



Matthew 26

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Tape #8026
By Chuck Smith

Now there are two or three places where Paul says, "I would not have you to be ignorant" (Romans 1:13). But it is interesting to me in those places where Paul said, "I would not have you to be ignorant," there probably exists today in the church the greatest ignorance. And there is a great ignorance concerning the gifts of the Spirit. And so we hope to give to you a thoroughly Biblical presentation of the gifts and the operation of the gifts of the Spirit in the lives of the believers and in the church, as we begin this portion of the study on the Holy Spirit.

So looking forward to just a glorious time in growing in our understanding and knowledge of the ways of God, in the things of God this week. Many opportunities for you to get involved, the bulletin is filled with various fellowships that are meeting here at Calvary and surely you can find one that is just suited for you. And we encourage you to just shop around until you find that fellowship.

Let's turn now in our Bibles to the gospel according to Matthew, chapter twenty-six, as we continue our study through the Bible. Jesus has just concluded His study with His disciples on the mount of Olives, it is often called the Olivet discourse. This study was prompted by the prediction that Jesus made concerning the destruction of the temple. There would not be one stone left standing upon another. The disciples wanted to know when that was going to happen and what would be the signs of His coming and the end of the world. So in chapters twenty-four and twenty-five, Jesus gave the signs of His coming, the end of the world, and then He gave a series of parables emphasizing the importance of our being ready because He is going to be coming when He is not expected. In such a time as you think not, and thus parables that dealt with the importance of being ready and the importance of watching, being alert.

Now chapter twenty-six,

And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings (26:1),

That would be the discourse there on the mount of Olives concerning the prophecies of His coming and the parables that related to that coming

he said unto his disciples, You know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified (26:1,2).

This Olivet discourse is thought to have taken place on Tuesday. Sunday, the triumphal entry, was on the tenth of the month of Nisan which would be equivalent to the sixth of April in our calendar, but in the year 32, it was in the Jewish calendar the tenth of Nisan. Now on the tenth day of the month of Nisan which was the first month of the Jewish year, they selected the lamb for the passover offering. It is interesting that it was on the tenth that Jesus presented Himself as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. On the fourteenth day was the day of passover, the fourteenth of Nisan was the day of the passover feast, the feast in which they commemorated the deliverance out of Egypt, the final plague, the death of the firstborn, and their being spared the disaster of that plague by the blood of the lamb that was placed upon the doorpost and the lintel of the house. On the fifteenth of Nisan began the feast of unleavened bread which was a seven-day feast in which they ate only unleavened bread, they would not eat any bread with any leaven in it, the rising elements, and the fifteenth beginning the feast of the unleavened bread was a seven-day feast and it went until the twenty-first. Now the first day and the last day of the feast of unleavened bread were holy days or sabbath days. And they were to be observed as a sabbath day, a day that was holy unto the Lord, the first and the last day of the feast of unleavened bread. And so if indeed Sunday was the tenth of Nisan, then Thursday would have been the fourteenth, the day of the passover, the fifteenth, Friday would have been the holy sabbath day of the feast of unleavened bread which would then change the traditional Good Friday crucifixion to Thursday, which then would equate to the three days and the three nights that was predicted that He should be in the earth. Something to consider, after two days the feast of the passover spoken on Tuesday, that would put it on Thursday. "And the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." In another portion

of the city,

Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas (26:3),

At this particular time in the history of Israel, there were two high priests, Caiaphas was the high priest who was recognized by the Jews but he came into disfavor with the Roman government and the Roman government appointed a second high priest by the name of Annas, who was actually the son-in-law of Caiaphas. And so you have an interesting situation in which there are two high priests, it's not a contradiction in the scripture, it actually took place, one a Roman appointee, the other one recognized by the Jewish people as the legitimate high priest. And so they were gathered at the palace of the high priest whose name was Caiaphas,

And they consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him (26:4).

They were planning, they were plotting, they were seeking some way to get hold of Jesus, they had determined that He had to die.

But they said, Let's not do it on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people (26:5).

