

The Passion Begins - Presenting the King

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[0 : 00] All right, please take out your Bibles to John chapter 12. John chapter 12. We will let the elephants leave in peace.

Good sunny morning, as I said earlier. If you're new, a special welcome to you and thank you for joining us for this morning of worship on this beautiful Victoria Day weekend.

Again, we are in, as you may know or may not know if you're just visiting, the life of Christ. We're doing a series looking at... I was thinking about this today, you know, what are the things that we're really trying to pull out?

And I know I've said them before. You know, it's not so much the teachings of Jesus that we're specializing or honing in in this series, but so much more the timing of his teachings, the significance of his actions.

And what do those all tell us about him and how it fits in to the panorama of history, right? Jesus did not exist outside of history.

[1 : 12] His life doesn't happen outside of history. But history and Jesus Christ go together. And it serves a couple of reasons. One, it gives us the confidence in the testimony of the Bible.

And there's just some amazing stories. Like even when I shared with you... Remember when I shared with you a couple of weeks ago about why Jesus went to Perea so he could get out of... away from Pontius Pilate, right? So he could be out of the authority of the Jews that were trying to kill him. So it's kind of interesting because Herod Antipas, even at that time, was best friends who'd grown up with the current emperor of Rome at that time.

And in fact, that was one of the reasons why Herod Antipas could pretty much do what he want because he was best friends with one of the best guys who ruled the Roman Empire.

And Pontius Pilate actually was on very thin ice because where he came from, one of his primary sponsors was in conflict with the emperor of the day.

[2 : 15] So I know those things don't really mean a lot. But when we read the pages of scriptures, we're seeing all these reasons why Jesus did certain things in understanding the dynamic of the world at that time.

It's just amazing. So we have these events that occur in real time with real people in a real culture who had very real concerns. And we preach that although Jesus is fully God, he's also fully man, right?

He's not 50% God and 50% man, and he kind of weaves in between the two. Scriptures clearly teach that he is 100% man and 100% God all the time, amen?

But scripture also teaches that he is willingly choosing not to, quote unquote, initiate some of his God-like powers to achieve what he wants to achieve here on earth, but instead uses his wisdom, understanding, and he is free of sin.

And today's sermon, we're going to begin looking just how wonderfully, I don't know how to say it, brilliantly Jesus is. Just that he is able to make an event come about with his actions and words, and it's just absolutely amazing what's going to go on here.

[3 : 38] But we know that Jesus didn't just walk this earth as God, but he did as man, just like us. Feels the same pains, hunger, thirst, loss of friends, loved ones, all these things he experienced.

So this week, we are actually beginning what is probably, or not probably, it is, it's the week that changed the world. It is the most important week in all of human history.

It is upon the pivotal time, upon everything changes, from the Old Testament to the New Testament. This is what we as Christians call the Passion Week, the Holy Week, or the Easter Week, as some would say.

So in the next several weeks, I want to examine the significant events that happened leading to the crucifixion. And as we move into this Passion Week, I want you to see the events just don't occur. However, as I earlier stated, I want you to see how Jesus crafts the weeks through his teaching and his actions to bring about the result that would ultimately lead to our salvation.

[4 : 53] Amen? So Jesus is going into this week, and these aren't accidents that we're going to be reading about. But I want to demonstrate for you that Jesus made them happen, not by simply using God-like powers, but by simply using his perfect wisdom and knowledge of people and the understanding of the time.

So when you ask the question, how important is the Passion Week? I don't know if you know, but Matthew, Mark, and Luke, 40% of the pages are devoted to this one week. The Gospel of John, two-thirds of the Gospels written to this one week.

So obviously, this is a very significant week in the life of Christ. As we know, Jesus' ministry spanned three and a half years. But like I said, this one week, majority of writing is dedicated to. So for this part of the series, I want to do my best to explain not just the events as they happen, but the significance of events. And I have three hopes. My hope is that you will see Jesus and Jesus Christ in a whole new way.

Not to be, oh, that's really cool information. But I want you to be in awe of him, of his complete being. I want that awe to lead to deeper worship of him.

[6 : 18] And I want that deeper worship to be ingrained in a deeper love of Jesus Christ. That is the simple goal that I have for you this morning. All right, so one of the most important things is that we're going to look at is this morning is the triumphal entry, which I read for you this morning.

