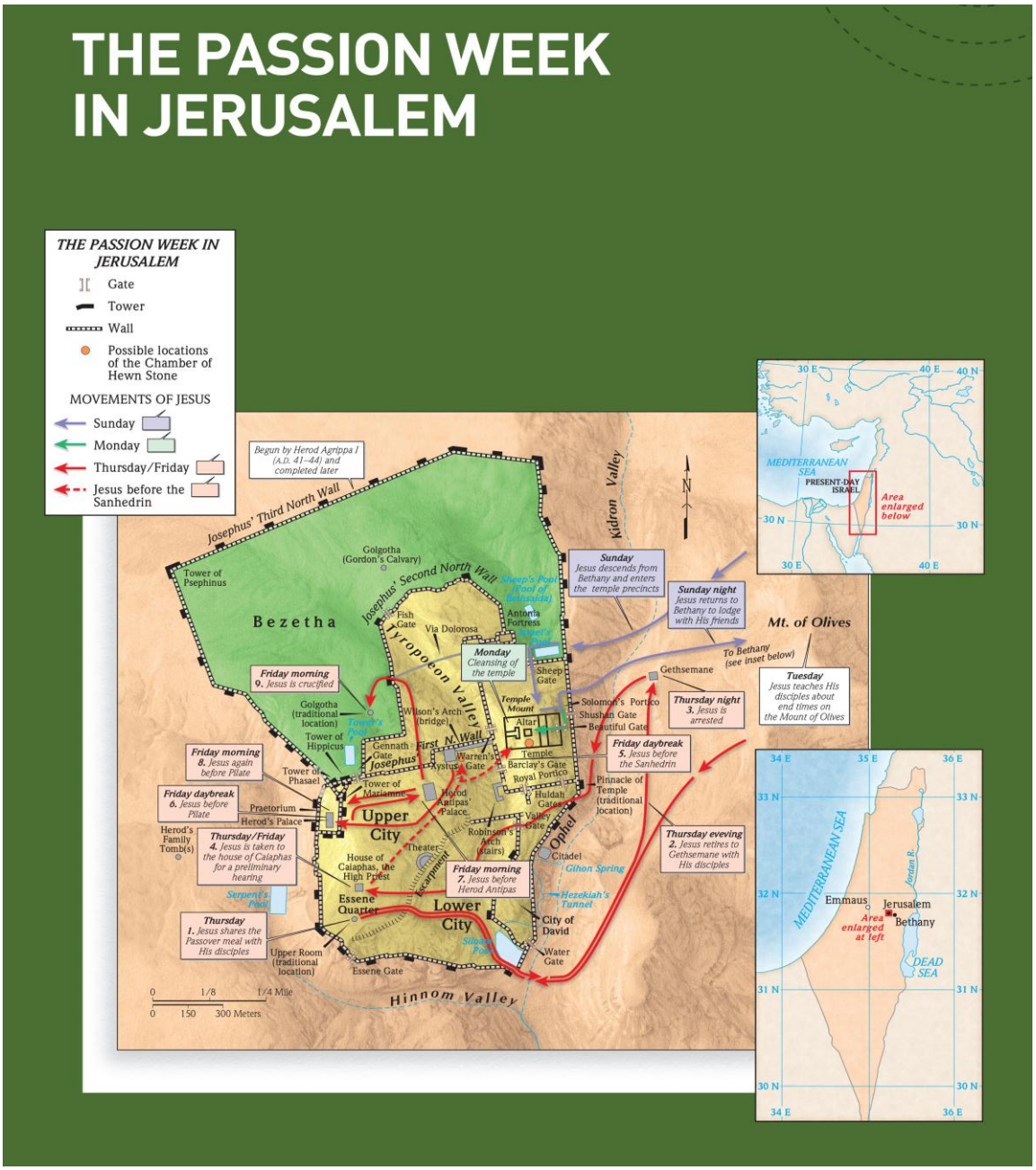
Unit II: Jesus' Private Ministry (John chapters 12-21)



The previous 11 chapters covered Jesus' public ministry which lasted about 3 years, the second half of this Gospel from chapter 12, covers His last week "Passion week"

Lesson 13 [Chapter 12]"The Triumphal Entry"

Remember:

Last lesson, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, demonstrating His power over death and declaring Himself "The Resurrection and The Life".

