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Today the village of Bethany is called al-Eizariya, which is Arabic for "Place of Lazarus." Félix Bonfils (1831-1885) took this photo of the place on January 1, 1880. It is online via Wikimedia Commons. The photograph is also part of the National Photo Collection of Israel.

The plot to kill Jesus started after the death of his friend, Lazarus. Hearing that his friend was ill, Jesus did not go immediately to the village of Bethany (today called al-Eizariya, Arabic for "Place of Lazarus"). He waited two days to walk to the village, located less than two miles from Jerusalem.

By the time Jesus arrived, his friend had been dead four days. Lazarus' body had been wrapped in linen cloth and buried in a tomb sealed by a large stone.

Many of the family's friends gathered to comfort Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus. In the presence of all those witnesses, Jesus commanded that the stone be removed. Martha argued against it. After four days the smell would be terrible!

After the stone was removed, Jesus commanded Lazarus to come out of the tomb. With his body still wrapped with strips of linen, walked out of the cave. Some of those who witnessed the miracle believed in Jesus. Others went to the Jewish religious leaders to report the event.

The leaders called a meeting of the Jewish religious council, the Sanhedrin. They were concerned that if Jesus continued to perform such miracles, all the people would believe in Him. If everyone believed in Him, dire consequences would result for the Jews, who lived under Roman rule.

Caiaphas, the high priest that year, had an idea. Why have Rome's wrath directed at the entire Jewish nation? He argued for a different result:

You know nothing at all! You do not realize it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.

From the time of that Sanhedrin meeting, the religious leaders plotted to kill Jesus. They also made plans to kill Lazarus since "on account of him" people were placing their faith in Jesus.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/DEATH-of-LAZARUS-Passion-of-the-Christ>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/DEATH-of-LAZARUS-Passion-of-the-Christ>

Media Stream



Bethany - Map Locator

Image online, courtesy the University of Calgary website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Bethany-Map-Locator>



Martha at Lazarus Tomb

Image online, courtesy the Web Gallery of Art.

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Raising Lazarus - by Caravaggio

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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