

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

**Let's pray...**

This morning, we come to chapter 14 in the gospel of Mark.

And as we as we have been making our way through the gospel of Mark, we are coming closer and closer to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

All the pieces are falling into place and things are going to start to really speed up over the next few weeks.

**[Mar 14:1-11 NKJV] 1 After two days it was the Passover and [the Feast] of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by trickery and put [Him] to death. 2 But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people." 3 And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman**

came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured [it] on His head. 4 But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted? 5 "For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they criticized her sharply. 6 But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. 7 "For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. 8 "She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. 9 "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

10 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. 11 And when they heard [it],

**they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.**

So this morning we are going to talk about two different events – the anointing at Bethany and the scribes conspiring to kill Jesus.

Now, I want you to keep in mind that these two events are not in chronological order. The anointing at Bethany happened prior to the Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, which is on a Sunday – Mark simply lists these two events out of order.

So the first event in our text is the scribes conspiring to kill Jesus Christ.

Remember, Jesus Christ had just finished rebuking them days earlier for being a **bunch of pretenders**. For giving the perception that they were spiritual but in reality they were spiritually broke.

However, it is important to note that the rebuke by Jesus wasn't the driving force behind them wanting to kill Jesus –

You see, the religious rulers wanted to kill Jesus from the beginning of His ministry – In the gospel of John, after He healed Lazarus, they sought to kill Him and in the Gospel of Mark, they sought to kill Him after He had healed the man with the withered hand.

Here Jesus is no longer running around the Sea of Galilee, He is there in Jerusalem. However, the timing is not right as they are approaching the feast of the Passover and the Feast of the Unleavened Bread.

Let's take a closer look at these two feasts – because people sometimes get the confused.

### The Passover

[Exo 12:1-14 NKJV] 1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2 "This month [shall be] your beginning of months; it [shall be] the first month of the year to you. 3 "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying:

'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of [his] father, a lamb for a household. 4 'And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take [it] according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. 5 'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take [it] from the sheep or from the goats. 6 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. 7 'And they shall take [some] of the blood and put [it] on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. 8 'Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread [and] with bitter [herbs] they shall eat it. 9 'Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire--its head with its legs and its entrails. 10 'You shall let

none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. 11 'And thus you shall eat it: [with] a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It [is] the LORD's Passover. 12 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I [am] the LORD. 13 'Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you [are]. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy [you] when I strike the land of Egypt. 14 'So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

### The Feast of the Leaven Bread

[Exo 13:3-10 NKJV] 3 And Moses said to the people:

"Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this [place]. No leavened bread shall be eaten. 4 "On this day you are going out, in the month Abib. 5 "And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month. 6 "Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day [there shall be] a feast to the LORD. 7 "Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. 8 "And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, '[This is done] because of what the LORD did for me when I came up from Egypt.' 9 "It shall be as

a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD's law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. 10 "You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.

Both of these feasts were memorials for the Jew. Passover was the memorial of how the Spirit of the Lord passed over the homes of those that had the blood of the lamb on their doorpost during the last plague in Egypt.

And the Feast of the Unleavened Bread was a memorial how God delivered them from Egypt.

However, both of these feasts also point to Jesus Christ.

We read that the Passover Lamb was to be without blemish –

They couldn't break the bones of the lamb during the cooking process either, which also points to Jesus Christ as not one of His bones were broken

Jesus Christ is the Passover Lamb. That is why John the Baptist says in the gospel of John, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

The Feast of the Unleavened points to Jesus Christ as it followed upon the blood-deliverance of Passover. In scripture, leaven is a picture of sin – therefore in the Feast of the Unleavened Bread we see the principle that we can only walk in purity before the LORD after the blood-deliverance at the cross.

Our deliverance wasn't from Egypt but from sin.

Now, back to the gospel of Mark, the significance of these feasts in our text is that the population of Jerusalem would explode during

these feasts. Males within a certain radius were required to spend the days of the feast in Jerusalem during this time.

And because one of the Feast was Passover, which symbolized deliverance, many people flocked to Jerusalem in search of a Messiah who would deliver them from Roman occupation.

The religious rulers were worried if they tried to kill Jesus during the Passover, the people would turn on them.

They were worried about a rebellion against them.

The problem with the religious rulers was that they feared man instead of fearing God.

They never questions what God might think if they went through and killed Jesus.

They only questioned what man would think.

Look at the words they spoke in verse 2 again,

**[Mar 14:2 NKJV] 2 But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people."**

They make the decision not to kill Jesus during the feast – but guess what???

Ultimately they do kill Jesus during the feast.

Not because they wanted to but because God chose that His only begotten Son die for you and me on that particular day.

It had to be during Passover because Jesus Christ is the Passover.

We are going to see at the end of our study how an opportunity is presented before them to kill Jesus that wasn't there before.

### **The Anointing at Bethany**

In verse three, we are told that Jesus and His disciples are now in the town of Bethany.

Remember, this event takes place the day before His triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

And Jesus is no stranger to the town of Bethany. We had seen Jesus return to Bethany after He went into the temple on Palm Sunday.

Bethany was just outside of Jerusalem.

Bethany is where His friend Lazarus lived along with His sisters Mary and Martha.

However, in this event, it's not taking place at Lazarus' house; it is taking place at the home of Simon the Leper.

Who is Simon the Leper??? This is the only time in scripture that we see his name mentioned.

It is most likely that Simon the leper is one of the many people that Jesus healed during His ministry.

Meaning that he was a former leper since the Levitical laws had strict rules against coming in contact with a leper.

Remember - they were outcasts who had to live outside the city walls where they lived the rest of their days until they died.

It is most likely that Simon was afflicted by the disease so long, that the name simply stuck.

I don't think he minded – as every time he heard someone address him as Simon the leper, he would remember the grace and mercy as our Lord and Savior healed him from his affliction.

So everyone is in Simon the leper's house and verse 3 says that a woman brings in this flask of very costly oil, breaks the flask and starts to pour it on the head of Jesus.

The gospel of John tells us that this woman was Mary, the sister of Lazarus.

And John also adds that she applies some of this expensive stuff on the feet of Jesus as well and she wipes it with her hair. (John 12)

We see this same Mary three different times in the gospels and each time, she is either at the feet of Jesus listening to Him teach, or she is running to Jesus to be comforted by Him or she is in the process of worshipping Him – like we see her here in verse three.

What Mary did was give an incredible, extravagant gift to Jesus.

We call this worship. The act of worship does not just consist in the songs we sing on Sunday morning, though that might be a part of our worship.

Worship consists of the things we give to Jesus, out of love for Him.

The ways we live our lives, the things that we do in His name, walking in obedience to His will – all of this is worship.

Notice that Mary did not do this so that she might be seen by the disciples – she didn't do it because someone instructed her to do it. She did it out of her own free will because of her love for her Savior.

Mary gave lavishly and lovingly. **She was not ashamed to show her love for Christ openly.**

Let's see how the other disciples in the room react to her act of worship.

**[Mar 14:4-5 NKJV]** 4 But there were some who were indignant among **themselves**, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil **wasted**? 5 "For it might have been sold for more than **three hundred denarii** and given to the poor." And they criticized her sharply.

There will be many in the world that will criticize our acts of worship because they don't truly understand who Jesus is.

What do you mean you are going to church again this Sunday – didn't you just go last Sunday???

In John's account, it tells us that Judas is the one that questioned the waste of the fragrance – and John tells us that he did this because he was the treasurer among the disciples and he had been stealing from the funds.

I asked you to underline the word wasted – because the Greek word that is used here in the text is the word for perdition or destruction and it is the same word that is used to describe Judas later on in the gospel of John.

**[Jhn 17:12 NKJV] 12 "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.**

The disciple who argued that it was wasteful to worship the savior – wasted his own life as he failed to worship the Lord.

Mark clearly points out that some of the other disciples agreed with Judas –

The 300 denarii was equivalent to about a year's wage - some theologians have even speculated that the flask and its contents could have even been Mary's own dowry.

And I have mentioned to you before that the dowry was the insurance for a woman in case she became a widow. She was supposed to live off the dowry.

If that is the case, it makes Mary's worship even more significant because she was worshipping her Savior with her livelihood.

**Church, true worship is costly.**

**[Mar 14:6-9 NKJV] 6 But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. 7 "For you**

**have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. 8 "She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. 9 "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."**

Jesus rebuked His disciples for their reaction to what Mary was doing.

Notice what Jesus says about Mary -

**She has done a good work for Me – the word that is used here for good is the word for beautiful. The disciples considered what she was doing wasteful but Jesus considered it beautiful**

**She had done what she could – this is what God expects from us.**

There can be no greater complement than this.

In verse 8, Jesus seems to imply by His words that Mary was fully aware that He was going to die.

And the question becomes – how is it that Mary understood this yet, His disciples who had walked with Him for 3 years did not understand this?

Even though they had been repeatedly told by Jesus that He was about to die.

Why did Mary seem to comprehend the significance of Jesus' death and the disciples did not? Here is a truth; Mary comprehended the substance of Jesus mission and cross because of her close worshipful relationship with Jesus.

Coming close to Jesus in worship brings us in tune with His purposes and priorities. Worship opens the window of wisdom and understanding. The disciples were out of sync with the purposes

and priorities of Jesus because they weren't in a worshipful state before Jesus.

If we want to comprehend the substance of Jesus purposes and have our priorities in line with Him, we need to worship at His feet.

Always remember that worship brings our hearts in sync with His heart.

Let's look at our last two verses again.

**[Mar 14:10-11 NKJV] 10 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. 11 And when they heard [it], they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.**

Matthew tells us that Judas went to the chief priests and asked what they would give him to betray Jesus. They didn't come to him, he went to them.

**(Mat 26:14-16 NKJV) Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests {15} and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. {16} So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.**

I asked you to underline thirty pieces of silver.

The reason, thirty pieces of silver was the worth of a lowly slave (Ex. 21:32), Mary worships Jesus with her livelihood and Judas sells Jesus out for the price of a slave.

That is how much Jesus meant to Judas.

Now, before we start shaking our heads at Judas, think about how many people sell Jesus out for something even less than 30 pieces of silver.

Popularity, friendships, convenience, relationships.

## How do we worship Jesus?

Like Mary of Bethany or like Judas Iscariot???

Many fall away because they consider following Jesus too costly –

However, always remember that when Jesus Christ hung on the cross for you and me, He never questioned the price that He paid for each and every one of us.

What can I give to Jesus?

Church, it starts with giving Him our entire lives. That is true worship.

Amen...

Let's pray..

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

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