In other words, they're setting now their plot. We've got to kill Him, but let's not do it on the feast day, we don't want an uproar among the people. But you see, they weren't in control. God was in control. And it was ordained by God that He should be crucified on the day of the passover feast because He was the true sacrificial Lamb whose blood keeps us from death. So that whole experience in Egypt was only a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ. As Paul writes about the new moons, the sabbath days and their feast days and all, in Colossians he said, "These were all just the shadow of the things that were to come, the real substance is Jesus." So when they took the lamb, and they killed the lamb and put the blood upon the doorpost of the house, so that when the Lord passed through the land of Egypt that night, He said, Wherever I see the blood on the doorpost of the house, I will pass by that house, the firstborn will be spared. Here is the developing of the type of Jesus, the Lamb of God who would be slain for the sins of the world. The blood of Jesus Christ upon our lives, spiritually speaking, causes us to be freed from the judgment of death for our sins. And this was all the foreshadowing of Jesus Christ. Thus, it was important that the fulfillment take place on the day in which they celebrated the passover. And it was not by accident that Jesus was crucified on the day of the passover because He is our passover Lamb, He is the One who has freed us from the penalty of death for our sins.

In like token, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples on the feast day of Pentecost. Now Pentecost was the feast in which they celebrated the first fruits of the great harvest. They would set out a corner of the field and they would cut the wheat and they would bind it into sheaves and they would bring it in and offer a wave offering with these sheaves of wheat before the Lord, and these would be offered unto God as the firstfruits, we've got a great harvest out here and these are the firstfruits we offer to God. So it was appropriate and right that the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples and the church was born on the day of Pentecost and some 3,000 people were saved. They were the firstfruits of the great harvest that continues to the present time, as the Holy Spirit is still at work in the world, in hearts and lives of men and women. That is why so many people believe that when the Lord comes again to establish His kingdom, that it will take place during the feast of tabernacles because the feast of tabernacles was the feast in which they celebrated twofold, God's preservation of their fathers through the forty years of wandering in the wilderness, and secondly, His keeping of the promise and bringing them into the land that He had promised unto their father Abraham. So God is preserving us through this wilderness experience, but He is going to keep His promise and He's going to bring us into that glorious kingdom that has been promised and that is why many commentators believe that the actual second coming of Christ will take place on the day of the feast of tabernacles, and thus the thing is, we don't know which year. There are a lot of guesses and every year there are new books coming out with guesswork, but chances are, it will take place during the feast of the tabernacles because that was the third of the three major feasts and that one has yet not had its New Testament fulfillment. That's still cast in the shadow of things of come and that coming of the kingdom is yet to come. So, that is yet future. So they had determined not on the feast day. Now in reality Jesus was the One in control. They were trying to control the situation but Jesus was in control all the way. He had said,

“No man takes my life from me, I give my life.” And Jesus was in control though they sought to be in control. He took it out of their hands because it was necessary for the fulfillment of the type that He be crucified on the day of the passover.

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper (26:6),

The other gospels tell us that at this feast, there was Mary and Martha, in fact Martha was helping to serve at this feast, so typical of Martha. Where would you expect her to be? That’s just her nature, and so she was serving. It was in the house of Simon the leper and we are told that Lazarus was also at the feast, he was sitting at the table and many people were just coming in and out just to look at Lazarus because he had been dead and buried for four days and of course was brought back to life so he was a curiosity, sort of a spectacle, and people were coming in and out just to look at the guy who had been buried for four days and was eating now at this feast in the house of Simon the leper.

There came unto him a woman (26:7)

The other gospels name the woman, John tells us it was Mary, the sister of Martha. Now again, so typical of Mary. It’s interesting how they just, their temperaments, there they are, right according to their nature, Mary was the worshipper, she was the one that was sitting always at the feet of Jesus, just worshipping, adoring, listening. Martha was the busy one, always getting things ready, making sure the little sandwiches were all set and the ice tea was ready and so it was just typical of the sisters, and just the different temperament or nature of the sisters. And so, “There came unto Him a woman,” Mary,

having an alabaster box of very precious [or costly perfume] ointment, and she poured it on his head, as he was sitting there at the dinner. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste (26:7,8)?

