

The celebration of Easter or Resurrection Sunday usually begins with Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Which is today. But the events of Passion Week cannot be understood without understanding the backstory...

How did this happen? Answer JESUS SET IT UP....AS HE IS ALWAYS IN CHARGE... Jesus literally controls the outcome of every situation.! He knows everything, He is everywhere present, he cannot be outsmarted nor out strategized, therefore He cannot fail, He has no weaknesses, His decisions are final and cannot be overruled, his power cannot be overcome, His plans cannot be thwarted. He foresees every possible situation, obstacle, attack, setback, delay and has already designed winning counters to them. He promises victory and delivers every time in His Time

So Do not ever mistake ...bad times, hard times, trouble, trials, disappointment, as an end... as an indication that Jesus is not in charge...he is always in charge...

This is the back story...the set up... which starts a couple months before the last Passover feastWe travel to Bethany, just over the hill east of Jerusalem a sabbath days walk away.

*JN 11:1 A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. ² This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. ³ So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."⁴ But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. **No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this.**" ⁵ So although Jesus loved*

Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, ⁶ he stayed where he was for the next two days.

The Glory or advertising is Jesus performing one of the greatest miracles of his life...which also seals his death warrant. but love always costs self sacrifice

- **After the two days...time to go!**

⁷ Finally, he said to his disciples, “Let’s go back to Judea.” ⁸ But his disciples objected. “Rabbi,” they said, “only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again? ¹¹ Then he said, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up.”

- **It is obvious to the disciples, going back to Judea...to Bethany a few miles from Jerusalem is a horrible idea...they had just tried to stone him a few weeks earlier....in the natural they are absolutely correct...**
- **We are always willing to help Jesus out when we believe he is making a bad move**
- **They forgot Jesus was in charge always... Jesus replies ...it is the time to do this... I am in charge it will work out..**
- **Jumping ahead to when he arrives at the graveyard four days later.....exactly four days to late..**

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. ²⁰ When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house.

When Martha greets him...he tells her to get Mary..for she two must witness the miracle

.....³¹ When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus's grave to weep. So they followed her there.³² When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, **if only** you had been here, my brother would not have died."

- ***"If Only" everyone who suffers great loss...always goes back to the if onlys... if we could just rewrite history...it would have been different...***

³³ When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled.³⁴ "Where have you put him?" he asked them. They told him, "Lord, come and see."³⁵ **Then Jesus wept.**³⁶ The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!"³⁷ But some said, "This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?"

- ***It appears he was angry at the hardness of people's hearts to believe...including Martha and Mary...who have know Jesus for quite a while...yet still doubt...***
- ***And yet Jesus wept, he knew he would raise him up, but he still wept...why ? because death of loved one is painful... witnessing the excruciating pain of Lazarus' the loved ones...sums up the devastation of loss..***
- ***And he knew this would seal his death warrant...it would be the cause of his own death...a precursor to the cross...his life for the life of Lazarus***

³⁸ Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. ³⁹ “Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, protested, “Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.”

⁴⁰ Jesus responded, “**Didn’t I tell you** that you would see God’s glory if you believe?” ⁴¹ So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. ⁴² You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.” ⁴³ Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in grave clothes, his face wrapped in a head cloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!” ⁴⁵ Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen. ⁴⁶ But some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷ Then the leading priests and Pharisees called the high council together. “What are we going to do?” they asked each other. “This man certainly performs many miraculous signs. ⁴⁸ **If we allow him to go on like this, soon everyone will believe in him.** Then the Roman army will come and destroy both our Temple and our nation.”

⁴⁹ Caiaphas, who was high priest at that time, said, “You don’t know what you’re talking about! ⁵⁰ You don’t realize that it’s better for you that one man **should die for the people** than for the whole nation to be destroyed.” ⁵¹ He did not say this on his own; as high priest at that time he was led to prophesy that Jesus would die for the entire nation. ⁵² And not only for that nation, but to bring together and unite all the children of God scattered around the world. ⁵³ **So from that time on, the Jewish leaders began to plot Jesus’ death.**

The religious and political shot callers sanctioned the hit...and began figuring out a way to do it

1. Raising a man from the dead became the final straw...in the minds of the religious elite...why? Everyone will follow him...and we will lose our place...what did Jesus say...the greatest among you is the servant of all...

We jump ahead a couple of months to right before Passover...the miracle of Lazarus has spread like wild fire...Belief in Jesus at an all time high in Juresalem...yet he has become a wanted fugitive by the religious leaders...all according to plan..

JN 11: 55 It was now almost time for the Jewish Passover celebration, and many people from all over the country arrived in Jerusalem several days early so they could go through the purification ceremony before Passover began. ⁵⁶ They kept looking for Jesus, but as they stood around in the Temple, they said to each other, “What do you think? He won’t come for Passover, will he?” ⁵⁷ Meanwhile, the leading priests and Pharisees had publicly ordered that anyone seeing Jesus must report it immediately so they could arrest him.

They were wondering if he would show up...why?

- 1. Priests and pharisees ordered the people to report if they see Jesus**
- 2. Priests and pharisees had their snitches on the look out also...**
- 3. Also John gives an account of Jesus in Jerusalem on four different occasions , he was no stranger to the area...in fact Jesus notoriously prior to Passover three years earlier right after the wedding in Cana and the changing of water into wine..., he goes to the Temple**

NLT John 2:13 It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; he also saw dealers at tables exchanging foreign money. ¹⁵ Jesus made a whip from some

ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and cattle, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables. ¹⁶ Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, "Get these things out of here. Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!" ¹⁷ Then his disciples remembered this prophecy from the Scriptures: "Passion for God's house will consume me."

- **So the people were rightly skeptical if Jesus would show up**
- **But ...Jesus always in control. the Passover lamb must die on the Passover...and this was that Passover...what looks like a trap of man, is actually the plan of Jesus!**
- **But there is one thing they did not know...Jesus must first be announced as King...**

So Jesus goes to Bethany a days walk from Jerusalem.. And again Lazarus plays a role...this incident causes Lazarus to be greenlighted also...Saturday evening

JN 12: 1 Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. ² A dinner was prepared in Jesus' honor.

- **Jesus is seen...and the crowds seek him out...instead of reporting him they flock to him...in defiance of the religious leaders...**

John 12:9 When all the people heard of Jesus' arrival, they flocked to see him and also to see Lazarus, the man Jesus had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the leading priests decided to kill Lazarus, too, ¹¹ for it was because of him that many of the people had deserted them^[e] and believed in Jesus.

All the religious leaders needed was an inside man, to pull this off..
Judasthis happened while Jesus is visiting Lazarus...

MT 26: 14 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the leading priests ¹⁵ and asked, "How much will you pay me to betray Jesus to you?" And they gave him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶ From that time on, Judas began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus.

- **This last event turned Mary pouring a years worth of perfume...on Jesus feet was the last straw for Judas his Heart completely hardened. As he said why this waste!**
- **Interestingly when Jesus called Judas son of Perdition in John 17:12 KJV it literally means "son of Waste"**
- **He had every opportunity to receive Jesus as Lord but he wasted Them. Judas Iscariot means Ish (man) carioth (city in Judea) only one of twelve from Judea. All the rest from Galilee.**
- **The raising of Lazarus created so much publicity for Jesus and was such an amazing miracle and testimony of his power and word...that the chief priest decided Lazarus must go also...**
- **Why? People were putting their faith in Jesus...the Religious leaders were losing their people...which means they would lose their Jobs...their power prestige and position...**
- **So they put the green light on Lazarus he is a walking dead man also This event has been deliberately pre-arranged by Jesus**
- **All his life, Jesus had walked everywhere. But now he deliberately decided to cover this short distance on an unbroken donkey, one he would not ride again**

John 12:12 The next day, the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city. A large crowd of Passover visitors took palm branches and went down the road to meet him. They

shouted, "Praise God! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hail to the King of Israel!" 14 Jesus found a young donkey and rode on it, fulfilling the prophecy that said: 15 "Don't be afraid, people of Jerusalem. Look, your King is coming, riding on a donkey's colt."

