

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

The Anointing of Jesus

Last time...the division of the sheep and the goats by the King of kings and Lord of lords
Jesus' testimony and judgment of both "His" and "not His"

This time...the anointing of Jesus

We will be in Matt 26, Mark 14, John 12, and Luke 22

Matt 26:1-5

v1-2 finished all these sayings...Ye know...betrayed and crucified:

The content of these 2 verses appear only in Gospel of Matthew

When Jesus finished teaching the great prophetic teachings of Matt 24-25,
Jesus said to the twelve:

Ye know...the Passover...Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

Matt 24:25-ish

"Behold, I have told you before."

Matt 16:21

Matt 17:9

Matt 17:22-23

Matt 20:18-19

The very meaning of and the complete fulfillment of Passover
(Ex 12, Lev 23, Deut 16) will come in 2 days

The mind-blowing, dream-shattering, ambition-squashing,
repeatedly-foretold Plan of God crescendos in 2 days

In this 5th foretelling of the "end" of His ministry, Jesus spoke of being

1. betrayed

then

2. crucified

He does NOT speak of

- setting up the kingdom of God
- restoring the kingdom to Israel
- throwing off the Roman yoke and iron fist

They know...but they are blinded by their dreams and ambitions and pet doctrine
("Kingdom Now")

Again, 2 days before their world comes apart, Jesus tells them what is going to
happen

v3-5 Then assembled together...take...kill:

Once again the Jewish religious powers convened for a very serious deliberation.

Where: in the palace of the High Priest, Caiaphas

What kind of High Priest has a palace for a home?

One who, with the highest bid, bought the office from the Romans

A wealthy false priest lording over the common people

Why: to devise a devilish/deceitful/subtle/cunning plan to

- seize/arrest Jesus of Nazareth
- kill/murder Jesus of Nazareth

They've had this discussion before, starting the day Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:53)

When: NOT on the Passover to avoid creating an intolerable (to the nervous Romans) disturbance by the common folks

Contrary to what Jesus told the 12 in v2

Whose timing will prevail for this, the epicenter of human history – God's or man's?!

Prov 21:30 *There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.*

Let's go to Mark's account

Mark 14:1-2

v1-2 passover...unleavened bread...sought how...not on the feast:

Passover: Instituted by the LORD in Ex 12, a set day (14th) of Nisan in the 1st month to "cover" Israel from the 10th Plague – death of firstborn

In the March/April timeframe (and the 1st day of Unleavened Bread)

The day the perfect Passover lamb was slaughtered and consumed, his blood used as a covering of immunity from death

Unleavened Bread: 7 day Feast during which time the Jews were to eat only unleavened bread, having purged their house of leaven (sin)

Both feasts are foretold appointments of the LORD Jesus Christ...shadows of what was going to be fulfilled in the next few days

In this season of the feasts of the LORD, the chief priests and scribes
(and elders/Sanhedrin) are looking for a way to capture and murder...
the Lamb of God Who came to take away the sin of the world

Their methods (craft, deceit, trickery, subtility) are of the devil the hunter
(Gen 3:1, 1 Peter 5:8)

Their will is murder...the will of the devil the murderer (John 3:4, John 8:44)

Their timing is motivated by the *m.o.* of the devil the deceiver

- selfish ambition (John 11:47-51)
- fear...of man, not of God

Luke 22:1-2 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh,
which is called the Passover. And the chief priests
and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they
feared the people

Whose plan will be executed for this, the epicenter of human history –
God's or man's or the devil's?!

Now we go to the Gospel of John for the anointing of Jesus

John 12:2-8

v2-3 There they made Him a supper:

Where?

Bethany...v1

There are 4 days in the white space between v1 and v2

At whose house in Bethany?

This Gospel does not say, so hold that thought

Yet this Gospel tells us some of those who are there – Martha, Lazarus, and Mary

Mary had a pound of ointment of spikenard, a very costly and perfumed
ointment

She anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping His feet with her hair, filling the house with
the very powerful fragrance

Which Mary/Miriam (a very common Jewish name, of which there are 6 in NT)
anointed Jesus is, remarkably, a point of confusion debated by “scholars”
Many believe this Mary is Mary Magdalene

Why is the confusion and debate remarkable?

