

Matthew 26:36-46

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[0 : 00] This morning we're going to look at Matthew 26 from verses 36 to 46, which is the story of Jesus.! I don't like the word story, it's the account of Jesus when he went into the garden of Gethsemane.

Father, as we come to your word, we do so with awe, and particularly this morning with the various tangents that I've managed to include somehow, I'm struck just by the internal integrity of the Bible that you've given us.

And I pray that you'd set our hearts on fire to study it, that as we become incredulous at various aspects of your word, we will realize that you took great pains to write this book as a love letter to your people. And I pray that our hearts will be set alight this morning and that we will be driven to further and deeper study. In Jesus' name. Amen.

So just before we read it, you will recall last time that in the earlier parts of this chapter, so the first 35 verses, we learned that there was this plot to kill Jesus at some time other than that Passover. Which of course didn't succeed because the date for the crucifixion of Jesus was set by the Lord. And the feast of Passover was a feast that prophesied of his death.

So if he died at any other time, so many scriptures would have been rendered as null and void. We also saw that as he celebrated his own Passover, that he instituted the Lord's Supper.

[1 : 56] Often we call it the breaking of bread. We also read at that time that Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, and they were all, if you remember, they were in Lazarus's house, the home of the ex-dead man and attended by the ex-leper. It must have been a fascinating meeting.

But Mary anoints him with spikenard, oil of spikenard, which was an anointing for burial. And he actually, when Judas showed his true colours as a thief and someone who was robbing the treasury, by saying, we could have sold this to the poor. And it was Jesus that said, no, leave her alone.

She's anointing me for burial. And it was further prophecy about his own coming death. We also saw that Jesus was given 30 pieces of silver to betray Jesus, fulfilling the prophecy in Zechariah 11 and verse 2.

We saw two major sins committed. We saw the betrayal of Jesus by Judas and the disowning of Jesus by Peter.

But one was not accompanied with repentance and therefore was not forgiven. But Peter's sin was accompanied by, he was absolutely, when you read into the original languages, he was sobbing over what he had done. There was a genuine heartfelt repentance.

[3 : 24] For what he had done. And just to remind us, we'd also read that at that time, all of the disciples said what Jesus said. Right? It wasn't just, sorry, all the disciples said what Peter said.

Peter is highlighted as the one who said, oh, I'll die for you. I'll never abandon you and so on. But then we read at the end of one of the accounts in one of the gospels, I can't remember which one.

And the others with him said the same thing. So Peter kind of gets the, he gets to be on the pedestal, but he wasn't the only one who was going to betray the Lord in some way.

And so what we're going to read now brings us on to the next stage of the day of Jesus's crucifixion. So we turn to Matthew 26.

It's worth getting the notes because there are some things in the notes and they'll be online with the sermon. There are some things in the notes that I just don't have time to go through today, but are really useful things to know.

[4 : 31] So they'd eaten the Passover meal. An important factor as we read through is they were eating this in the absence of Judas. Judas had gone off to carry out his betrayal.

So the only disciples there were true disciples. And that becomes important when we read what Jesus says to them. So let's read it. Verse 36 is where we're going to start.

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane and said to his disciples, sit here while I go over there and pray. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee.

That'll be James and John, by the way. And began to be grieved and distressed. And he said to them, my soul is deeply grieved to the point of death. Remain here and keep watch with me.

And he went a little beyond them and fell on his face and prayed, saying, my father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.

[5 : 36] And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping and said to Peter, so you men could not keep watch with me for one hour. Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation.

The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, my father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, your will be done.

Again, he came away and found them sleeping for their eyes were heavy. And he left them again and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. And he came to the disciples and said to them, are you still sleeping and resting?

Behold, the hour is at hand and the son of man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up and let us be going. Behold, the one who betrays me is at hand.

Now, I'm aware that what I'm going to talk on this morning covers, in terms of potential detail, covers about half. And so I might return to the subject next week and cover the other half.

[6 : 43] But I was kind of taken by certain aspects of today's as we, as I read it. Now, the important thing about Judas being absent, just before we move on, one of the things that Jesus said when he instituted the last Passover was, I will not drink this again until I drink it with you in the kingdom.

I drink it with you anew in the kingdom. When that was said, Judas wasn't present. So it was said to his disciples who were firmly his disciples, not to Judas who was going to betray him.

That's a point in passing. We know that when Judas departed, Satan had entered immediately into Judas at that time. When Jesus had addressed him on the matter of betrayal, and you read that in Luke 22, verse 3.

Judas had gone off to carry out this betrayal and Satan had entered him. One of the reasons I put a note out saying, by all means, read the other gospels on this. And we also learn from Luke's account, chapter 22, verse 39, that it was customary for Jesus to go to the Garden of Gethsemane.

He was familiar with this place. As far as we know, history tells us that the Garden of Gethsemane was a walled garden and was privately owned. So we can presume that Jesus knew the owner and used the Garden of Gethsemane for his times of personal prayer whenever he wished.

[8 : 12] It's a bit of an assumption, but it says it was customary for him to go there. So this is one of the reasons why Judas would know where to lead the arrest squad, which, of course, we're going to cover when we move on.

Jesus has gone off to betray Jesus. He's going to bring an arrest squad to Jesus and betray him with a kiss. So there is this walled garden called Gethsemane.

And the word Gethsemane means oil press. And it's a place where the olives were crushed and the oil was extracted.

And, of course, the oil was always symbolic of the Holy Spirit. And so what we know later on in the crucifixion is that Jesus cried out, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And people would argue over this. But to me, at that point, and at least for a time, the Holy Spirit left him. Although that hasn't happened yet. The Holy Spirit is still very much with him at the moment.

[9 : 22] But it's a place of crushing. And it's a place where the oil was removed. So Jesus goes into this garden of Gethsemane. And not only do the olives get crushed there, but he got crushed there.

He got emotionally crushed there. We're going to read that he suffered great anxiety there. So I'm sorry if this sounds a little bit disjointed, but I'm trying to bring several ends together.

The other meaning of Gethsemane is the eighth or the number eight. Eight presses, right? Well, the number eight, if you've ever studied Bible numbers, the number eight is the number of resurrection.

So it's got this dual name that almost seems like a contradiction in terms. It's a place where you get crushed, but it's also a place that's associated with resurrection. And Jesus is in this place when he cries out to the Lord in the way that he does.

And we read in Matthew 26, verse 38, that his spirit was tormented to the point of death.

[10 : 28] Now, I feel there's a critical thing about this, and that is that Gethsemane was the first place that Jesus' blood was shed. You know, the cross gets a lot of publicity, and of course it should.

The crown of thorns gets a lot of publicity, and so it should. But actually, I don't hear too many preachers who draw attention to the fact that when he suffered this anguish in this place of crushing, his blood was shed.

And it, I think, behoves us to ask what that was about. Because you can't have the blood of Jesus being shed in one place really significant and in another place insignificant.

It's all the shedding of Jesus' blood. So just as the oil would flow from the olives, Jesus' blood here flows for the first time as he sweat great drops of blood from his brow because of the anguish he was suffering.

There is actually a medical condition. For those of you who are medical in the room, it looks as if it should be pronounced hematrodosis.

[11:38] And it's a rare but not unknown medical condition where people sweat, usually from their brow, drops of blood. And the blood is mingled with sweat. Hence, the Bible doesn't say strictly he sweat drops of blood.

It says he sweat as it were great drops of blood because the blood was mingled with his sweat and the sweat was brought about by his stress and his torment. But it's a known medical condition, normally fatal.

When you get that stressed, I'm getting nods from at least one medical person in the room. So I'm not a medical person, but I do read a lot.

So it's thought to be a result of capillaries, usually in the brow, bursting and shedding blood out with the sweat. That's what's thought to be the cause of it. And it could well be the, you know, when we say to people who are really angry, well, don't burst a blood vessel, mate.

Well, it's quite likely that that's linked to things like this or even to this. And what we're seeing here, because this provides us with paradoxes.

[12:48] Because on the one hand, you've got God. Why would God be stressed about anything? He is in charge of everything. He's sovereign over everything. Why would he be stressed about anything?

But we've also got Jesus the man. And what we have here is the humanity of Jesus emerging. That despite being God, he wasn't immune to things like sorrow, to things like grieving.

And he certainly wasn't immune to stress in this particular case. And it's probably going to be helpful to us to understand what was stressful about it, whilst also understanding that he knew what was coming.

He knew that this day would come, and that the next 24 to 48 hours, he knew what that would be full of as well. It's also going to become clear as we look at it, that he planned it this way.

So why would he be stressed by it, or driven to anguish by it? Well, it's because he's both fully God and fully human.

[13:58] And so what we see is his humanity coming out. And him doing battle with his humanity to make his humanity submit to the Spirit.

Now, everything, this is my personal belief, and you can, by all means, accost me about it later if you want to. But wherever Jesus' blood was shed, to me, it was shed to set us free from something.

Now, one of the things we read in 2 Timothy 1 and verse 7 is that God does not give us a spirit of fear or a spirit of timidity, but of love, power, and a sound mind. Now, I can't speak for you, but there are times when I don't feel very sound-minded, powerful, and I struggle with love.

But he has given me a spirit of love, power, and a sound mind. That indicates to me this is an eternal promise for all those who are saved. Now, that doesn't mean you can't have some of it now, but it does mean eternally there will be no anguish, there will be no fear, there will be no pain.

Jones already touched on it this morning. And at some point, he paid the price to give us that freedom. And I think this is where it starts.

[15:11] I think he died to set us free from mental anguish and fear. Now, you will find quite often our word of faith, brothers and sisters, will be saying, you've just got to claim it and you'll be free from it, and Jesus died to set you free from it.

Yes, he did. But this is an eternal promise. And what Jesus did in this sacrifice paved the way for us to be set free eternally. Along the way, of course, we sometimes find we are set free during this life, but only partially.

But in the long term, we will be utterly free from this. And so Jesus says in verse 39, My father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not as I will, but as you will.

In other words, father, if there's any other way, can we do that? Because this looks horrific, but not my will, but yours be done.

What I thought was perhaps strange, Jesus said to the Lord, if there's another way, there doesn't appear to have been an answer.

[16:23] There's certainly no recorded answer. This reminded me of the apostle Paul, who said three times to the Lord, to deliver him from the thorn in the flesh.

Now, there was an answer, which was, My grace is sufficient for you. Here in the garden, what we see is not a verbal answer, but an angel sent to strengthen him.

And notice that that angel did not turn up and remove all the problems and say, Okay, we can bypass this bit. But the other thing that struck me like a hammer really was the Lord did not insist that he went through with it either.

Because later on, later on, the Lord says, I am laying down my life. I have the power to lay it down and the power to take it up.

So it was voluntary on the part of the Lord. Now, why am I taking time over this? Well, I don't know about you, but I've heard some quite well-known speakers, one of which is actually not foreign to this town, a man called Steve Chalk, who said for God to put his son to death would have been like cosmic child abuse.

[17:44] And he's completely misunderstood the fact that he, Jesus and the Father, agreed on this plan. God stated his will.

Jesus said he would carry it through. They had an agreement between them. This wasn't just a foul murder. It was that, but it wasn't just that. Because Jesus himself said, I can walk away from this anytime I like.

So in this garden, before it all happens, he's saying, Father, is there another way? And there's no answer. And we read, we just read that he was tormented to the point of death.

So he's shedding blood from his brow and he's dying. And the angel isn't sent to deliver him from the hour.

The angel is only sent to stop him from dying. Because the time wasn't right. But the shedding of the blood was important. Because we would not be free if he hadn't shed his blood.

[18:51] And I'll deal with the mental anguish side of it in a moment. But if we take the trouble, and I'm referring to a lot of scriptures, please get the notes. In order to pay for all sin, for all time, for all men, Jesus had to drink the cup of God's wrath to the dregs.

There are a plethora of references. Jeremiah 25, verse 12 to 17. Isaiah 51, verse 12 to 23. Psalm 75, verses 6 to 10. And there are others.

And in Revelation 16, what we see is the outpouring of the bowls of God's wrath. And the prospect of that outpouring of the bowls of God's wrath in Revelation 8, verse 1, caused a half an hour silence in heaven.

It was utterly awe-striking, awe-inspiring. And by that, I don't mean the modern use of the word awe. I mean it was terrifying to the extent that even heaven went quiet.

And even that is a diluted version of what Jesus had to suffer. So the Bible gives us this insight into just how awful it was.

[20 : 06] People are saying, rocks fall on us! Utterly terrifying. And yet, the full outpouring of God's wrath to be drunk to the dregs by Jesus on our behalf was even worse than that.

So, Jesus is fully aware of this reality that's about to descend upon him. And so who can wonder that he said, Father, is there another way?

No answer. Now, so many teachers teach that God could not possibly put his son through this barbaric death.