It is known as the first event of the Passion Week. As you know, sometimes it's called the Palm Sunday or triumphal entry or the declaration or presentation of the King, sorry.

And this is not just a simple event that is going on, but it's an incredible event that was going on. Because we know after this event, four days Jesus will be crucified.

So we need to understand why on one day Jesus walks into Jerusalem and is celebrated as the King of all, as the presented Messiah, the one who the Jews had been waiting for their whole lives and four days later they kill.

How does that happen? More importantly, I want us to see, like I've said again, how does Jesus make that happen? So I want you to see three things this morning.

[7 : 33] I don't think we're even going to get to these three things, but we'll continue next week. One, I want you to see how this event unfolds. This morning, why this crowd?

Why is there such a large multitude of crowds waiting on this specific day to do the specific things that they are doing for Jesus on this day?

When he comes in, and we're going to read the passage again, I'm going to pull some truths out of Messiah to let you know how grandiose this event is. We need to understand how that event happened.

Two, and we're going to probably get to this next week, but the timing of this event. Do you know that the exact day that Jesus walked into Jerusalem was prophesied?

Now, I'm not talking about the month of the year or the week of the month or maybe even a day of the week or an hour of a day. No, no, no.

[8 : 32] I'm talking about a very specific day, and we're going to look at that next week, that Jesus was prophesied to come into Jerusalem, and I will show you through prophecies that Jesus was to come into this day, and it was on March 30th, AD 33.

It's amazing, and we're going to go through all the prophecies that lead to this. It's amazing, and it's mind-blowing, and everything that Jesus did to make that happen demonstrates to us further how much God he is in his humanity.

And the third thing we're going to look at is the meaning. What is so significant of him coming into this city? So, the first fulfilled prophecy that I want to look at occurs at the very beginning.

So, if you turn in your text to John chapter 12, John chapter 12. And the first prophecy that is clearly seen that we've read in the Scripture is the manner in how Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem.

There was a prophet, and his name was Zechariah, and he lived over 500 years previously. And he prophesied of this event in Zechariah 9. And this is what Zechariah wrote.

[9 : 48] He said, And rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king is coming. And remember, when Zechariah is writing this prophecy, Jerusalem

and the temple have just been devastated.

Babylonians have come in and have clean house. There is no more except wailing, sadness, and the Jewish people are wondering what happened to all the prophecies that God gave us, the promises that He told us to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

And now this foreign kingdom has come out and removed us, and we're now living in a foreign land. And out of the wilderness, this man, Zechariah, comes up with this prophecy.

And he says, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Just think about that. How do you rejoice when you're being inflicted with much pain? Your city, Jerusalem, was actually surrounded.

The walls destroyed. The temple where you worshiped God wiped off the face of the earth. This place where your people had been coming for centuries.

[11:03] All the promises, gone. Just think what that would happen to us. How we would feel at that time if that happened to us. Yet this prophet comes out, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king is coming to you. Righteous, and having salvation is he.

Humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. So let's turn to John 12, 12 and see what it says here.

The next day, the large crowd that had come to the feast, remember, we're talking about the Passover feast, heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Even the king of Israel, and as you know, that's another prophecy which we're going to get to next week. So there's another prophecy there. But, and Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it just as it is written.

[12:14] Fear not, daughter of Zion. Behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt.

Just think of that anticipation that is happening. They've been waiting. They heard John the Baptist prophesying, calling out as the herald, the king is coming, the king is coming, the Messiah is coming.

Now he's here. Worship him. And the people have been ambivalent, right? Is he a prophet, as we learned last week? Or maybe he's the real king.

So there's this division, but we see Jesus Christ and what scripture tells us. And even it says in verse 16, his disciples did not understand these things at first.

But when Jesus was glorified, when they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. So even the people who were supposed to know somehow forgot about these events.

[13:16] So what stands out in this story, as we all know, the people are waiting for a king to overthrow Rome. If a king is to overthrow Rome, what do you think he's riding on?

A steed, right? If you're waiting for your king, are you really expecting him to come on a donkey? Right?

I remember my buddy, he had this big sales meeting. And he talked about, he was hiring this guy, he hadn't met him yet. He had this really big business. And this guy was supposed to revolutionize his sales.

