

Lesson 1

Jesus in Bethany (Saturday)

Key Scripture Readings: Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:1-11; John 11:55-12:11

Fast Facts

- Six days before the Passover, Jesus traveled through Jericho to the home of Simon the Leper in Bethany. Other friends of Jesus (Mary, Martha, and Lazarus) were also present. Simon probably had been healed by Jesus of his leprosy before this gathering.
- Bethany was a small village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives (only a few miles from Jerusalem).
- Since the Sabbath was Saturday (and the Sabbath was a day of rest for the Jews), Jesus probably arrived in Bethany on Friday night.
- On Saturday night, a meal was prepared by Martha for Jesus and His apostles.
- As the meal progressed, Mary took an expensive bottle of perfume, poured the contents on Jesus' head and feet, and wiped His feet with her hair. The house became filled with the smell of the perfume.
- The apostles (particularly Judas) became upset because Mary didn't sell the perfume and give the money to the poor. Judas did not say this because he was concerned for the poor, but because he was a thief and carried the money bag (John 12:6).
- Jesus told the apostles to leave Mary alone. He said her actions were right and would be remembered forever (Mark 14:9). Jesus praised her for sacrificing so much to honor Him before His death on the cross!
- Then Judas left the house upset, seeking an opportunity to betray Jesus. He was glad when he found out the chief priests would give him money for his betrayal.
- Outside the house, a large crowd had gathered not only to see Jesus but also to see Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead (John 12:9).
- Meanwhile, the chief priests were planning to kill Jesus and Lazarus because so many Jews believed in Jesus because of Lazarus' resurrection (John 12:10-11).



Study Questions

1. While traveling to Jerusalem, why did Jesus stop in Bethany?
2. What does Martha do for Jesus on this occasion? Where else do we find Martha doing something like this?
3. What kind gesture does Mary do for Jesus? Why do you think Mary does this?
4. How did the apostles (particularly Judas) react to Mary's gesture?
5. How did Jesus respond to Judas' rebuke of Mary?
6. For how long did Jesus say Mary's kind gesture would be remembered?
7. What does Mary teach us about sacrificing for Jesus?
8. Who was gathered outside of the house? Why were they there?
9. What did the chief priests plan to do to Lazarus? Why?