Lesson Goal:

Jesus is our king, following Him requires humble devotion, obedience, and a willingness to honor Him above everything else in the world.

Lesson opener:

Perfume Sniff Test: what's that smell? Collect various small containers with removable lids and fill them with different items with distinctive odors. (cinnamon, vanilla, grated orange peels, coffee, onion, soap, perfume) Have the children take turns putting on a blindfold and try to guess what the item is as the teacher removes the lid and holds it under the child's nose.

If pouring perfume on someone's feet sounds strange, wiping it up with hair probably seems even more odd. However, the story of this action by Mary was foreshadowing of Christ's preparations to go to the cross, as He is anointed for burial.

Lesson Body:

Now we are starting the events of the Holy Week.

Anointing the Lord's Feet with Spikenard 12: 1-11

After the Lord had raised Lazarus from the dead, He went to make a friendly visit to his home. It was six days before the feast of the Passover.

The family offered thanksgiving in a practical manner. The Lord was the One who had raised the head of the family from the dead. They made dinner and each of the three members of the family played a different role. Lazarus sat among those who were gathered around the Lord, and he witnessed for the One who had granted Him life. Martha served, while Mary proclaimed her love by anointing the Lord's feet.

There were two separate events of anointing with perfume. The dinner here takes place in the house of Lazarus and his sisters. The dinner mentioned in the Gospel of St Matthew

took place on the third day of the Passover week, whereas this dinner occurred six days before the Feast.



Nard was a kind of perfume made from a special herb in India. Because of transportation at that time, anything coming from as far as India would be extremely expensive. The nard was 300 denarii. How much is that worth? It's the equivalent of 300 days wage for a blue-collar worker. That is almost an entire year's worth of income!

Mary used it to anoint Jesus' feet. Yes, it is a foreshadowing of Jesus' burial. She had offered the most valuable thing she owned to honor the Lord.

Judas criticized the woman out of selfish interests. He was greedy and had hoped to steal some of the money if she sold the perfume. Apparently, the money box was for donations from the disciples and others and was to be commonly used for provisions and for ministry outreach. Why was Judas put in charge of this when Jesus knew He was a thief? Perhaps Jesus allowed him to have the money box so that he would have no excuse for selling His Master, since he was not in need.

She put three hundred denarii under the Lord's feet and considered this as nothing. As for Judas, he put his Master under thirty pieces of silver and considered His Master as nothing when measured by that trivial amount.

Jesus defended Mary for her actions. It was a foreshadow of His burial. What does God think about what we did? In the end that is all we should care about. It doesn't matter if others are pleased with us or commend us. We must seek to please God rather than men.

What can we learn from her actions?

God deserves our very best. Mary didn't simply wash Jesus' feet with water. She didn't wash it with cheap perfume either. She used the costliest perfume she owned. It is a common thought today to "serve God, but don't be too extreme".

From Mary's action we can learn that we should not be content to just serve God a little; to give alms on Sunday and think we did a lot for Him. We must be willing to give Him the very best of our life. That means we must be willing to turn over the most important areas of our life to God.

When you give, do you try to give the least possible? Do you hope that the person will thank you? Do you keep a record of how many times you have done something for someone? If you paid for them the last time, do you hope they will pay for you next? When you give gifts do you give others some junk that you don't need any more or something nice?

Do you give God the best of your time to read His Word or do you read it when you are sleepy and exhausted after you have finished everything else?

Do you give the first of your allowance to God or the leftovers? **God deserves our very best.** We need to devote our entire strength and souls to serving God.

Too many people view God as just someone to turn to in time of trouble. We need to be a living sacrifice, to give up everything we have for Him.

Imagine a swimmer from the Olympics. In 2004, he won the gold medal. He was extremely talented and everyone said he was meant to win several more gold medals in 2008. This swimmer knew he was faster than everyone. Gradually, he worked out less and less. He started eating more and more junk food. He got up later in the mornings and skipped important practices. Do you think he will win in the Olympics? He will lose.