This was very precious, very costly perfume. In fact, it could have been sold for several thousand dollars. But Mary in this moment of adoration and love just poured it on the head of Jesus. Again, John’s gospel tells us that the one who really objected, the one who was angry over this was Judas Iscariot. And it was Judas who said, Why this waste? We could have sold this for several thousand dollars and we could have put the money in our treasury. But John gives us a little insight concerning Judas, he said he did not say this because he was really concerned with the poor, he said this because he was the one that was keeping the bag with the money and he had been thieving out of it. So gives you a little insight into this.

For this ointment [or perfume] might have been sold for much, and given to the poor (26:9).

It’s amazing to me how sanctimonious hypocrites can sound sometimes.

When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. You have the poor with you always; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this perfume on my body, she did it for my burial (26:10-12).

This is just a pre-burial perfuming.

Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever the gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her (26:13).

So Jesus was right, we’ve told you tonight as a memorial for Mary, that she was the one that did this act of love and devotion unto Jesus.

Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests (26:14),

Now you see, he’d been rebuffed. He was holding the bag that they had their, he was the treasurer of the group, he took of the bills, but have been thieving out of the bag. When the woman poured this precious, costly perfume on Jesus, he said, We should have not wasted it, let me just say this, nothing that you give to Jesus is ever wasted. Why this waste? Nothing is ever wasted that is given to Jesus. But he had been rebuffed by Jesus. We got to give it to the poor. Jesus said, You have the poor with you always, you don’t have Me always. She’s done this for my burial. And wherever the gospel is preached, this will be spoken of as a memorial for her. And Judas Iscariot was upset. He was determined then he was going to still profit and make money off of Jesus. And so he went to the chief priests,

And he said unto them, What will you give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought the opportunity to betray him (26:15,16).

Now this thirty pieces of silver which Judas covenanted and made his deal for, is actually a prediction in

the prophecy of Zechariah. He tells us in verse twelve of chapter eleven, "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord" (Zechariah 11:12,13). We know that later, Judas brought the money back, said, I can't take this, I betrayed innocent blood. They said, That's your problem. And so he threw the money down there on the temple floor and went out, he said, it's your problem, what are you going to do with the money and he went out and he hanged himself. And they said, What are we going to do? We can't put this back in the temple treasury, it's blood money. We used it to buy the information that brought the death of this man, it's blood money, it can't go in the treasury, and they then came upon the idea of buying a potter's field in which to bury the poor. A potter's field was the field next to the potter's house where all of the pottery that did not survive the firing process and had cracked or broken, he would just toss these pots out into the field and they would be filled with these little potsherds that made the field untillable and really worthless; and so it was cheap and they bought it to bury the poor and thus, you have the graves or the graveyards that are called often the potter's fields. Comes from this.

Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus (26:17),

that is, the feast was approaching, and so they came to Jesus and they

said unto him, Where will you that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say to him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at your house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover (26:17-19).

All of the elements for the passover feast, the wine, the bread, the lamb, the bitter herbs and all that was necessary for the passover feast.

And now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve (26:20).

It is interesting that in the Jewish days, their day begins at sundown. So their sabbath, which of course, seventh day, Saturday, begins at sundown Friday and goes until sundown Saturday. Friday afternoon in Israel, everything shuts down. By the time the sun goes down, no more taxicabs driven by Israeli drivers, and there's just a quietness that comes over the whole city, as all of the stores are closed and they are observing the sabbath day. Saturday when the sun goes down, the streets are full, people are partying, the sabbath is over, they all go downtown and they just have a great celebration of the sabbath being over. So that their days begin at the evening of the day before, so to speak. So the evening of the fourteenth day of the month would have been then on Wednesday evening, the passover day would have been the fourteenth on Thursday during the day, would have ended at sundown on Thursday. The next day would be the great sabbath of the unleavened bread, the first day of the feast of unleavened bread which would begin at sundown on Thursday. "So when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve."

The reason why they start the day, incidentally, at evening, is found in the book of Genesis. In the seven days of creation, you read, And it was evening, and it was morning, the first day. It was evening and it was morning, day two. It was evening, and so in Genesis it started the day with the evening and morning, and that is why they start the day on the evening before. So their day goes from six o'clock to six o'clock approximately, from one evening to another. We start our day at midnight. They start it at six o'clock approximately in the evening. It varies with the sun, when the sun goes down, it's the evening and that's the beginning of the next day.