I'm going to say something really radical. He didn't. But, they agreed it together. Father said, this is what it's going to take.

Jesus said, I'll do it. This wasn't some malicious father putting his son to death. This was the father and the son loving us so much that whatever it took, they would do it.

[21 : 10] Matthew 26, verse 53. He said to Peter, when Peter took his sword and lopped off somebody's ear, he said, don't you think I can appeal to my father and he will at once put at my disposal more than 12 legions of angels?

He could have pressed the stop button on this any time he wanted. And, in all this, with anguish that was so great that he was sweating drops of blood, he still continued to say, I will pay the price.

I will do it. And what he was about to go through, and it started in the garden, and I know I've dragged this out beyond the text for today, but we'll return to the text for today in a moment.

It involved his humiliation, and part of that humiliation started in the garden. He became fearful. This man who had calmed storms, who had walked through crowds that had decided they were going to throw him off a hill, who'd, I think on at least three, maybe four occasions, it says, they sought to kill him, but he simply walked through the crowd.

There were all these occasions when any lesser person would have died, been beaten up, whatever, and he had all power, and yet forbade himself from using that power to get him out of this predicament, even though it was producing great anger in him.

[22 : 43] Now, I want us to turn, and this is a tangent, but I hope it's a useful one. Psalm 22, and I'm going to cherry pick from Psalm 22.

It's a fairly long psalm, but it's well worth a read. And Psalm 22 is the psalm where when God put this psalm in the heart of David, he revealed exactly that he knew what he was facing.

You know, because I've said all these things, now I need to justify them. He knew what was coming, and we learn that more than anywhere else from Psalm 22. And strangely, I'm going to pick a verse that, I'm going to pick verse 6 to start with, or 6 to 8 maybe.

So, reported speech of the Lord as he speaks whilst hanging on the cross, says, but I am a worm, not a man, a reproach of men and despised by the people.

All who see me sneer at me. They separate with their lips. They wag their heads, saying, commit yourself to the Lord. Let him deliver him. Let him rescue him because he delights in him. So, there is this, and remember, in the garden here, he's about to be arrested.

[24 : 02] This God-man who's all-powerful is about to be arrested. If they only knew, they wouldn't have tried. They'd have been too afraid.

But, he says here, I am a worm, not a man. Now, there's a statement of humiliation, but in the English language, you miss the point. So, we're going to capture the point, I hope.

He didn't just say, I'm a worm, but he said, I am a tola, or tolaat. And the word tola describes a particular worm.

Now, when you, when you look at this, if it has the same effect on you as it had on me, it is incredible.

So, have you got three photos for me? I'll have the first one up on the screen if I can. This is a tola. So, it's a nondescript bug.

[25 : 03] It's a form of worm, or sometimes called a maggot. And, the life cycle of this bug, now, when he said, I am a tola, to Jews, they would have understood a lot about this creature.

For a start, it was used to make the most expensive red dye that was used to dye the clothing of the priests and the garment and the things in the temple.

It was, it needed hundreds of thousands of these to make a single garment. But, it was very, very expensive. And so, on the one hand, this bug is nondescript, and on the other hand, it's very precious.

Of course, what we have in the crucifixion and in the sacrifices is a man who has made himself humble, nondescript, but is also very precious.

Now, what this bug does, and this is just unbelievable, because Jesus claimed to be this. Right? I am a toller. This bug, when it becomes time for this bug to reproduce, it crawls to a tree, and it crawls up to a high place on this tree, and it affixes itself to the tree in a high place.

[26 : 24] Who do we know that was destined to be affixed to a tree in a high place? But it affixes its body to the tree with secretions from its own body, and using the bark and the dust and things.

It affixes itself to that tree. It then lays its eggs underneath its own body and remains fixed there while everything that it has given birth to feeds off the living body of the bug.

the result of which, could I have the next photo, please? In fact, yeah, that'll do. In fact, go to the next one.

Sometime during the process, what happens is this bug splits open and forms a heart shape, and so you've got this red thing that's gone up a tree, given birth to its young, underneath its own body, they have fed on its blood.

who gets to feed off the blood of its saviour, and it cracks open and finishes up still stuck to the tree in a heart shape.

[27 : 34] If you could go back to the previous one. What then happens is that the wood that it's been affixed to becomes stained blood red, and that stain is permanent.

