

John 11 — He Prophesied Without Knowing

John 11:49–52 (with 11:45–48 · 11:53 · 10:16 · 18:14) · For posting on YouTube & Facebook. Use the overview for the description; add the prompt and links wherever they fit.

VIDEO OVERVIEW (post-ready)

The raising of Lazarus is what finally gets Jesus killed — and watch *how* it happens. The council meets in a panic, and the high priest Caiaphas stands up and says, **“it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish”** (11:50). He means it cold — kill this one troublemaker before Rome comes down on all of us. But John stops the story and tells you something Caiaphas never knew: *“he did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation”* (11:51). The man plotting the murder just preached the gospel and didn’t even know it. Caiaphas meant raw politics. God meant **the cross** — one man dying in the place of many, “and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad” (11:52). The one who gives life to Lazarus is marked for death in the same chapter — so he could give that life to you.

GO DEEPER — STUDY PROMPT FOR VIEWERS

Read John 11:45–53 slowly and watch the irony John builds. The council frets, “the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation” (11:48) — and the very thing they kill Jesus to prevent falls on them anyway in AD 70. Then read Caiaphas’s words in **11:49–52** twice: once hearing what he *meant*, and once hearing what God *meant*. Turn to **John 10:16** — “other sheep... one flock” — and you’ll see the “gather into one” he stumbled straight into. Nobody backed Jesus into that cross. Even his enemies were announcing it.

KEY PASSAGES REFERENCED

Elsewhere in John: 11:49–52 · 11:45–48 · 11:53 · 10:16 · 18:14 · 1:29 · 19:11

Other Gospels: Matthew 26:3–5

Rest of Scripture: Isaiah 53:8 · Genesis 50:20

RESOURCES & FURTHER READING

An Unwitting Prophet

Ligonier Ministries (Tabletalk)

<https://learn.ligonier.org/devotionals/unwitting-prophet>

On John 11:49–52: Caiaphas meant political expediency, but God made him prophesy Christ’s substitutionary death for the people.

Jesus Died to Gather the Children of God

John Piper — Desiring God

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/jesus-died-to-gather-the-children-of-god--2>

Piper on 11:49–52: Caiaphas’s words were God’s prophecy — Jesus dies for the nation and to gather God’s scattered children into one.

Expository Thoughts on John — Chapter 11

J.C. Ryle — GraceGems

<https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/j11.htm>

Ryle on Caiaphas: a wicked man’s office was made to speak a true prophecy — God can announce saving truth even through his enemies.