And so as they did eat, he said, Truly I say unto you, that one of you is going to betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I (26:21,22)?

That is interesting to me in that it would indicate that they recognized that they didn't even know their own hearts. I don't know what is in the capacity of my heart to do. I am certain that we are discovering that the capacity for evil in the heart of a man is far greater than anything we ever dreamed. The horrible killings in Rwanda are things that are far beyond our capacity to even dream or think. Some of the brutal murders that are happening here in the United States, it's hard to imagine a person's mind that is so distorted that he could do these kind of things. The capacity for evil. And it would seem like they didn't even know what their own capacities for evil might be. Lord, is it I? David said, Lord, you know me. You know all about me.

And then he said, "Search me and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, see if there's some way of wickedness in me." Lord you know me, I don't know myself. For the prophet said, "The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it?" And so the disciples began to ask, Lord, is it I?

And he answered and said, He that dips his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me (26:23).

They usually had a dish of sauce and soup and so forth, and they would take their bread and as they would eat, they just would have this bread, pull it off, and they'd dip it in the soup and then eat it or in the sauces and so He is saying, Whoever dips at the same time I do, he's the one. And then He's declared,

The Son of man goes as it is written of him (26:24):

In other words, it's prophecy, it's got to be.

but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed (26:24)!

Though it is a fulfillment of prophecy, woe to the man who betrays.

it had been good for that man if he had not been born (26:24).

Interesting statement by Jesus. "It had been good for him not to have been born."

Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? And He said unto him, You said it. [Yes.] And as they were eating, Jesus took the bread, and He blessed it, and He broke it, and He gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and He gave thanks, and He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new [covenant or] testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom (26:25-29).

So Jesus is now giving a new understanding of the passover feast. I'm the bread of life, this bread is My body broken for you. He who eats of Me shall never hunger again. This cup, it's a new covenant that God is making with man. It's in my blood which is shed for the remission of sins. The old covenant that God made with Israel was put the blood of the lamb on the doorposts, Lord will pass by, the firstborn will be spared. This now is the new covenant. It's in the blood of Jesus Christ by which if applied to our hearts in that spiritual sense, we will not die for our sins. It's shed for many for the remission of their sins.

And when they had sung a hymn (26:30),

Now this is something I wish they had recordings in those days, I would love to have heard Jesus sing. I imagine he had a strong, robust voice. We know that the hymn that he sang was one of the Hallel songs, there is a traditional hymn out of the psalm. I believe it is Psalm eighteen that is the traditional psalm that is sang at the end of the passover, eighteen through twenty, right in there, the traditional psalm sang at the passover. So they had, wouldn't you love Jesus and the twelve disciples; of course, at this point, they were eleven, Judas had already left, but I would love to have had a recording of that song. "When they had sung the song,"

they went out to the mount of Olives (26:30).

Now there was a place there at the mount of Olives that Jesus resorted to many times with His disciples, just sort of a favorite spot, quiet, away from the hubbub of the city of Jerusalem, outside the walls, towards Bethany, but just a quiet spot where He can get alone with His disciples. And they went on out to the mount of Olives probably where He had given them the discourse couple days earlier.

And then said Jesus unto them, All of you will be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad (26:31).

Prophecy of Zechariah. And so Jesus is saying, All of you are going to be offended.

Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended (26:33).

It's sort of putting himself above the others. You see, there was a rivalry and a dispute going on among the disciples right up to the time of the death of Christ. They were disputing among themselves as who would be the greatest in the kingdom of God. It was an argument that was constantly going on. And Jesus was trying to teach them that the path of greatness was by taking the path of servanthood. "He that would be chief among you, let him become the servant of all." Now the Gentiles love to exercise lordship over others, how they do. Just go to city council meetings, you'll find out how they do. But it shall not be so among you. And so when Peter said, Lord, though they all may be offended, I won't. In other words, he was sort of

vying for that top stop. They may, not me. I'll never be offended.

Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times. Peter said unto him, Though I would die with thee, yet I would not deny thee. And likewise said all the disciples (26:34,35).

They all said, no, no, no, never, never, we wouldn't do that. Notice that Peter is boasting of himself. Confident in himself. Lord, I would never deny you. Notice also he's arguing with the Lord. He's arguing with the scriptures, smite the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. He's arguing with that, Lord, I would never be offended. I would never deny you. Arguing with Jesus, boasting in his confidence in his own flesh. Now, this was said as they were walking from the place where they had had the passover feast to the garden of Gethsemane there on the mount of Olives.

Then they came to the place that is called Gethsemane [or Olive press], and he said to the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go over there and pray. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee [James and John], and He began to be sorrowful and very heavy (26:36,37).

Began to show His emotions. The weight of the cross, the whole experience began to just weigh upon Him now heavily.

And He said unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, watch with me (26:38).

Strengthen, be there. Watch with Me.

And he went just a little farther, and He fell on his face, and He prayed, saying, O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as you will (26:39).

The prayer of Jesus. Father, let this cup pass from Me, if it's possible. If what is possible? If salvation and redemption for mankind is possible by any other means, by any other method, then let this cup pass from Me. The cup of the indignation of God's wrath against sin that He was to bear for you and for me. Because as God placed upon Him all of our sins, He then died for our sins, He took the penalty and the guilt of our sins. He felt that result of sin, that separation from God that is always the result of sin, He felt that, He cried, "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?" And the heaviness of this whole experience weighing on Him, Father, if it's possible, if man can be saved, redeemed from his sin by any other method, by being good, by being religious, by being sincere, let this cup pass from Me.

The reason why the cross of Jesus Christ offends people is because it narrows down the way of salvation to only one way. There's only one hope for a man to be forgiven his sin, there's only one hope for heaven, and that's through the cross of Jesus Christ. If it had been possible that man could be saved by any other means, then Jesus would not have gone to the cross. If it's possible, Father, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, and here is that beautiful submitting, now what I will but Thy will be done.

I think that that is the wisest prayer that can be offered by anybody concerning any situation. I think that it is good to express to the Father what we desire and what we will, but always the deferment of my will to His. That is not a cop-out, as some would try to claim. That's just pure wisdom. If that's a cop-out, then you'd be accusing Jesus of copping out. But that's just pure wisdom. That's glorifying God as God, that's recognizing that God is just a lot smarter than you are. And that His ways are far wiser than your ways. God, this is what I like to see but You know what's best. Not my will, Your will be done.

And he came to the disciples, and he found them asleep, and He said unto Peter, Could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation: [Oh Peter] the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak (26:40,41).

And how we know that to be true in our own lives. How often the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying [just slight different here], O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done (26:42).

Resigning now. Just not saying, Let it pass, if it can't pass, I have to drink it, then Father, Thy will be done.

And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words (26:43,44).

Now there are those who say, You should never repeat a prayer, you should have enough faith for

something you say once, don't pray it again, I ask the Lord once and I lay it in His hands and so, stay out of it. I don't know, Jesus prayed the same thing three times and so I would take His word over some of the Tele-evangelists.

Then he came to his disciples, and said unto them, Sleep on now, take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners (26:45).

I think that there could be at this point a pause between the end of verse forty-five and the beginning of verse forty-six. I think that Jesus came back, found them asleep again, and just said, Sleep on, take your rest. He knows the pressure that they're going to experience. He knows the sorrow, the disappointment that they're going to go through. And I think that it was more or less, You could not watch with Me but I will watch you. And I think that He sat there and it could be an hour or so that He just sat there while they were sleeping, probably praying for each of them. Lord, there's Simon, he's going to so mess up, he's going to just really be devastated. Help him, Father. Satan's going to take him and rake him over the coals, going to sift him like wheat. Lord, just minister, help him Lord. And I think He prayed for each of the disciples, just sitting there and watching, and then finally He woke them up and He said,

Rise, let's be going: behold, he is at hand that betrays me. And while he yet spake, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and spears, from the chief priests and the elders of the people (26:46,47).

Huge multitude came there into the garden.

And he that betrayed him gave them a sign, he said, Whosoever I shall kiss, that is the one: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and he kissed him (26:48,49).

The Greek word here for "kiss" is that of a passionate kiss of lovers. Sort of sickening.

And Jesus said unto him, Friend, why have you come? And they came, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword (26:50,51),

And we know from John's gospel that that one was Peter.

and he struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear (26:51).

From Luke we know it was his right ear. And of course, Luke, being a physician, also told us that Jesus picked it up and healed it, put it back on. From John we know that the name of this fellow was Malchus, so put all the gospels together and you get sort of the whole picture, these are just little composites.

Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again your sword in its place: for all they that take the sword will perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray the Father, and he would presently give me more than twelve legions of angels (26:52,53)?

Peter, I don't need your defense, I don't need your support that way. I could pray to the Father right now, He'd send twelve legions of angels. Now, we read that one angel destroyed a hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrian troops in one evening. Imagine what twelve legions of angels could do. I really believe, it is my personal opinion, that God had to use restraining force against the angels from intervening at this point. I really believe that the angels had to be restrained or they would have come and just ripped man up for this horrible, horrible action. That God forcibly restrained them from intervening on behalf of Jesus. But Jesus said, I could do this but then He said,

How shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be (26:54)?

In other words, I could do that but then the scriptures wouldn't be fulfilled. So He recognizes that this is the fulfillment of the prophecy, and for Me to deliver Myself or seek divine deliverance from this, then the scriptures could not be fulfilled that speak of the redemption for man that would be brought to us by God.

In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes (26:55),

That is, of course, here, give Peter credit. There were multitudes, a big crowd with swords and spears, Peter was going to take them all on. Starts with Malchus, closest to him, starts swinging. Now the interesting thing is that he cut off his right ear, which if Peter was right-handed, means that Malchus was going away from him, to clip his right ear. All suppositional, we don't know if he's right-handed. In the same hour Jesus then addressed the multitudes that had come. He said,

Have you come out with the riot squad like you're looking for a thief coming out with your swords and spears to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, you didn't lay any hands on me (26:55).

Why have you come out with all of this force? I was daily there in the temple teaching. You could have arrested Me then.

But all of this [we are told by Matthew] was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. And then all the disciples did forsake him, and they fled. And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled (26:56,57).

They had called this night assembly which was actually unconstitutional, but at this point, they weren't interested in the fine points of their laws.

But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end (26:58).

He was following, not close, he was afar off. Now John was inside, John had connections. He was right inside. But Peter was there just sort of on the fringes, he wanted to see what was going to happen.

Now the chief priests, and the elders, and all the council, sought false witnesses against Jesus, to put him to death (26:59);

They were looking for charges by which they might put Him to death. Have a cause, a legal cause to execute Him.

But they found none: yea, though there were many false witnesses who came, they really couldn't find any real charges. And at last there came two false witnesses, And they said, This fellow said, that He was able to destroy the temple of God, and build it in three days (26:60,61).

Jesus did mention, Destroy this temple and in three days, I will build it again. But He was talking about the temple of His own body and His resurrection. So this was a misinterpreting of what Jesus said. They said, this temple, that is the temple there in Jerusalem. Jesus was talking about the temple of His own body. So he brings up this charge against Jesus.

And the high priest arose, and he said unto him, Don't you answer anything? what is it which these are witnessing against thee? But Jesus just held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him (26:62,63),

Now this is with an oath, he is taking an oath, he said,

I adjure you by the living God [I command you by the living God], that you tell us whether you're the Messiah, the Son of God (26:63).

Now in those days, they believed, the rabbis all believed that the Messiah would indeed be the Son of God. Tell us if You are the Messiah, the Son of God. They expected the Messiah to be the Son of God. Today the rabbis say no, we don't believe Jesus is the Messiah because He said He was the Son of God; the Messiah is not the Son of God, He's going to be a man like Moses was a man, and therefore, we reject the claim of Jesus because He claimed to be the Son of God. But the rabbis all believed in that day that the Messiah would indeed be the Son of God. "Unto us a Son is given." "This is My beloved Son, this day have I begotten Thee." "The Lord said unto my Lord, Thou art my beloved son, this day have I begotten thee." So they expected the Messiah, so are you the Messiah, the Son of God?