And the guy shows up in a rusted out, beat up 1980 Datsun. Okay? Now for you guys who remember, Nissan used to be known as Datsun.

That's how old we're going, right? And we just looked at this guy. And I'm like, Will, I think you made a big mistake. Right? Like, for a guy who's supposed to be good at sales, you'd think he'd be riding a little bit nicer of a car.

[14:16] But anyway, but there's an expectation. The king is coming, there's an expectation. But this donkey rides in. So this morning, if there's one question I wanted for you to see, is why the crowds?

Why the crowds? Why the celebration? Why the exuberation? I think when we read the pages of scripture, we just kind of take things for granted. I want to show you the story behind the story that tell us everything that's going on because it exemplifies Jesus Christ.

I'm just going to read for you a quick passage out of Matthew. Matthew 21, 8. And this is the same situation, but I want to tag on a couple of the words that are here to let you know how big this crowd was.

Verse 8 of Matthew 21 says, Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road. And what that was is significant that royalty was coming. At that time, you'd take off your clothes, you'd put it out on the road.

That's why they're ripping off the branches. They're celebrating that he is king. Right? So they're here, they're doing this, and the crowds that went before him. The words crowds were dealing again. It's not just a group of people.

[15:23] It's not like SBC went out. It's not even if all of Squamish went out. We're talking about a city that's as big as Vancouver. Hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of people are coming out to see this event.

How do we know that this is so big? It says, And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred. Stirred. We think of stirred. The root of the Greek means the earth was shaking.

It's the word that they used to describe an earthquake. Okay? So that's how much the crowds, the jubilation, the excitement, the city is all coming up to see their king.

And they're shouting, you know, who is this? Some people are not understanding what's going on. What's going on? Right? And the crowd said, This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee. So people are shouting.

So our perspective and understanding this is a massive event. They are multitudes, thousands upon thousands of people there and they're welcoming Jesus as king.

[16:23] Some are just there. They don't know what's going on, but they are stirred up. There's a commotion. There's this disturbance. And Jesus has become the talk of the town on this one specific day in all of history.

Have any of you, you know, a lot of us have gone to major events. You've gone to concerts, right? You ever been to a concert? I grew up with a lot of people that go to YouTube concerts and there'd be like a hundred thousand people and they would just talk about how the energy that was there. I remember being at two World Series games, Toronto Blue Jays. Yeah, you know, that's how old. But it was electrified. Everybody was on there standing up the whole time. We were excited. I don't think that was anything like what these people experienced on that day.

This is the king. This is the long-awaited Messiah that we had been waiting for, that we've endured pain, persecution, loss of land. It is just this event.

And the key question that I want to answer for you is, why? How did it happen this way? Not only is why the crowd so large, but why their expectations? Why are they welcoming Jesus as king?

[17:33] Why are they here in the first place? John 12, 12 says, the next day, the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. How did they hear?

Did Jesus tweet it out? Sent out a Facebook invite, right? Everybody, come on in. I'm coming to town. We're going to actually see this morning how he begins to stir the crowd to create the reason this is going on.

There's going to be three reasons for this. One, it's the time. It is the Passover. This is the feast of all feasts. It's AD 33. Because it's the Passover, people from all over the country are coming into Jerusalem for this celebration.

In case you're not familiar with the Passover, what the Passover feast signified goes all the way back to Moses in 1400 BC when Israel were slaves to the Egyptians.

and God raises up Moses, a prophet, and he goes to Pharaoh and he's arguing, hey, Pharaoh, let my people go. We remember the story, right?

[18:37] And he ends up not wanting to let people go when seven plagues happen and the last plague is the most ruthless of all plagues. It's an angel of death.

God says, I am going to send an angel over all the land and the firstborn of every family will die. except the one who takes the blood of a lamb, an innocent blood of the lamb and puts it on their dorsal and then the angel would know to pass over.

Thus, the Passover feast. We know the story. The Jews do this. The Egyptians do not. And at that time, Pharaoh relents for a time.

So this is the major significance of all significant events in the time of Israel. So that tells us that there's already a big group of people in Jerusalem on that day.

They were already there, a lot of people. They were already moving in. But it doesn't explain why they were there to see Jesus. This doesn't explain that there was so much people like it was almost like an earthquake that people were laying out their clothes.