Ch 11:1-2

Scripture plainly says which Mary – Mary of Bethany,
sister of Martha and Lazarus

Clarity comes by studying all 4 Gospel accounts, the events in
chronological order

Where is Martha?

Always busy, serving...of course

Where is Mary?

At the feet of Jesus...of course

Where is Lazarus?

At rest, healthy, alive, with Jesus (post-Ch 11)

v4-5 Judas...sold...given to the poor:

Everyone in the house could smell the perfumed ointment when Mary anointed
her Lord

Judas Iscariot

- Simon's son
- who should/intended to/purposed to/was about to betray Jesus

objected to what Mary had done

Why was this ointment not sold...monetized

for 300 pence...300 denarius, 300 days wages (he knew his prices, huh?!)

and given to the poor...so holy and sanctimonious, such a man after
God's own heart!

But in the Gospel written about 30 years after the other 3, we learn...

v6 not that he cared...was a thief:

Judas' heart was NOT after God's own heart (care for the poor) but was all about
himself and the money

He is trying to cover his covetousness with pious self-righteousness

Judas carried the money bag, money for the ministry of Jesus Christ

And his "hand was in the till"!

He was serving himself and enriching himself from donations to
Jesus' ministry!

His heart is after the heart of the devil!

John 6:70

Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a
devil?

v7-8 Let her alone...my burying:

Jesus, who knew v6 at the time of His anointing, defends one who

- He loves and loves Him (Ch 11:5, Luke 10:38-42)
- has heard and believes what He has said is about to happen – betrayed to be crucified this Passover (Matt 26:2)

Does Mary of Bethany understand it? No

Does she believe what Jesus said? Yes

Mary has faith (in Jesus, in the Word of God)

vs

knowledge (her capacity to reason and understand),
and is acting on her faith

Judas Iscariot ripped into Mary of Bethany

Jesus rebukes Judas and defends Mary

Leave her alone.

She has kept/guarded/reserved this costly ointment for the day of My burial.

Foretold by Simeon in the Temple on the day of His presentation
(Luke 2:34-35)

Foretold by Jesus Himself 5x

The poor are always with you...I am not.

Bodily only for another 45 days

After that He will be “taking a journey into a far country” as
He has repeatedly taught this final visit to Jerusalem

1. Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19:11-27)

v11-14

2. Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (Matt 21:33-40)

v38

But when the husbandmen saw the son, they
said among themselves, This is the heir;
come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his
inheritance

3. Parable of the Talents (Matt 25:14-30)

This exhortation by Jesus cannot be used as justification for
neglecting the poor

It must be understood that Jesus must always be pre-eminent in our
hearts...the reason we minister to the poor
(in body and spirit)

Deut 15:11 For the poor shall never cease out of the land:
therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open
thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to
thy needy, in thy land.

Let's pick up some more information in Matthew's account

Matt 26:6-13

v6 in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper:

The Gospel of John did not tell us which house was the supper for Jesus.

The Gospels of Matthew and Mark tell us it was in the house of Simon the leper.

I presume Jesus previously had healed Simon "no longer" the leper...

Who is Simon the leper?

The father of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (John 12:2-3)?

Is the healing of their father the reason for their love for Jesus?

The father of Judas Iscariot (John 12:4)?

Another Simon?

Simon is another very common Jewish name...

1. a fisherman and apostle (John 1:40-42, Matt 10:2)
2. an apostle (Matt 10:4)
3. a half-brother of Jesus (Matt 13:55)
4. a Pharisee (Luke 7:36-40)
5. a leper (Matt 26:6 and Mark 14:3)
6. the father of Judas Iscariot (John 12:4, John 13:2)
7. a cross-bearer (Matt 27:32)
8. a sorcerer (Acts 8:9)
9. a tanner (Acts 10:6)

We do not know more than what the Word of God says...

this Simon is Simon the leper

Anything else we add is speculation

v7 a woman...very precious ointment...His head:

Which woman?