That will be there as long as the wood is there until what I'm saying is you can't wash it off, but as the sun plays on that, over time, it turns white.

Turn to Isaiah chapter 1 and this is where I just find the Bible incredible.

I nearly said unbelievable. Of course, it has to be believed, but by all earthly standards, it's difficult to believe its consistency, so this was written 500 years before the crucifixion, verses 18 to 20.

Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are as scarlet. Now, this bug has two names. It's called a tola, but it's also called, let me get this right, shani.

[28 : 53] So, Hebrew people will refer to it as tola or shani. So, when Isaiah wrote this prophecy down, in verse 18, he said, though your sins are as scarlet, the word there is shani, they will be white as snow, though they are red like crimson, tola.

He's covered both the vernacular names for this bug as he's made this prophecy. Though your sins are red like crimson, they will be like wool. And of course, mature wool that they stripped off the sheep in that place was always pure white.

so, he's included in the prophecy the reference to the tola, and then he says as they nail him to the cross, I am a tola.

I'm a worm. I'm the one who is going to be on this tree, and everybody that I give new birth to will feed off my blood.

And the crimson stain that I leave behind will make your sins white as snow. What then happens to once the stuff is bleached white, strangely, if it's then scraped off the tree, it's been used to produce preservatives and been used to produce eye salves and balms of one sort or another, medications.

[30 : 30] So the white stain left behind is a source of healing, even after it's dead. I hope you're as blown away by this as I was.

Now, coming back to the mental anguish, another part of Psalm 22, go back there. If we go to verse 11 and read down for a few verses, again, this is a psalm that tells you what Jesus was going through and he wrote it ahead of the event.

And he says, be not far from me, for trouble is near, for there is none to help. Many bulls have surrounded me, strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me.

They open wide their mouth at me as a ravening and roaring lion. I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint, my heart is like wax, it is melted within me.

The Bulls of Bashan most scholars would agree, or most reputable scholars would agree that the Bulls of Bashan is an indication of demonic activity.

[31 : 47] And what it suggests is that at this time when Jesus was in the garden approaching the cross, he was totally harassed by demonic activity.

If you ever look into Midrash, I am not going to do a big thing on Midrash, mainly because I am not clever enough, but one of the things Midrash does is it shows you how the Hebrews studied the Bible.

Now in the first garden, the garden of Eden, we know that Satan was there in the form of the serpent. Satan was present in the garden. He were in a garden again and Satan is present again.

So that which happened in the first garden where man fell is being restored in the next garden where there's a temptation taking place again.

In the first garden there was a temptation and man fell for that temptation. In this garden, there is a similar temptation and Satan is present, not only in the demonic stuff, but also when Judas comes back, we read from the other gospels that Satan had entered into Judas.

[33 : 02] So we have the presence of Satan in both places. In one Satan was victorious, in the other he was defeated. Praise God for that. And so this plaguing by Satan, this demonic activity, would plague the mind with doubts and anxieties and it's all part of the demonic stuff that humans suffer from.

And there are people in this room who suffer from it. They are plagued in their minds. They feel anxious. They feel afraid of stuff that isn't actually there to be afraid of. It's there to be overcome.

And I'm not saying that's wrong because it's not something you can just not do. It's a problem of humanity. But Jesus shed his blood to deliver us from this.

So you have hope. You might be anxious but you have hope. I would suggest that hope can be worked on in this life but is complete in the next.

That's my take on it. You may or may not agree. By the way, the reference from Paul's thorn in the flesh is 2 Corinthians 12 verses 7 and 8.

[34 : 17] So what we've got here right in front of us is messengers sent from Satan to buffet Jesus just as Paul had a messenger sent from Satan to buffet him. And there was no response.

God didn't compel Jesus to go through with it, which is what enabled him to say, no man takes my life from me, I lay it down. John 10 verse 18.

I will just mention this. It's worth, I don't want to get off into midrashic things because it makes me very confused. However, in John 19 verse 41, we read that Jesus was buried in a garden.

So that which was given birth to in the first garden, sin, was buried in another garden later on at the crucifixion. The Bible is consistent in these things, but I think it's remarkable that the plan of salvation is minutely perfect, where not only did he come and pay for our sins, but he did it in a way that was meaningful, in a way that undid the fall of man.

The fall of man took place in a garden, the redemption of man began in a garden, and that red stain began in the garden. It weren't bugs in the garden, but the red staining of his blood, upon which we would feed, began in the garden of Gethsemane.

