

(1) Six days before Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they gave a dinner for Him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with Him at the table.

(3) Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

(4) But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples (he who was about to betray Him), said, “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. Jesus said, “Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have Me.”

(9) When the large crowd of Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came --- not only on account of Him but also to see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

Think on these things:

- 1) After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead outside the city of Bethany, He left with His disciples to stay at a village named Ephraim on the edge of the wilderness (last lesson, John 11:54). Now, six days before Passover, He returns to Bethany with His disciples. Four days later, two days before the Passover, everyone gathers for a meal together at Simon the leper’s house (Mark 14:1,3), also in Bethany. Describe what Lazarus (v.2), Martha (v.2), and Mary (v.3) were doing.

Lazarus – **He joined all the men reclining at the table with Jesus.**

Martha – **She was helping in the serving of the meal.**

Mary – **Mary showed up with an expensive bottle (flask) of expensive nard perfume. She broke the flask and began pouring it over Jesus’ head. The room reaction was mixed....**

- 2) This meal and its importance is recorded three times in the Gospels: Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:1-11; and John 12:1-12. Let’s look a little closer at Mark 14:1-11. What does Mark report is the value of Mary’s ‘gift’ (v.5)?

Value? **The value was ‘at least 300 denarii.’ One denarii equaled one day’s pay at that time, so this is about a year’s worth of money to the common people.**

NOTE: There is a **DIFFERENT** event recorded in Luke 7:36-50. There, a woman of the city slips into Simon the Pharisee’s house while Jesus is visiting. She is described as a ‘sinner’ (v.37), possibly indicating a prostitute. She brings a flask of ointment with her, and positions herself kneeling behind the reclining Jesus near His feet. Crying heavily, her tears wash over His feet, and she then wipes them tenderly with her hair before anointing them with her ointment.

- 3) Compare the two accounts from Mark & John again. How does each passage say the “nard” was applied to Jesus? Do you see this as an error? If not, how do you reconcile the difference?

Mark says the nard was applied to Jesus’ head, while John says it was applied to His feet. This is not really a conflict, but a progression reported by two witnesses. Likely, the nard was applied to the head first (Mark), and the process concluded with an application to the feet (John). Head and feet were appropriate as a “burial” activity.

- 4) Jesus told the people in the room to leave Mary alone. Using Mark & John, how did Jesus explain her actions (John 12:7, Mark 14:8), and what promise did He make about her (Mark 14:9)?

Explaining her actions: **Mary was being scolded by many in the room (Mk. 14:4-5), and Jesus told them to stop it! He responded that Mary was doing a beautiful thing for Him, and that she was, in fact, preparing His body for burial (this was a jolting statement to the disciples).**

Jesus’ promise? **Jesus said that wherever in the world the Gospel was preached, what Mary did for Him at that time would be reported as a lasting memorial to her.**

- 5) When Jesus says, “You will always have the poor with you,” what is His point? Consider also the teachings from Luke 10:38-42 and James 2:14-18.

The point? **There is a time for service and a time for worship. When Jesus is “present,” we do well to focus on Him. *It’s okay to pause service* to commune with Jesus. Opportunities to help poor people will never end.... Christians must find balance between these two ends.**

Luke 10:38-42 – **Martha was recognized for her service; however, Mary was commended for listening intently to Jesus instead of serving. Jesus said Mary had “chosen the good portion.”**

James 2:14-18 – **James says that what we say we believe is shown (confirmed) by how we actually perform Christian works for others. Faith is life in action, not a mental understanding or acceptance of information/facts.**

- 6) What did John call Judas Iscariot (v.6)? What did he accuse Judas of doing?

He called him a...? **Thief**

He accused him of...? **Judas was in charge of the group’s moneybag, but he used to (stealthily) help himself to some of the money put into it.**

- 7) Who was added to the Pharisees’, “We’ve got to kill him!” list, and why (vs.9-11)?

The Pharisees added Lazarus to the “kill list” because he had been raised by Jesus from the dead, and those seeing him turned their loyalties towards Jesus on account of this miracle!

People and situations I want to pray for this week: