

The Jewish Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus

Here's your **Full Breakdown** of  Matthew 26:1–5,  Mark 14:1–2, and  Luke 22:1–2 on *The Jewish Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus*.

Parallel Gospel Overview

Gospel	Passage	Setting	Key Details
 Matthew 26:1–5	After Jesus finishes His teachings in Jerusalem	Jesus foretells His crucifixion at Passover; chief priests & elders plot secretly at Caiaphas' palace	They decide not to arrest Him during the feast to avoid riots
 Mark 14:1–2	Two days before Passover & Feast of Unleavened Bread	Chief priests & scribes seek a "crafty" way to arrest and kill Him	Fear of people's reaction leads them to plan in secret
 Luke 22:1–2	Feast of Unleavened Bread approaching	Chief priests & scribes seek a way to kill Him	They fear the people because Jesus is popular

Historical & Cultural Context

1. Timing in the Jewish Calendar

- **Passover** (Pesach) began on **Nisan 14** with the sacrifice of the lamb in the Temple, followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15–21).
- The text says this plotting happened **two days before Passover**—likely Nisan 12—placing it in the final days before Jesus' arrest.

2. Political & Religious Tension

- Jerusalem's population swelled from ~50,000 to over 200,000 during Passover.
- Roman soldiers were on high alert for uprisings.
- The Sanhedrin feared that arresting Jesus openly could trigger riots because He had a large following, especially after raising Lazarus and His Temple teachings.

3. Sanhedrin Leadership

- **Chief Priests** = mostly Sadducees (wealthy, Temple-focused, politically aligned with Rome).
- **Scribes** = often Pharisees, experts in the Torah.
- **Elders** = respected lay leaders in Jewish society.
- **Caiaphas** = High Priest (AD 18–36), known for political skill and pragmatism.

4. Why Secret Arrest?

- Arresting Him during a festival could cause an uproar (Matthew & Mark explicitly say this).
- They wanted Him removed but in a way that would appear legal and avoid public backlash.

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Narrative Flow

- Jesus' Prophecy** (Matthew only)
 - After the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24–25), Jesus says: “After two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”
 - This shows Jesus is **fully aware** and in control of the timeline.
- Leaders' Secret Council**
 - Meeting at the house of Caiaphas, they plot His arrest.
 - Their plan: wait until after the feast to avoid unrest.
 - Irony: Despite their plan, events will align with Passover exactly as Jesus foretold.
- Luke's Emphasis**
 - Luke skips the prophecy detail and focuses on the leaders' fear of the people.
 - This sets the stage for Judas' betrayal as their opportunity to arrest Him quietly.



Greek Word Insights

- “Crafty” (Mark 14:1) – *dolō* (δόλω) = deceit, cunning, treachery. Implies intentional trickery rather than open justice.
- “Seek” (Matthew 26:4, Luke 22:2) – *zēteō* (ζητέω) = to search with intent, pursue actively. Suggests persistent plotting, not a casual idea.
- “Feast” – *heortē* (ἱόρτη) = a set holy festival; here referring to the combined Passover and Unleavened Bread.

❖ Messianic & Theological Implications

- Passover Connection** – Jesus' death during Passover fulfills His role as the true **Lamb of God** (Exodus 12; 1 Corinthians 5:7).
- Divine Sovereignty vs. Human Schemes** – Leaders plan for “after the feast,” but God's timetable places the crucifixion **on** Passover.
- Rejection by Leaders** – Echoes Psalm 2:2 and Isaiah 53:3—Messiah opposed by rulers despite His innocence.
- Jesus' Control** – He predicts both the timing and the manner of His death, showing it is part of God's redemptive plan.



Comparison Summary

Detail	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Jesus' prophecy about crucifixion	✓	✗	✗
Leaders meeting at Caiaphas' palace	✓	✓	✗
Leaders' desire to avoid arrest during feast	✓	✓	✗
Focus on fear of the people	Implied	Implied	Explicit
Mention of “two days before Passover”	✓	✓	Implied (feast approaching)