[35 : 51] So that leads me to, I think the application of everything that I've said, and I'm hoping it has done this, my prayer is that it would light a fire in us to really diligently search out the word of God, and not from a position of pride.

We've learned several times, and you've heard me when I've got things wrong, publicly correct them, because no man's going to get it all right. There are too many preachers out there who are determined to be right.

Well, I am determined to be right, but I'm not going to insist on it until I know I am, and where I'm corrected, that's great, because we all learn from that. We're all fellow seekers after the truth.

Colossians 3, verses 15 to 17, if you just turn there. The application of this, as far as I can see, is Colossians 3, verses 15 to 17.

And I think this is the takeaway. From all that we've uncovered today, we need to get so hungry to get the truth out of this word that we won't put it down.

[37 : 04] And it will share it with one another, and it will correct one another, and when I get it wrong, you'll correct me, because it's so important, if we're ever going to get what God intended us to get from this word, we have to be diligent about studying it.

And before I read this, I just want to say this, there are lots of people who struggle to study it by picking it up and reading it. Well then, get it on a CD, go online and listen to reputable speaker, get the audio books and listen to them.

Come and plague the life out of me. I don't understand this scripture, Ray. To which I might say, no, neither do I, let's find out together. But my point is that whilst you may not have the gift of being able to extract stuff out of the scriptures as we've done this morning, you don't have to be separated from that provision.

God has put that provision in the body, it's there for you, you need to ask for it. And so Colossians 3, 15 to 17, says, let the peace of Christ rule in your heart, to which indeed you were called in one body, be thankful.

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you with all wisdom, teaching, and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your heart to God.

[38 : 38] Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. I think it was very timely this morning that those books appeared at the back.

Because that's somebody who's not immediately part of this body, sort of vicariously through Leonie and Malcolm. them. But having been disabled, she's sharing stuff from God's word that God has given her for your benefit.

There is no barrier in God's word. These people who teach that you need to be under this or that man to reach God, that is God's wallop.

God is just as interested in reaching every one of us on a person-to-person basis. And if you struggle with it, please ask for help. There's a load of, what I've put in the notes, there's a load of scriptural references that basically exhort us to fall in love with his word.

Joe mentioned a while ago in one of, I can't remember if it was in the Psalms or was it Tony that mentioned it, where God elevates his word above his name.

[39 : 54] Right? He is, if you, those of us who are old enough to have written love letters in our past, if you wrote a love letter to somebody and they screwed it up and chucked it in the bins, not interested in that, it's not going to lead to love, is it?

God has put this together as a love letter. I don't know which one to pick. Hebrews 4 verse 12, I'll just pick one. Hebrews 4 verse 12. It's a well-known verse.

The word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit and both joints and marrow and able to judge the thoughts and the intents or the intentions of the heart.

And there is no creature hidden from his sight, it goes on to say. The takeaway for me from this morning is twofold. One is to begin to appreciate that the sacrifice didn't begin on the cross, it began in the garden.

One could argue it didn't even begin in the garden, it began before the foundation of the world. And that scripture itself tells us that before the world was even thought of, there was a plan.

[41 : 17] Before the world was founded, this plan was already in place. So Jesus has always known he would have to go through this for us. And had it been me, I think I'd have run off.

But fortunately he's made of better stuff than me. You'll find in the notes that I've put a link to 30 powerful Bible verses about the importance of God's word with commentary.

You can look at those at your leisure. I've also put references to this Tola Shani worm thing because it has some interesting associations in scripture.

In Exodus 16 verse 20, it was, that was the worm that would eat the leftover manna and cause it to stink. So when people were misusing the provision of God, that worm would eat up or would feed off the manna and cause it to be stinking and horrible and inedible.

In Deuteronomy 28 verse 39, it's the Tola worm that will destroy the grapes of sinful Israel. So there's been this association throughout with redemption and the Tola worm as a figure of it.

[42 : 38] And Jesus himself said, that's me, I'm the Tola. Father, thank you for this word. Thank you I pray that you'd help me to keep my emotions under control.

Lord, I do pray that everybody in this room will have a really good week of fellowship with you and that we will all know the benefit of feeding off the blood that you shed and that we will all know that our Messiah was humbled to the point of being likened unto a mere grub.

But what an important grub that turned out to be. Father, thank you for this morning and thank you for as