


Day 1

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

Mary Anoints Jesus at Bethany

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.

Luke 10:38-42


³⁸ As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.

³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made.

She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

⁴¹ "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."


Q1. (Referencing Luke 10:42) What does Jesus mean when He states, "Mary has chosen what is better"?

 At that time, at that place, women were considered property; women served. Christ Jesus turned traditions of the culture on its head and provided equal learning opportunities for men AND women. Through this dialogue, He encouraged Mary, as well as Martha, (and all women) to listen, to learn. He commended Mary for her attention to His Words of life. Jesus wants all people – men and women, rich and poor, celebrity and servant, black and white, red and yellow – to come to Him in faith! Jesus sees all people as equal! It is Satan who exploits our innate desires to be unique, special, superior to others. We are individuals with free-will. Many times, we have to exercise our free-will and choose Christ's way or the world's way. It is easy to follow a leader, but – bottom-line – you and I choose. You and I own our actions, and our choices will be judged. What do our actions suggest? Who do you follow? To whom do you contribute time and money? What political party do you generally support? Are you a one issue voter? Do you see all people as your equal? Do you embrace the "Great Commission" (Matt 28:16-20)? So. Are you Christ's? Or Satan's?

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

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.

Q2. Why did Mary apply the nard to His feet (versus His head or hands) and then wipe His feet with her hair?

 Definition: Spikenard: also called nard, nardin, and muskroot, is a flowering plant of the Valerian family that grows in the Himalayas of Nepal, China, and India. It is used in the manufacture of an intensely aromatic amber-colored essential oil. It was highly regarded in India as a perfume, health-supporting herb, and skin tonic. Prized at the time of Christ, it was used by Mary of Bethany to anoint the feet of Jesus before the Last Supper. This is relaxing and soothing oil for the skin. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spikenard]



Spikenard

 The following commentary is an excerpt from *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/john/12-3.htm>

“Mary took about a pint of pure nard”

“Here, again, St. John alone gives the name of her whom St. Matthew and St. Mark call “a woman,” and here, too, she is true to the earlier character as we have it drawn in St. Luke (Luke 10:40; Luke 10:42). From this passage also we know that it was a “pound” of ointment which she took. The other accounts tell us that it was an “alabaster box.” This pound was the Greek litra, the Latin “libra,” the pound of twelve ounces.

“She poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair”

“St. Matthew and St. Mark both state that she anointed His head. This was the usual custom (see Luke 7:46 ↓, and Psalm 23:5 ↓); but St. John remembers that the act of love went beyond that of common esteem, in the depth of its gratitude and reverence, and anointed the feet, and wiped them with her own hair.

“The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume”

“The ointment was imported from the East in sealed flasks, which were broken when it was used. The strong perfume then escaped, and spread through the house (Mark 14:3).”

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

Psalm 23:5 [from the oft quoted 23rd Psalm]

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Luke 7:46

You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet.

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."

Q3. Was Mary's gift expensive?

Yes? How do we know?
No?

Q4. Why did the Lord Jesus allow Mary to apply such costly perfume to His feet, to His head? (Jump ahead to verse 7 to help with the answer.)

⁶ He 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.

Q5. Why did Jesus allow Judas Iscariot to be one of His followers, a disciple?

⁷ "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial.

Q6. What was Mary to "save . . . for the day of my burial"?

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

⁸ You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

Q7. What did Jesus mean, "you do not always have me"?

Q8. Jesus said, "You will always have the poor among you". Since the Messiah prophesied that poor people will always be among us, did He mean that it is pointless to help the poor?

Mark 12:28-31

²⁸ One of the teachers of the law [Jewish religious leader] came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked Him, 'Of all the commandments, which is the most important?'


²⁹ 'The most important one,' answered Jesus, 'is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.'

James 2:14-17 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good [or benefit] is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

Day 2

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

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

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.

Q9. How would you describe the atmosphere around the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus?

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.

Q10. Why do you think the people believed Lazarus (“for on account of him”) about Jesus?


Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a


The Triumphal Entry

¹² The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. ¹³ They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel!"

Q11. Do you think the people expected a military conqueror or a servant who was willing to give up His life for the people He loved?

¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, ¹⁵ "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt." [Zechariah 9:9]

 Zechariah was a prophet and his book is part of the Old Testament canon (collection). During Zechariah's lifetime, he received a vision in which he saw the Messiah – "your" King – coming, seated on a young donkey, a colt. Zechariah's words included "your king" (not a king); the pronoun 'your' emphasized the coming Jewish King, the Messiah.

 "seated on a donkey's colt"

"Although it is certain that the ancient Jews understood this prophecy of the Messiah, yet that this divine person, this king of Israel, should come unto them riding upon a [donkey], which, notwithstanding that in former ages patriarchs and judges thought it no disgrace to ride upon them, yet was then looked upon as below the dignity of any person of eminence, must, at the uttering of this prophecy, have appeared a very mysterious and improbable circumstance. But we who know that the only time when the Lord Jesus entered publicly into Jerusalem, he thought proper, as an example of humility and meekness, and of indifference to worldly pomp, to ride upon a young [donkey], or colt; and that, at the same time, the whole multitude were seized with such a sudden and extraordinary impulse of joy, that they spread their garments in the way, and cut down branches of trees and strowed them in the way, shouting unanimously, HOSANNAH, BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD — we, that know this remarkable circumstance, cannot but be greatly struck with this prophecy, as an admirable instance of the divine prescience, and a strong proof of the truth of Christianity." [©about 1880, *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/zechariah/9-9.htm>]

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

¹⁶ At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

Q12. What does “after Jesus was glorified” mean to you?

Q13. Do you think the Apostles had to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit in order to “realize that these things had been written about him”? (Note: this reference to the “written” things refers to the Old Testament canon.)

Q14. Do you think the Holy Spirit helped the apostles remember the “things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him”?


Yes? Why?
No?

John 16:13-14

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

Day 3

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¹⁷ Now the crowd that was with him, when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to spread the word.

Q15. What method(s) did the “crowd . . . [use] to spread the word” (or *bear witness* to Christ Jesus)?

John 12:17-19 [The Message (MSG)]

The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, was there giving eyewitness accounts. It was because they had spread the word of this latest God-sign that the crowd swelled to a welcoming parade.

The Pharisees took one look and threw up their hands: “It’s out of control. The world’s in a stampede after him.”

¹⁸ Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him. ¹⁹ So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

Matthew 21:1-11

¹ As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: ⁵ “Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”


⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them.

⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Hosanna in the highest!”

¹⁰ When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” ¹¹ The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

Day 4

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


Some Greeks Seek Jesus

²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast.

Q16. Why is it important that “Greeks” were named?


Q17. Would these “Greeks” be converts to Judaism?

Yes? Why?
No?

 The Greek worshippers were non-Jews (Gentiles); they could have been proselytes (a new convert to Judaism), or people, who wanted to participate in worship and the associated festivities. That said, this act demonstrates that, while Jesus primarily ministered to His fellow-Jews, His ministry was for all people – Jews and Gentiles, alike!

²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus."

Q18. Why did the Greeks seek a disciple, instead of going directly to Jesus?

 Note: “Philip” is a Greek name. Note: this is the last time the Greeks are mentioned. There is no record of the conversation they had with the Son of God. However, the Greeks were presumably present for Jesus’ statement in verse 32, when He said, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” By implication, Jesus meant all people Jews and Gentiles alike.

²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

Q19. Why didn't Philip go directly to Jesus?

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

²³ Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Q20. What did Jesus mean, when He said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified"?
[glorified: To give glory, honor, or high praise; exalt] After all, in a few hours Jesus will be crucified.

²⁴ I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

Q21. If you look at a seed, you know there is life within the hull. What does Jesus mean when He states, "a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies"?

Q22. Why does the seed, the "kernel of wheat", "remain . . . a single seed"?

Q23. What does this mean: "if [the seed] dies, it produces many seeds"?

²⁵ The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Q24. How would you explain the meaning behind verse 25?


Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

Q25. Who is the servant to whom Jesus refers, “where I am, my servant also will be”?

Q26. How will the “Father . . . honor the one who serves me”?

Day 5

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

The Son of Man Must Be Lifted Up

²⁷ "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

Q27. Why did Jesus say that His “heart is troubled”?

²⁸ Father, glorify your name!" ^{29a} Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Q28. Why did the Father glorify His Name?

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

^{29b} The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

Q29. Why do you think some of the eye-witnesses interpreted the voice as “thunder” and others heard an angel speaking? Shouldn’t this incredible event have a consistent conclusion?

³⁰ Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine.

Q30. Why did Jesus state, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine”? Why was the voice for the eye-witnesses?

³¹ Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.

Q31. Who is being judged?

Q32. Who is the “prince” and why is he “driven out”?

Q33. Is the “prince” still ruling the world in our present day?

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

³² But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."


John 12:20

Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast.

Q34. Since Jesus normally ministered to His Jewish brethren, how significant was it that Greek Gentiles were in the audience as Jesus said, "I . . . will draw all [people] to myself"?

John 3:14-15

¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

 John 3:14-15 refers to the ever-defiant Israelites, who were forced to wander in the desert for forty years. They continued to sin against God by complaining and testing God's patience – over and over. After a particularly bad outburst which Scripture reported in Numbers 21:5 "[the Jews] spoke against God and against Moses, and said, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!' " God judged and sent venomous snakes among the Jews. Moses interceded on behalf of the Jews, God listened, and modified His judgment – see Numbers 21:8-9 (↓)

Numbers 21:8-9

⁸ The Lord said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live."

⁹ So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived.


Q35. What does the phrase "lifted up" mean?

³³ He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

Q36. How did Jesus' Words "show the kind of death he was going to die"?

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a


Day 6

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

³⁴ The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?"

Q37. Why were the people confused?

Q38. Can you explain the meaning of the phrase "Son of Man"?

 The term "son of man" occurs a number of times in the Old Testament. There are several references to the "son of man" in the Psalms and one that is relevant.

God refers to the prophet Ezekiel as a "son of man." Since history repeats itself, there are parallels between Ezekiel's prophetic visions compared to that of our Savior Jesus – the son of man.

Additionally, the prophet Daniel had a vision in which he saw the "son of man".

The religious leaders of Jesus' time would have known of these passages and studied them. They would have recognized the Messiah if they had not been so blinded by their own arrogance and desires to maintain their upper class standing in society.

I apologize for the number of citations that follow. As you, the student, read these, please consider the parallels between these Old Testament passages and that of our Savior.


Psalm 80:17 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

But let your hand be on the man of your right hand, the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself!

Ezekiel 2:1-7 [English Standard Version (ESV)]


¹ And he said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you." ² And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. ³ And he said to me, "Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day. ⁴ The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I send you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God.' ⁵ And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) they will know that a prophet has been among them. ⁶ And you, son of man, be not afraid of them, nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions [or scorpion plants]. Be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. ⁷ And you shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear, for they are a rebellious house.

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

 We consider Christ Jesus the Word (John 1:1, 1:14, 1:17). Therefore, He is the Old Testament. That said, His primary ministry was to the Jews to whom He spoke, ministered, taught, and argued. Please read Ezekiel 3:4-10 (↓).


Ezekiel 3:4-10 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

⁴ And [God] said to me, “Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with my words to them. ⁵ For you are not sent to a people of foreign speech and a hard language, but to the house of Israel — ⁶ not to many peoples of foreign speech and a hard language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I sent you to such, they would listen to you. ⁷ But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me: because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. ⁸ Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads. ⁹ Like emery harder than flint have I made your forehead. Fear them not, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house.” ¹⁰ Moreover, he said to me, “Son of man, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart, and hear with your ears. ¹¹ And go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God,’ whether they hear or refuse to hear.”

 We studied the statement of Christ Jesus’ from John 3:34 in which He said, “For the one whom God has sent [Christ Jesus] speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.” Therefore, Ezekiel 3:17 (↓) provides the source of the Words of Ezekiel, which parallels that of our Lord Jesus.

Ezekiel 3:17 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

“Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me.

 There are parallels between this Ezekiel 3:24-26 (↓) passage and that of Christ’s torture and crucifixion.

Ezekiel 3:24-26 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

²⁴ But the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and he spoke with me and said to me, “Go, shut yourself within your house. ²⁵ And you, O son of man, behold, cords will be placed upon you, and you shall be bound with them, so that you cannot go out among the people. ²⁶ And I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be mute and unable to reprove them, for they are a rebellious house.

Ezekiel 11:4 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

Therefore, prophesy against them; prophesy, O son of man.”

Ezekiel 12:2 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

“Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a rebellious house, who have eyes to see, but see not, who have ears to hear, but hear not, for they are a rebellious house.

Ezekiel 17:2 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

“Son of man, set forth an allegory and tell it to the Israelites as a parable.

Ezekiel 20:3 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

“Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God, Is it to inquire of me that you come? As I live, declares the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you.

Lesson 17: John 12:1-36^a

Daniel 7:13-14 [The Message (MSG)]

¹³⁻¹⁴ “I saw a human form, a son of man, arriving in a whirl of clouds. He came to The Old One and was presented to him. He was given power to rule — all the glory of royalty. Everyone — race, color, and creed — had to serve him. His rule would be forever, never ending. His kingly rule would never be replaced.

³⁵ Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. ^{36a} Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light."

Q39. Who (or what) is the source of the “light”?

John 1:4-10

⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

⁶ There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹ The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

Q40. What does the “light” represent?

Q41. What does “darkness” represent?

Q42. How would a person become “sons of light”?

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