[19 : 52] So one, the first hint, Passover, tells us that that's the first reason we're going to have a crowd. The second reason I want to demonstrate for you is what else do we know?

Take a look at verse 17 of John chapter 12. It said, the crowd that had been with him, this is Jesus, when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to bear witness. Now, for you who were here last week, you know I didn't finish that story of Lazarus. So now, that is what we're going to spend our time with. So turn back to John chapter 11, one chapter back. And I want to go through the significance and how this event, about six weeks previous to this event and how it affects the life of Jesus here.

So remember, John chapter 11 begins with not even Jesus being not only in Jerusalem, he's not even Judea, the land where Jerusalem was found. He's over in Perea. And he's along the river Jordan.

[21 : 04] And he's teaching. And he's meeting with God's people. And remember, just like I said, he's out of harm's way. Because we're going to find out, and we know, the Jews wanted to kill him.

So here he is, he's Perea, he's outside of the reach of the religious leaders. And he is teaching, he's healing, and he's doing the things that Jesus did. And then all of a sudden if we read in verse 11 of John chapter 11, he finds out that his good friend Lazarus is dying.

He's ill. Verse 5 tells us that Jesus loved Lazarus, along with his sister Mary and Martha. So here's a family that Jesus is particularly close to and he gets word that he's dying.

But Jesus does something very curious. He doesn't leave. How many of us if we're told that a loved one is sick, we don't want to run to them?

Jesus stays there. He remains there. Verse 6, so when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

[22 : 19] Instead, like I said, he remains in Perea, the Jordan area. And when we look at this like face value, this isn't the Jesus that we know, is it? Everywhere else when people brought the blind, the lame, those who needed healing, Jesus did it immediately.

And these were strangers, people he didn't know, that all of a sudden his most loved, a loved, cherished person that scripture makes the point of pointing out that he is loved and he remains. But Jesus says something very curious. And he says, this illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.

It's a curious statement, but it's a bit of foreshadowing what we're going to find out. So when Jesus finally decides to go, we learn last week that the disciples were not exactly enthused by this decision.

Take a look at verse 16. So Thomas, called the twin, we know Thomas the twin as doubting Thomas, says to his fellow disciples, let us also go that we may die with them.

[23 : 24] Why? There's a death sentence on Jesus. He goes into Judea, it's all over. Right? All the apostles know this. They obviously are concerned for Jesus.

But Thomas, we see this mood that if we go, we're going to die. But you know what? We're going with Jesus, so let's go. So just in case, oh, we're going to get to this in a second.

Verse 17. Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for days. Bethany was a town near Jerusalem, about two miles off.

And this, the details aren't just because the guy's got a certain word count, okay? There's a specific reason why John is telling this. Two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother.

Now remember when it says Jews, it's not just talking about regular folk, it's usually talking about those who were in political, religious power, the leaders. So by all accounts, Lazarus was a man of wealth, a land of means, and had somewhat popularity, that even some of the most important people in the city would come to his funeral.

[24 : 41] So here we have this group of leaders coming in. So first that I need to understand, that we need to understand is today I'm going to give you a little bit of teaching on a Jewish funeral, okay?

Quickly. Jewish funeral lasted seven days. So when a body first, the person has died, what the Jews would do is they would take these linen strips and they put them in spice and then they would wrap the body.

So for the first two days they would wrap and prepare the body because Jews did not embalm and they would allow the body to decompose because what they would do is they would put it usually in

a tomb that they could access and basically they'd let the body sit there decompose for an amount of time and then they would kind of go in after a year or so and kind of scoop up all the bones and put them in a stone box.

And what you'd do is say you would live in a tomb, say we would have a family Smith tomb and what you would do is not only in that tomb would be my dad but my grandfather, my great grandfather, my uncles and all that.

So what they did is they put them in a stone box and they put the stone box on shelves in the tombs. Are you with me on this? So you just have this one tomb that would cover for generations of time.

[25 : 58] So what you have this scene where they're preparing the body and they're putting the spices because as you know within 25, I think it's 48 to 72 hours, the human body begins to decompose and it smells really bad.

Okay? So that's what they're doing. So the first two days they would prepare the body. On the third day they would put it in the tomb and then they would seal the tomb.

And at this time the body's starting to smell. Okay? And then what they would do is they would kind of cover up around the tomb entrance anything to keep that smell down because they knew they'd have to go back in sometimes later after the body had decomposed put it in the box.

So the true funeral really only began on what day? fourth day. What day is Jesus arriving on? The fourth day.

All right. Here's another interesting little tidbit. Jews believed that when a body died the spirit hovered over the body for three days.

[27 : 05] All right? That's not what the Bible teaches but this is what Jewish mythology teaches at that time. And what's interesting the Jews have two types of dead. You know what the two types of dead are?

Dead and on the fourth day good and dead. Right? That's time the spirit's gone. It's all over. So if you're looking for a specific time that it is inarguable that someone is dead guess which day it is? It's on the fourth day. Which day does Jesus show up in? Fourth day. Right? So we know this is the story. So this is all how it happens and how they prepare. So all the people come out and the height of the funeral is on the fourth day.

So that's when all the people are gathered. They've come down for Jerusalem. So what we're going to be seeing is Jesus is actually for the first time orchestrating an event to get absolutely maximum effectiveness.

You with me on this? Jesus knows he's going to raise Lazarus but he's going to do it on a day that everybody's going to be there to see. It's going to be the talk of the town and this is what he's doing.

[28 : 09] He's holding back. He knows what's going to happen and remember those words so the son might be glorified. Right? So here we go. Shows up on the fourth day. And what does happens?

So let's take a look at verse 30 of John chapter 11. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him.

When the Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet saying to him, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

when Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in the spirit and greatly troubled.

[29 : 15] And he said, where have you laid him? They said to him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. So the Jews said, see how he loved him.

But some of them said, could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying? So there's always these already questions.

In case you didn't know, to heal a man of blindness was seen to be the mark of the Messiah. That if there was anybody who could heal someone who's sight, we're not talking about a rock coming through and he lost his vision for a while and got hit again by a donkey and all of a sudden he sees again.

We're not talking about this, we're talking about someone who they know is permanently blind.

Scriptures talk about that you would know the mark of the Messiah because he could even make

those who had never seen seen, right? So they already seen Jesus do this.

So here they're at a session, could not he who opened the eyes of the blind also have kept this man from dying? Then Jesus, and we're getting such a wonderful picture of his humanity here, deeply moved again, came to the tomb.

[30 : 30] It was a cave and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, take away the stone. Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead, how many days?

Four days. Jesus said to her, did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God? This is how the story begins, right?

I must delay so that you may see the glory of God. So they took away the stone and Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me. But I said this on account of the people standing around that they may believe that you sent me. When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, Lazarus, come out.

The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to him, unbind him and let him go.

[31 : 43] Do you get what's happening here? It's not like Jesus is looking over a coffin and says, hey, you're healed, come alive and all of a sudden he sticks up. He's buried in this tomb.

He's got all these linen straps around him. All of a sudden he's told to come up, he gets up and it's not like he walks out, he's got to hop out. So this whole scene is a huge dramatic emotional scene. He can't even see. Notice that Jesus everybody's in such awe that he's got to say, hey, uncover him, lest I have to do another miracle because he's going to die of suffocation.

Right? So that is the extent. There's this huge miracle that is going on at this time. This is no normal miracle. Jesus is doing it in such a way that has maximum effect, maximum people, and it's an inarguable miracle.

You've even heard it. We can't do it. The body would still be, it's dead, it stinks. So what Jesus is doing, he's setting stage for the eventual entrance into Jerusalem.

[32 : 59] And guess what people are going to be talking about in Jerusalem by the time he gets there? Lazarus, right? That's why John tells us in John chapter 12. The people kept talking.

They kept stirring up the crowd. So what's at stake here? Notice the response of verse 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. When it says Pharisees it's not just religious rulers, it's talking about the religious rulers.

Remember there's a group of 70, the chief priests and the Pharisees they are part of the Sanhedrin. Look at verse 47. So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said what are we to do?

For this man performs many signs. Aha! Even the religious rulers are advocating like we can't hide this anymore guys.

[34 : 02] We can't argue. These aren't fake signs. These are signs unlike we've ever seen. if we let him go on like this everyone will believe in him.

But they're concerned and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. I'm going to tell you what our greatest problem is.

