

Day 1

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

¹ Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some sly way to arrest Jesus and kill him. ² "But not during the Feast," they said, "or the people may riot."

John 12:1-2 ¹ Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him...

Q1. Some accuse the Bible of being inconsistent. How should we explain the “inconsistency” of the Bible between John 12:1 “six days” and Mark 14:1 “two days”? (Might there be a several days interval between Jesus’ arrival and the dinner?)

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The Hebrew or Jewish calendar is complex. While years are based on a solar year (~365 days), the months of the Hebrew calendar are based on the lunar cycle (~29.5-days per month), with a ‘leap’ month (Adar 1, plus at times an Adar 2) added to synchronize the lunar cycles with the solar years. The names of months include Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, and Adar. [Source: https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2263459/jewish/Hebrew-Months.htm?gclid=EA1aIQobChMI5_TuJOw9QIVExLnCh1uigBoEAAAYBCAAEgIjNPD_BwE]

In John 12:1 we read ‘six days before the Passover’: “The Passover began at sunset on Nisan 14: six days before [the 14th] would bring us to Nisan 8. Assuming the year to be A. D. 30, Nisan 8 would be Friday, March 31. We may suppose, therefore, that Jesus and His disciples arrived at Bethany on the Friday evening a little after the Sabbath had commenced, having performed not more than ‘a Sabbath-Day’s journey’ on the Sabbath, the bulk of the journey being over before the day of rest began. But it must be remembered that this chronology is tentative, not certain.” [© Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/john/12-1.htm>]

Q2. What is the Passover?

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Q3. Why is the Passover important to Jews?

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Q4. Why might the Passover be important to Believers in Jesus?

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Exodus 12:1-3a, 7, 11b-14 [Passover] ¹ The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ² “This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. ³ Tell the whole community of Israel [the Jewish slaves in Egypt] . . . ⁷ Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. . . ^{11b} Eat it in haste; it is the Lord’s Passover. ¹² “On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. ¹³ The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt. ¹⁴ “This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord — a lasting ordinance.”

Exodus 12:17 [Following the 'Passover' judgment, the Egyptians immediately expelled the Jewish slaves from Egypt. In this Exodus verse the Lord continued to instruct] "Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come."

Q5. Why might the Jewish leaders be frightened of the people ("the people may riot")? (Vs. 2)

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A Bible commentator Alexander MacLaren in his "Expositions Of Holy Scripture" wrote an essay about this 'dinner' event (John 12:1 - John 12:11). While his essay is too long to duplicate here, please consider reading his commentary:

<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/macclaren/john/12.htm>.

³ While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.

John 12:3 Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume...

Q6. Did Jesus do something special for Lazarus the brother of Mary and Martha? What?

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⁴ Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? ⁵ It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly.

John 12:4-5 ⁴ But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ⁵ "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages."

Q7. How do you think Mary felt?

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Q8. Is this the treatment you would expect from the disciples who had been following Jesus for the past three years?

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Q9. Were the disciples justified in making their rebuke?

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John 12:6-11 ⁶ [Judas Iscariot] did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

⁷ "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. ⁸ You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

⁹ Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, ¹¹ for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.

Day 2

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⁶ "Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷ The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me.

Q10. If you were a disciple, how would you have felt at the Lord’s rebuke and His acceptance of Mary’s action?

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Q11. Wouldn’t it be a good thing to have additional money in the money sack to help meet the needs of the destitute?

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⁸ She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. ⁹ I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

Q12. Jesus is now talking about His burial. Do you think the disciples understood?

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Q13. If you were Mary, how would you now feel hearing the Lord’s words that my action “would be preached throughout the world”?

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¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. ¹¹ They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So, he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

Q14. Why would Judas Iscariot be so angry? So vengeful?

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Q15. What kind of a Messiah were the Jewish people expecting? Could this have contributed to Judas’ anger?

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Q16. Why did Jesus put Judas in charge of the moneybag?

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Q17. What does sovereign mean to you? Was Jesus sovereign? (See John 13:3)

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John 13:3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;

Day 3

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Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

²⁷ “You will all fall away,” Jesus told them, “for it is written: “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.” [Zechariah 13:7]

Zechariah 13:7 [written about 520 BC] ⁷ "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!" declares the LORD Almighty. "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones.

Q18. Who does “shepherd” refer to?

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Q19. Who might be the “sheep”?

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John 16:32 [Jesus said,] “But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.”

²⁸ But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

Q20. Do you think the disciples understood His comment “after I have risen”?

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²⁹ Peter declared, “Even if all fall away, I will not.”

Q21. If you had to pick a human trait (for example, humble, or prideful or ??) that described Peter, what trait would you select?

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Q22. Is the trait you selected a sinful trait? Why or why not?

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³⁰ "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "today -- yes, tonight -- before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times."

Q23. How do you think Peter felt when he heard the Teacher prophecy “you ... will disown me three times”?

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³¹ But Peter insisted emphatically, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the others said the same.

Q24. Do you think Peter understood the depth of the sacrifice that Jesus was about to experience?

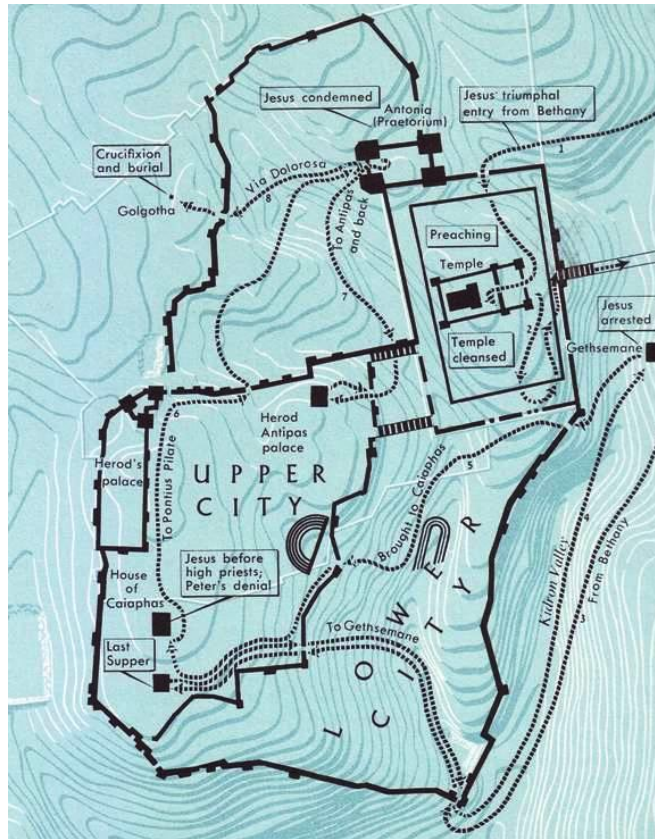
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Day 4

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Gethsemane

(Gethsemane is located on the east/right side of the map, near the temple)



<https://www.jesus-story.net/the-road-to-calvary/>

³² They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” ³³ He took Peter, James, and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled.

Q25. Why did He separate the disciples by singling out Peter, James, and John to follow Him?

Q26. Why do you think “He began to be deeply distressed and troubled”?

Q27. Referring to John 13:3 (following question 17), if a person knew that something bad was going to happen, how would the typical human react? What might they feel?

Matthew 26:36-44

³⁶ Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."
³⁹ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."
⁴⁰ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹ "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."
⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."
⁴³ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So, he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

³⁴ "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."

Q28. Why do you think Jesus was so distressed?

Luke 22:44 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

Q29. Why did Jesus want His disciples to keep watch?

Day 5

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³⁵ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

“Abba” is defined as “a term expressing warm affection and filial confidence. It has no perfect equivalent in our language.” (Easton’s Bible Dictionary, 1897) Perhaps, a child’s love and awe expressed in “Daddy!” approximates the feeling and relationship of “Abba”.

Q30. Is Jesus arguing with The Father? Is Jesus still obedient?

Q31. Through prayer can we argue with the Father?

Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

James 1:5-8 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

Q32. Does God want us to complain to others about, for example, our perception of His silence as we struggle in this world?

³⁷ Then, he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Simon," he said to Peter, "are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

Q33. Is there a lesson for us from Jesus' command to Peter, "pray so that you will not fall into temptation"?

³⁹ Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. ⁴⁰ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

⁴¹ Returning the third time, he said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

Q34. Who was the "betrayer"?

Q35. Who was coming with the betrayer?

Day 6

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Jesus Arrested

⁴³ Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.

Q36. What time of the day was it?

Q37. Why did the religious leaders pick that time of day?

Q38. To summarize, where were they and what had Jesus been doing?

⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard."

Q39. In that culture and at that time in history, what do you think a "kiss" signified?

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Romans 16:16 [The Apostle Paul wrote] Greet one another with a holy kiss.

⁴⁵ Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁴⁶ The men seized Jesus and arrested him. ⁴⁷ Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant [Malchus] of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

Q40. Do we know who struck with the sword?

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Q41. If you were one of the Chief Priests' "crowd", what would you have been thinking?

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Luke 22:51 But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear [Malchus] and healed him.

⁴⁸ "Am I leading a rebellion," said Jesus, "that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? ⁴⁹ Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." ⁵⁰ Then everyone deserted him and fled.

Q42. Why didn't they arrest Jesus in the temple courts?

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Q43. What did Jesus mean when He said, "But the Scriptures must be fulfilled"?

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Q44. Who was "everyone" referred to in verse 50?

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⁵¹ A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, ⁵² he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

Since verses 51-52 provide the only reference in the Gospels to a "naked, young man" at the arrest of Jesus, it is believed that this young man may have been the author of this Gospel: John Mark.

Q45. If we think passages within the Holy Bible are contradictory, how should we resolve those contradictions?

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The Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John and provide additional insights to these events from other eyewitnesses.

John 18:1-11

- ¹ When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it.
- ² Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. ³ So Judas came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns, and weapons.
- ⁴ Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"
- ⁵ "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.
- ⁶ "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.
- ⁷ Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?"
- And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."
- ⁸ "I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go." ⁹ This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me." [See John 6:39]
- ¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)
- ¹¹ Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

John 6:38-39

- ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

Matthew 26:51-54

- ⁵¹ Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus, and arrested him. With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out, and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.
- ⁵² "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions* of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

* Legion: the chief subdivision of the Roman army, containing about 6,000 infantry, with a contingent of cavalry. The term does not occur in the Bible in its primary sense, but appears to have been adopted in order to express any large number with the additional concepts of military order and organization (rank).

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