Mary of Bethany (John 11:2, John 12:3)

Mary had a perfume vase of very valuable perfumed ointment

(not identified as spikenard as in John 12:3)

and she poured it on Jesus'...head

In John 12:3 we learned she poured it on His feet and wiped it with her hair

Matt 26 says head, making no mention of His feet and her hair

Is this a contradiction?

Which is it – the anointing of Jesus was on His head or His feet?

What does the Word of God say?

John 12 – feet

Matt 26 and Mark 14 – head

Therefore, according to the Word of God – head AND feet

No contradiction

2 perspectives taken together to give the complete picture

“Which is it” is a biased question, biased by human reasoning that the anointing must be one OR the other, when Scripture says “AND”

Do we believe what God has said (faith) or do we believe according to our ability to reason and understand (knowledge)?

Note: a clue, perhaps, is “as He sat at meat”

Reclining on a couch as was the cultural custom,
not sitting on a chair as we do

v8-9 disciples...indignation...waste:

The disciples (“they”) were very displeased with this woman (Mary of Bethany) and judged her actions to be wasteful.

Such a valuable item could have been used to help a lot of poor people, after all!

According to the Gospel of John, it was Judas Iscariot who spoke

v10-12 Why trouble...good work...on my body...memorial:

When Jesus was aware of their (“them”, “ye”) displeasure and judgmentalism, He comes to “the woman’s” defense.

He even commends her for the good work of anointing His **body**
(head AND feet) for burial.

v13 this gospel shall be preached...memorial for her:
 Jesus adds (not recorded in John) that

Wherever this gospel...1 Cor 15:3-4

is preached in the whole world...Matt 28:18-20, Rom 10:9-17

also this will be told for a memorial of her...a reminder to us of the faith
of this (unnamed in Matt and Mark) woman, who believed
what Jesus said (v2)
rather than what she understood or wanted to believe
(ala the 12)

She did it for Jesus, not for herself...
 honoring Him while not understanding His words
Unlike Judas Iscariot, who was in it for himself

Why is she unnamed?
The memorial of her faith is more important than her name.
Whose name is important?!

Now to Mark's account

Mark 14:3-9

v3-5 spikenard...on his head...indignation within themselves...murmured against her:
 Again in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper
 As in John 12:3 but not in Matt 26:7, the ointment is identified as spikenard
 As in Matt 26:7 but unlike John 12:3, a woman (Mary of Bethany) poured the
 ointment on Jesus' head

And "some" (of the disciples) had indignation within themselves for her doing
such a wasteful thing with something worth 300 pence (John 12:5);
 Judas Iscariot was NOT the only one!
 More than just Judas was annoyed and angry with her and blamed
 her for doing something wrong
 Others were thinking it but it was Judas Iscariot who spoke his
 indignation

v6-8 whensoever ye will ye may do them good...she has done what she could:
This echoes John's account..."Let her alone" (John 12:7)

And it reads much like Matthew's account,
including "ye" (Matt 26:10)
but adding:

You can help the poor anytime you so desire (v7)...always
She has done what she could (v8)...
she has done according to her ability to anoint His body
before and for His burial

v9 memorial:

A reminder, so let's remember

Mary of Bethany's anointing of Jesus' body...head AND feet...for burial before
the fulfillment of the Passover feast is a reminder to us of her faith...
believed what He said (Matt 26:2)
rather than
what she understood or what she wanted to believe (ala the 12)

The memorial of her faith is more important than her name
She did it for Jesus, not for herself...
to honor Him vs honor Self
Unlike Judas Iscariot, who was in it for himself
(whose name is also ALWAYS remembered!)

Application

Faith

Believe what Jesus/The Word of God has said, recorded, and preserved
rather than

Believe what

- we understand
- we want to believe
 - pet doctrines
 - pre-conceived ideas
 - false doctrines

Obey/Do

To honor Jesus vs honor Self
Col 3:23
Acts 4:12
1 Cor 1:31