

(45) Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what He did, believed in Him, but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priests and Pharisees gathered the council and said, “What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let Him go one like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.”

(49) But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.” He did not say this of his own accord, but, being the high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

(53) So, from that day on, they made plans to put Him to death. Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there He stayed with His disciples.

(55) Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, “What do you think? That He will not come to the Feast at all?”

(57) Now the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest Him.

Think on these things:

- 1) With Lazarus raised right before their eyes (vs. 40-44), it is recorded that the astonished people had two reactions. Many believed and pondered Jesus! Others believed and did what (v.46)?

Some who believed rushed back to Jerusalem from Bethany to tell the chief priests and Pharisees that Jesus had raised a dead man (Lazarus) back to life.

- 2) The Chief Priests and Pharisees immediately convened a council to consider Jesus’ ministry and many miraculous signs (v.47). They came up with three key concerns (v.48). What were they?

1) **If we let Jesus go on like this unchecked, pretty soon everybody will believe in Him!!**

2) **If we don’t get on top of this, Rome might simply eliminate our positions in Jewish society.**
(We need to save our own skins and upper class status!)

3) **If Jesus’ crowd popularity increases, Rome might see this as rebellion and crush our nation.**

- 3) Is there any evidence here that any of the Pharisees became believers in Jesus? **No**

- 4) God established the priesthood in Exodus (read Exodus 40:12-16). Who was the first High Priest, and what do we know about all High Priests since that time (see also Numbers 25:10-13)? Read Exodus 4:14 to learn which tribe High Priests come from (and Moses and his brother belonged).

1st High Priest was: **Aaron, the brother of Moses**

All High Priests are: **direct descendants from Aaron’s lineage.**

Which tribe do High Priests come from? **They come from the tribe of Levi (Levites).**

5) Let's learn about this man Caiaphas mentioned in v.49:

Luke 3:2 - Who was High Priest when John the Baptist was ministering? **Annas**

Matthew 26:3-5 – Where did Caiaphas live? **In a palace in Jerusalem.**

John 18:13, 19 & 24 (Acts 4:5-6) – Who was Caiaphas related to, and how? **Caiaphas was related to Annas as his son-in-law. (NOTE: Rome disrupted God's Law for High Priests and appointed individuals of their choosing for shorter terms [not for life, but maybe 1-2 years]).**

6) Caiaphas blasted the council with, "You know nothing at all" (v.49)! He had a solution, and he had an insight that John records was actually a prophecy (v.51b, 53). What was the solution-prophecy? What would be the ultimate result?

Solution/Prophecy? **Essentially, "It is better for one man to die than to let his popularity bring harm to our whole nation!" Jesus MUST die so Israel may be spared by the Romans! So from that day they (the Jewish leaders) made plans to kill Jesus (v.53).**

Ultimate result? **To gather into one group all the children of God scattered throughout the whole world. (By faith, Jesus' death on the cross brings salvation to the world.)**

7) After raising Lazarus from the dead and this united opposition development in Jerusalem, Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the village of Ephraim at the west base of the dry, mountain range wilderness that runs down to the Dead Sea. This village is about 15-20 miles north of Jerusalem, depending on whether they used the main road or cut across the countryside.

Passover is the festival during which Jesus will finally die on the cross in Jerusalem. Skimming Exodus 12:1-13 and 13:1-6, what significance, symbolism or parallel do you see with Jesus dying at this time of the year? How long is Passover celebrated each year?

Passover significance (Ex. 12:1-13)? **A lamb was slaughtered by each Jewish household in Egypt and the blood smeared on the door mantles. When God's angel of death came, he would "pass over" all such marked homes, delivering the firstborn males from death. Jesus was known as the "Lamb of God" who takes away the sin of the world, and by whose shed blood people today receive forgiveness and salvation.**

Passover celebration (Ex. 13:1-6)? **Also known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the observation lasted 7 days of eating unleavened bread, followed by one feasting day.**

8) What order was given to all the Jews in Jerusalem regarding Jesus (v.57)?

Basically, "If any of you know where Jesus is, tell us, so that we may arrest Him."

People and situations I want to pray for this week: