

- I) V1-2 INTRO: After two days it was the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened
- II) Ch 13 was an answer to questions that had been asked of Him by His men  
After Jesus left the Temple, the men pointed out its beauty
- III) As we have already seen, Jesus pointed out that it would be destroyed  
This obviously bothered His men, so they asked Him several questions  
When will these things be? What will be the sign that these things will be fulfilled? What will be the sign of Your coming and the end of the age?
- IV) The rest of the chapter was filled with His answer to their questions  
It is the longest recorded answer to any question He was asked
- V) After answering the question, Mark returns to why Jesus came to planet earth  
He came that He might redeem us by laying down His life
- VI) Jesus is in the last days of His ministry on earth  
He is about to fulfill the image of the Passover Lamb by giving up His life
- VII) This is what the last Old Testament prophet John had said of Him  
Jn 1:29 Behold the **Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world
- VIII) The death of Jesus on the cross is the heart of the last chapters of Mark  
He had recently predicted His death and its purpose  
Jn 12:31-32 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, **if I am lifted up** from the earth **will draw all peoples to Myself**
- IX) Mark now concentrates on the death of Jesus on the cross and its purpose
- X) V1 After two days it was the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened bread  
The Passover is observed on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan (March/early April)  
It celebrates the night in Egypt that the Angel of death passed over Jewish households that had sprinkled blood on the doorposts (Ex 12:22-23)
- XI) Unleavened bread began the next day and lasted a full week  
It commemorated Israel's exodus out of Egyptian bondage

I) They were part of Israel's three major feasts

Dt 16:16 **Three times a year** all your males shall appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will choose: at the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**, at the **Feast of Weeks**, and at the **Feast of Booths**. They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.

II) Again, **Passover**: A lamb was slain and eaten on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Nisan (the first month of the Jewish year) in memory of the day on which their fathers preparing to depart from Egypt were commanded by God to slay and eat a lamb, and to sprinkle their door posts with its blood, that the destroying angel, seeing the blood, might pass over their dwellings

III) The Feast of Unleavened Bread referred to the bread that was hastily made when Israel fled Egypt: Passover lasted only one day but it was immediately followed by the seven days of unleavened bread: Passover and the feast were combined to last 8 days

IV) Passover was intended to point to Jesus

1 Pe 1:18-19 You know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

V) V1 The chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him

Notice: That they might take Him **by trickery** and **put Him to death**

VI) This was not necessary because Jesus came to **voluntarily** lay down His life

Heb 2:9 We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels *for the suffering of death*, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death **for every man**.

VII) This was a secret meeting held by the Jewish High Council, the Sanhedrin

Ps 2:1-3 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us.

- I) Jesus had recently entered Jerusalem to an enthusiastic welcome  
They did this in secret because they didn't want to inflame His followers  
Lu 22:2 The chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill Him *for they feared the people*
- II) This meeting took place in the courtyard of Caiaphas the high priest  
Mt 26:3-4 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him.
- III) Caiaphas desired to kill Jesus because Jesus was a threat  
After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead Caiaphas **called for** His death  
Jn 11:47-50 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. "What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. If we let Him go on like this, everyone will believe in Him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." Then one of them, named **Caiaphas**, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that *one man die for the people* than that the whole nation perish!"
- III) V2 But, they said, Not during the feast lest there be an uproar of the people  
Jesus was extremely popular, so they wanted to do it with caution
- IV) They were unaware their plan to kill Jesus fit in with the plan of salvation  
Jn 12:24 Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.
- V) V3-9 And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper as He sat (reclined)
- VI) This is a **flashback** to the previous **Saturday**  
John records the same event in his gospel, and gives us the day it occurred  
Jn 12:1-2 **Six days before the Passover**, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him.

- I) Why would Mark insert this story here?  
This contrasts the **hatred** of the Sanhedrin with the **love** of Jesus' disciples
- II) The people **loved Jesus**, but the religious leaders hated Him for no reason  
Jn 15:25 But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, '**They hated Me without a cause.**'
- III) Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of a man known as Simon the Leper  
Bethany was a small village just outside of Jerusalem, to the east  
In this village lived several disciples, including a man named Simon
- IV) Simon was a **former** leper who had been cleansed by Jesus  
If Simon was still a leper, he would not have had a home in town  
Lev 13:46 (A leper) is unclean and he shall **dwell alone**; his dwelling shall be **outside the camp**
- V) Jn 12:2 says There they **made Him a supper**  
Simon was hosting Jesus, making Him the guest of honor in his home
- VI) Why was he doing this?  
**He** may be giving a supper in gratitude for Jesus cleansing him of leprosy  
**Or**, it may be in gratitude for the recent raising of Lazarus from the dead
- VII) Thankfulness is always the mark of a genuine believer  
Ps 9:1-2 I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.  
Ps 105:1 Oh give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples.
- VIII) V3 A woman came having an *alabaster* flask of **very costly** oil of spikenard  
Jesus was reclining, and she approached from behind and anointed Him
- IX) Mark leaves this woman unnamed, but John supplies her name for us  
She is Mary, the younger sister of Martha and Lazarus

- I) Jn 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.
- II) In an act of worship she poured this costly perfume upon the head of Jesus  
She may have had a clearer perception of what Jesus was about to do
- III) It may be that she could see what His beloved disciples refused to see (V8)  
The disciples did not want to accept that Jesus was about to die  
The thought of Him dying was not something they could come to grips with
- IV) When Jesus spoke to them of His death, they often resisted His words  
They could not bring themselves to accept it  
Mt 16:21-22 Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; *this shall not happen to You!*
- V) It seems Mary accepted what the others could not receive
- VI) V3 A woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard  
What we are about to observe is a genuine act of sincere worship
- VII) The fact is: Love for Jesus is always revealed by actions (V6)  
This is because genuine faith and love for Jesus is demonstrated  
Jas 2:26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead.
- VIII) V6 Notice how Jesus said she has done **a good work** for Me
- IX) V3 A woman came having an alabaster flask of **very costly oil** of spikenard  
On another occasion a poor widow gave God an offering of two mites  
This time a woman gives a very expensive gift to Jesus
- X) It was extremely **costly** (excellent; very precious; of surpassing value)  
V5 Reveals its value: 300 denarii, equivalent to **a full year's wages**

I) Her worship of the Lord was **costly** (Precious, of surpassing value)

This gives us insight into worship: True worship incurs sacrifice

2 Co 8:1-5 We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in **a wealth of generosity** on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and **beyond** their means, **of their own accord**, begging us earnestly for the favor<sup>2</sup> of taking part in the relief of the saints—and this, not as we expected, but **they gave themselves first to the Lord** and then by the will of God to us.

II) Mary was genuinely grateful to Jesus for all He had done

For her, such an expensive gift was proper in light of all He was to her

2 Co 9:7 Let each one *give* as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

III) Her extravagant gift revealed her depth of love and understanding of the Lord  
She was one who listened closely to what He had to say

IV) We see this on a different occasion

Lu 10:38-39 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet **and heard His word**.

V) It seems **she perceived** what His men refused to see

VI) V4-5 But there were some who were indignant among themselves and said  
The reaction of the disciples is interesting

There were some who **were indignant among themselves**

VII) This reaction was prompted by Judas

He had calculated its value and responded critically

Jn 12:4-6 But one of his disciples, **Judas Iscariot**, who was later to betray him, objected, "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money **given to the poor**? It was worth a year's wages." 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.

- I) He pretended to be concerned with care for the poor  
That fact was, he saw a great deal of money that he would lose
- II) His false charity infected the others, and they joined with him in criticizing her
- III) V4 Why was this fragrant oil wasted?  
What Jesus saw as pure worship Judas saw as a waste of money
- IV) This attitude continues to this day  
Why do you go to church so often? Why do you serve? Why do you give?
- V) V5 And they criticized her sharply (indignantly scolded her)  
As often happens, this was voiced among themselves and Mary
- IV) Judas' evil influence infected the attitudes of the others  
He was a thief, but he knew how to manipulate  
Call into question the use of the money and undercut trust in Jesus
- V) V6-8 But Jesus said Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done  
Jn 12:7 Jesus said Let her alone; she has kept this for **the day of My burial**  
Mary has anticipated My death and burial, anticipating what would occur
- VI) Later, after Jesus was crucified, she returned to anoint His dead body  
She wanted Him to have a proper burial  
Mk 16:1 When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Some bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him
- VII) V7 For you have the poor with you always and whenever you wish you may  
As long as there are people there will be poverty: you can always help them  
Dt 15:11 There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore, I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land.
- VIII) **On the other hand**, I am departing soon so your priority is to worship Me  
This is what Mary is doing, and this is what you should be doing  
All *true service* begins with serving and worshipping God, first:



- I) V8 She has done **what she could** She has come beforehand to anoint  
She held nothing back that could have been dear to her  
He who has a religion that **costs** him nothing, has a religion **worth nothing**
- II) Instead, she poured out her offering **completely**, holding nothing back  
In a short time, Jesus would pour Himself out completely for us
- III) You can only give what you have, not what you wish you had  
2 Co 8:12 For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.  
She did what she could
- IV) V3 Mark says she poured it on His head  
Jn 12:3 tells us that she included His feet, wiping His feet with her hair
- V) This was an act of service and humility  
This was something **that was noticed** but not done **in order** to be noticed  
Jn 12:3 And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil
- VI) Though not done to be seen by man, it was noticed  
While some criticized, Jesus commended
- VII) Genuine worshipful sacrifice is noticed by others  
The entire house was filled with the fragrance  
2 Co 2:15-16 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other **a fragrance** from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?
- VIII) V8 She did what she could  
She couldn't prevent His death, but she could reveal the depth of her love  
She revealed her devotion, and did so in the face of criticism
- IX) V9 Assuredly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world  
Jesus pronounced a blessing on Mary's act of worship
- X) This act of worship will be spoken of throughout history, as it is now



- I) V10-11 Then Judas Iscariot one of the twelve went to the chief priests to  
Stinging from Jesus' rebuke, Judas went to the enemy to betray Jesus  
Lu 22:3-5 Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas  
went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with  
them how he might betray Jesus. They were delighted and agreed to give him  
money
- II) In contrast to loving worship, Judas went out and sold Jesus  
He made his money by selling out Jesus for the price of a slave  
Ex 21:32 If the bull gores a male or female slave, the owner must pay *thirty  
shekels of silver* to the master of the slave, and the bull must be stoned.
- III) The stage is set, and soon Jesus will die
- IV) APPLICATION: Mary could have removed the top and saved the bottle  
Instead, she offered both the bottle and the perfume to Jesus
- V) She offered perfume, and a Broken Vessel  
This is the most valuable offering we can give  
2 Co 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of  
the power may be of God and not of us.