer delves into the fulfillment of Jesus' prayer at Lazarus' tomb, where many witnessed the miracle and believed in Him, contrasting with the hardness of heart displayed by some who refused to believe even after witnessing such a powerful sign. The plot to murder Jesus was hatched by the High Priest, veiled in a deceptive pretext to save the nation, showcasing how Satan influences men to hide wickedness under virtuous names. Despite the high priest's hypocritical intentions, his words unknowingly prophesied the redemptive purpose of Jesus' death to unite all God's children and bring them back to the Father, revealing the mystery of God's will accomplished through man's wickedness.

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## Transcript

Some of our Savior's prayers have not yet been fulfilled; but the prayer he offered up at the tomb of Lazarus was granted immediately. He prayed not only that he might raise Lazarus, but also that the miracle might cause the people to believe that his Father had sent him. Here is the answer to the petition--"And many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed in him." In the end, all the intercessions of the Son of God shall receive their accomplishment.

But some of the Jews went their ways to the Pharisees and told them what things Jesus had done. What an instance their conduct affords of the hardness of the human heart, when not softened by divine grace! It will not believe, even when one is raised from the dead. Perhaps these unbelieving Jews shed the tear of sympathy in the house of Mary--for there are many who are tenderly attached to their friends, who are full of enmity against the Son of God.

The Pharisees eagerly listened to the reports of these malicious informers, and convened a council to consider the subject.

It was in this assembly, that the most dreadful crime was suggested that man has ever perpetrated--the murder of the Son of God. It was suggested by the person who filled the most holy office in the world. The High Priest reproached the Pharisees for their perplexity, saying, "You know nothing at all; nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."

See how he veils the wickedness of his scheme by a specious pretext. He dares not say, "Let us shed innocent blood; let us rid ourselves of the object of our envy; let us falsely accuse him, and put him to death unjustly." Satan teaches men to hide their wickedness from their own eyes, lest its deformity should cause them to start back with horror. But God sees men's actions as they really are; their secret sins are set in the light of his countenance. It would astonish us to know by what gentle names wicked men have called their blackest actions. Let us watch lest Satan get an advantage over us, and impose some sin upon us by giving it the name of a virtue.

But though the high priest spoke hypocritically when he proposed that one man should die for the people, he also spoke prophetically. His words were lying words in the sense he used them; but they were true in another sense, which he knew not of. While his heart was under the power of Satan, his tongue was under the direction of God--"He spoke not of himself." As the Lord put words into the mouth of Balaam, so also did he put them in the mouth of Caiaphas, though it was Satan who put feelings into his heart. Yet his words only expressed a small part of the truth, for Jesus died not for that people only, but he died that he might gather into one all the children of God scattered abroad.

It is the desire of all his children to be with their Father, and it is the desire of their Father to have all his children with him. Sin, like an oppressive tyrant, has scattered his family abroad. Death divides them from each other, and even divides their souls from their bodies. But the death of Christ has taken away the guilt of sin, and has destroyed the power of death. At the sound of the last trumpet, the bodies that lay mouldering in the tombs, or forgotten in the depths of the sea, shall be glorified and united to the happy spirits of the just. Those who were born in different ages of the world, or who were separated by vast oceans, shall behold each other for the first time in their Father's everlasting home. And all these blessings shall flow from the dreadful crime suggested by the high priest. Well may the plan of redemption be called, "The mystery of His will." (Eph. 1:9.) It is a mystery that the will of God should be accomplished by the wickedness of man; that the purpose formed in heaven should be executed by hell. But herein the wisdom of God is displayed. The author of sin, even Satan, is compelled to lend his hand in destroying his own works, and his own kingdom. He knew not that the blood of the cross would make peace, and would reconcile all things to God, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven; he knew not that even his own servants, when sprinkled with that blood, would revolt and become the servants of God. (Col. 1.) Had he known it, he would not have suggested to Caiaphas the guilty expedient of causing one man to die for the people.

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