Mankind's greatest problem. And this verse depicts it perfectly for us. You see man's problem is not that he doesn't know enough truth.

Are you with me? Man's problem is never about knowing enough truth. And we've all been there.

Man if I could read this book and understand and explain this to my friend or my loved one.

And I gave them the truth they would believe. You with me on that? We've all been there. We all think this way. If I could just bring them enough truth. That's not our problem.

[35 : 17] Our problem is that we love our sin. We love our position. And that's always been man's greatest issue. He loves his sin more than he loves and believes in the truth.

So here we have the religious rulers of the day who were to know. We're going to see over and over. They did know the prophecies. They cannot deny that Jesus Christ is the king.

That he is the Messiah. He was the prophesied one. They cannot deny. But guess what they would rather have? Their high position in society.

And we had already read how corrupt they were. They stole from the people. They loved this religious system because it kept people in control and it kept the money flowing to them.

Verse 49, but one of them, Sapphias, who was a high priest that year, and 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 would perish.

[36 : 28] Boom. You know what this is? Testimony that they knew that there was a suffering servant. In case you're not familiar, Jesus Christ is known as the suffering servant. That is the son of man.

That is how Mark in the gospel portrays him. They knew that he was to come on a donkey and not a steed. They knew he would come in humility and not in greatness.

verse 52, 51, sorry. He did not say this of his own accord, but being 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 are scattered abroad, so that the day on they made plans, so from that day on, they made plans to put him to death.

Pay attention to verse 454. 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.

And there's a major significance which we're going to get to. verse 55. Now it's like there's a six week time frame, right? Between 54 and 55.

[37 : 58] 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 to 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? In verse 57, now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know so they might arrest him. You're following me on that whole story of Lazarus and why it's there? Jesus is making this event, so he's going to come into Jerusalem. So one, we understand it's Passover, it's a big crowd. Two, what's the next biggest thing that Jesus wants? He wants them talking about him. So what does he do six weeks earlier? He does this incredible miracle, raises the dead, well known within the leadership, and all the people are now talking about it.

So we know those are the two reasons. But here's the third barrier. How does Jesus get into Jerusalem given that they want to arrest him? Anybody know the answer?

[39 : 12] All right, we're going to find out next week. All right. Let me pray for you. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, I know this is a lot as we go through the text and we see how it weaves so perfectly together.

But God, you are indeed king, you are indeed ruler of all, and we're just seeing that even these slight little words in our scripture actually mean something. Four days that Jesus says he's going to delay two days, all fit in this perfect plan.

and that as you call this man Lazarus out of the tomb, that people literally saw him hopping out on the pinnacle day of the funeral was no accident.

Jesus just didn't live in the events that Jesus created the events. And the lesson for us, oh Father, is what are the events that God has created in our lives and how we are to respond to him.

Father, for those who know you as Lord and Savior, know that it was through specific events that we came to know you. Some it's through a loss of a family member, some it's a stranger sharing a gospel truth to us.

[40 : 35] Others it was through absolute pain. that although we thought we had achieved the success that all the world answers, we still found ourselves empty within.

And there's others of us who we've known nothing but defeat, discouragement, and debilitation in life, that we were truly able to see you as the only hope.

people. Every story is unique. But if anything that this tells us, this orchestration by Jesus is that we are known.

And most of us know you through suffering. As Jesus suffered, we will one day participate in that suffering as well.

But what's interesting is even in suffering, even in defeat, even in pain, Jesus is there as the greatest news of all.

[41 : 36] Amen? And Father, we can testify to this truth. This is why we can testify to these stories to our friends and our loved ones. So Father, as we come here, I just don't want these things to be interesting history lessons.

I want them to be personal promises of understanding your absolute wonderful character, that nothing escapes you.

We can hide nothing from you. The Bible tells us your eyes go to and fro. You see everything. And although we can hide from fellow man, we cannot hide from you.

Father, I pray that you would humble each and every one of us in our lives so that we would truly understand the saving grace that you offer us. And it costs absolutely nothing.

You paid the price for us. And all we need to do is trust in you. we're going to go forth and we're going to see the testimony of Jesus in his humanity, trusting in the goodness of his father every step of the way, even though he will bear a great, horrible, terrible cost, all so that we could become children of God.

[43 : 15] God's His will ask for all of God's people said amen.