And Jesus said unto him, You said it, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall you see the Son of man [a title of the Messiah] sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest tore his clothes, and he said, He hath spoken blasphemy; we don't have any further need of witnesses? behold, you've heard this blasphemy. What do you think? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. [Sentence was passed.] Then they began to spit in his face, they began to beat him; others smote him with the palms of their hands, And they said, Prophecy unto us, you Messiah, Who is it that smote you (26:64-68)?

The crowd began to get out of control. It was now getting rough. They were really beginning to abuse Jesus. Spitting on Him, pushing Him, shoving Him, beating Him. And in this rough treatment, the crowd getting out of control,

Peter sitting outside of the palace: a damsel came unto him, and said, You also were with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what you're saying I don't know what you're talking about. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath saying, I do not

know the man (26:69-72).

They would take an oath to affirm truth. In other words, I swear by the Bible, put your hand in the Bible and swear that you're telling the truth. And so you take an oath, I swear by the Bible, I swear by God, I swear by my mother's honor, I swear by Boy Scouts, you take this oath to affirm that what you are saying was really true. Imagine taking an oath and then lying. "I know not the man."

And after a while they came unto him [that is, the soldiers] those that were standing by, and they said to Peter, Surely you are one of them; for your speech gives you away (26:73).

The Galilean accent, can't hide it. And so if my speech is giving me away, Peter thought, by my speech I will try and prove that I'm not a disciple.

He began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately [as the words were going out of his mouth] the rooster began to crow (26:74).

And the crowing of the rooster was like a dart going through the heart of Peter, as it reminded him of the words of Jesus just earlier that evening. "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And his response to Jesus, Lord, I would die for You. I would never deny You. And yet he did. The failure of the flesh, the disappointment because of the failure of the flesh.

He remembered the words of Jesus, and he went out, and he wept bitterly (26:75).

Those bitter tears shed because of the consciousness of the weakness of the flesh. The failure, letting the Lord down in that moment of truth. The truth often hurts. Knowing what's in our heart is often painful. Discovering the weaknesses of our flesh is bitter medicine. He wept bitterly. But in the weeping bitterly, there is the sign of remorse and of repentance. And thus, there was forgiveness. Now Judas, who had betrayed the Lord, when he brought back the money, he went out but rather than weeping bitterly, he went out and he hung himself. The response and the reaction to the recognition that I really made a drastic, horrible mistake.

There are those times when we are desperate, when we get to just, we don't know what to do, where to turn. And many times in that pressure of the moment, the emotions and all that are running so high, people oftentimes then make tragic mistakes. Because you see, you've come to the place where you've got to reach out beyond yourself. Some reach out to God, and they find the help and the strength that they need. Others reach out for a bottle, others reach out for pills, and some tragically reach out for a gun. Where do you turn? Where do you reach when you've come to your own limits, when you've come to the end of yourself? Judas went out and hung himself. Peter went out and wept bitterly. To live another day, to see a glorious ministry, to have the opportunity of being restored and used of God as one of the mighty leaders and the apostles in the early church. There is restoration, there is forgiveness, there is the opportunity again of being used by God. We've all failed. "There is none that is righteous, no, not one." We've all come short of the glory of God. But there is forgiveness with Him. Merciful, kind, gracious, loving, compassionate, tender, forgiving, that's our Lord. And Peter experienced all of those and was restored. Even as God wants to restore you tonight. You may have failed, you might be in the midst of it, unseemly kind of an experience right now of rebellion against God, the weakness of your flesh being manifested and you're feeling miserable over it. But there's forgiveness, there's love, there's compassion, there's restoration.

Father, we thank You for the Word that gives us such hope in the midst of our failure. Lord we have such hope through Jesus Christ, forgiveness, cleansing, mercy, grace, compassion. Lord, You're so patient. Bless now we pray Lord and let the Word of God be of encouragement and strength to us as we go out this week to shine as lights in this darkened world. Lord, help us, help us not to deny You by our words or by our actions. But may our lives speak of our relationship with You that all men may see and know that we are followers of Jesus Christ, we're one of His, we've been with Him. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.