- **This was the messianic sign at once perceived by the crowds who hailed Jesus as their king shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Until now Jesus did not allow the people to publicly announce Him as The Messiah.**
- **The riding on the back of a donkey prophesied 500 years earlier...by Zechariah..** The prophet Zechariah wrote:
ZEC 9: 9 Rejoice, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey— riding on a donkey's colt.

He rides a colt ...not broken in, never ridden before...he can control what no human can.... The Lord is in control of what appears out of control....

- **By so doing, he would be publicly declaring that he was the Messiah. on Sunday, Jesus and the disciples joined other pilgrims to go the remaining two miles to Jerusalem.**
- *John 12: 19 Then the Pharisees said to each other, "There's nothing we can do. Look, everyone has gone after him!"*
- **Every plan failed...so far...the people left the religious leaders and have gone after Jesus ...**
- **He once again tells his disciples...his plan....**
- **At the same time...the religious leaders plot their plan...Geez I wonder whose will work out...**

NLT MT 26: 3 At that same time the leading priests and elders were meeting at the residence of Caiaphas, the high priest, 4 plotting how to capture Jesus secretly and kill him. 5 “But not during the Passover celebration,” they agreed, “or the people may riot.”

They plotted to kill Jesus: after but not during the Feast...wrong again. the Passover lamb must die on the Passover....the King has come...now it is time for his sacrifice...

- **Never fear man’s plans for God’s always prevails!**

NLT Psalm 33:10 The LORD frustrates the plans of the nations and thwarts all their schemes. 11 But the LORD’s plans stand firm forever; his intentions can never be shaken.

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How did Jesus arrange the circumstances to attract so many people to publicly hear the proclamation of Jesus being identified as the King?

NLT26:1 When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, ²“As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”

it is hard to imagine a reason why a large multitude of thousands upon thousands of people would have followed Jesus into Jerusalem shouting Hosanna! Save us now! Only for the multitudes and religious leaders to cry crucify only a few days later.

What did he do to make this happen? And secondly arrange only a few day later to be arrested and then crucified? Simple It was all preplanned...Jesus set it up

Caiaphas... A Roman appointee.. placed him there to keep tabs and keep peace. His loyalty definitely divided between the Jews and the Roman occupiers. But he was the one with power...served 18 years Annas was actually the heir to that role in the line of Aaron...so they shared being high priest..

Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. ³ Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, ⁵ "That perfume was worth a year's wages. It

*should have been sold and the money given to the poor.”⁶ Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples’ money, he often stole some for himself.⁷ Jesus replied, “Leave her alone. **She did this in preparation for my burial.**”*

4 events...raising Lazarus

Dinner at their home.

Riding into Jerusalem

Tearing up the temple

²¹ Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.” ²³ Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴ “Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.”²⁵ Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. ²⁶ Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?”

²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.” ²⁸ Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, “The Teacher is here and wants to see you.” ²⁹ So Mary immediately went to him.

John 12:17 Many in the crowd had seen Jesus call Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, and they were telling others about it. ¹⁸ That was the reason so many went out to meet him—because they had heard about this miraculous sign. ¹⁹ Then the Pharisees said to each other, “There’s nothing we can do. Look, everyone has gone after him!”

MT 26:3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas,⁴ and they plotted to

arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill him. ⁵ "*But not during the Feast,*" they said, "or there may be a riot among the people."

- **They plotted to kill Jesus: after but not during the Feast...Jesus always in control. the Passover lamb must die on the Passover...the King has come...now it is time for his sacrifice...**
- **Jesus is always in control...rest in it**

If he is your King raise your Palm branch!

Bethany within a Sabbath days walk of Jerusalem a popular town for travelers

- **And seemed to be Jesus favorite place to stay in Jerusalem.**
- **The woman is identified as Mary sister of Martha and Lazarus**
- **Perfume possibly Myrrh Gold –Deity Frankincense-Priesthood Myrrh –Suffering and death**
- **Jesus could have stopped her...Jesus knowing this would be the last piece of the puzzle...leading directly to Judas going to the Priest to betray Jesus**

Matthew tells us that night Jesus says her deed will be honored forever