Our life is a spiritual race. No one can win who only competes half-heartedly. No one can win who doesn't give it their best. We are running for a prize. **Give God your absolute best effort in every area**! This point is very important. Just think of any areas in your life where you aren't giving your best to God, perhaps it is prayer, perhaps Bible reading and study, perhaps serving others, perhaps church attendance, etc. Make a decision to give your best to God like Mary did. It's worth it.

Mary was discouraged from this action by Judas (and the other disciples). Sometimes when a person does right, they expect to be commended by others. Perhaps Mary thought that others would commend it. She likely didn't expect they would grumble about what she did. We should observe that doing what's right won't always bring commendation from others. Sometimes others will look down on us. Perhaps we will be too extreme for their tastes. A helpful thing to remember is that you can't give too much or be too loving or have too much compassion. We should not listen if others reprove us.

Many of the Jews had heard about Lazarus being raised from the dead. It was the talk of the whole city. Therefore, people came not to see the Lord but to see the one who had been raised from the dead.

The Lord's Entry into Jerusalem 12:12 -19

The palm tree branches are symbols of victory. Our Coptic church competes in decorating the churches with them on Palm Sunday.

People expressed their feelings by shouting "Hosanna!" or 'Hoshaana' which means 'Save us'

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey, the people lined up in the street to form a parade. They took their garments off and put them in front of the donkey Jesus was riding. They also put palm branches [a symbol of victory] down so Jesus could parade over them. This was a celebration that people would only do for a triumphant king.

The prophecy of the prophet Zechariah has been fulfilled:

"*Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt.*"

He asked the daughter of Zion [The Jews] to look up and see her humble and meek King, to rejoice and be glad for her King has come to tear away her fear and anxiety.

They welcomed Him out of their desire for a messianic deliverer, someone who would lead them in a revolt against Rome. But His kingdom was not an earthly kingdom.

The Jewish leaders lost all hope of restricting the Lord's popularity and power. They could find no other solution to get rid of Him but to kill Him.

The Greeks Honor the Lord Jesus Christ 12:20 - 26

Sir, we wish to see Jesus: These Greeks had heard of Jesus, perhaps of His reputation as a teacher and worker of miracles. What they did know of Jesus made them want to know more about Him, so they came to Philip asking to see Jesus.

Let us learn from them to seek Him. Sadly enough, during our big Coptic feasts, many Christians are so preoccupied with the preparations for the feast that they do not yearn to see the Lord Jesus Christ!!!

Jesus took this seeking interest of Gentiles as the signal that now the hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified [on the cross]. Jesus sees it as evidence that His mission has reached its climax and that He is now to die for the world. Now that the hour has come, it was time for Jesus to make the final sacrifice.

Jesus explains why He is willing to face death: Just as a seed will never become a plant unless it dies and is buried, so the death and burial of Jesus was necessary to His glorification. Before there can be resurrection power and fruitfulness, there must be death.

We are called to hate our life, not in the sense that we disregard it, but in the sense that we freely give it up for God.

26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me: To be a Christian is to serve Jesus, to follow Him. It doesn't mean that you stop working your job, caring for your family or studying at school. It means you do all that as a servant of Jesus, a follower of Jesus.

The Heavens Glorify the Lord Jesus Christ 12:27 - 36

Verse 27: Knowing this was the crucial hour, Jesus could not ask to escape the hour, because He knew that for this purpose He came to this hour.

Then a voice came from heaven: This was the third audible Divine testimony to Jesus' status as the Son of God, after the Divine voice heard at His baptism and His transfiguration.

The Lord did not need the Voice from heaven to encourage Him. The Voice had come for the sake of those present and so that they would believe that the Father had sent Him. This would sustain the disciples during the Lord's sufferings and keep them from stumbling.

The ruler of this world [Satan] will lose his authority and be thrown out, when Jesus will be lifted up [crucified] to bring everyone to God.

The Prophets testify to His Glory 12:37 - 43

If someone believes, it is because God has revealed Himself and His truth to them. Jesus had revealed Himself to them through the many signs and through His teaching, yet they refused Him. In quoting from Isaiah 6:9-10, John emphasized that with the hardening of their heart, these men chose evil. It was their own deliberate choice, their own fault, they did not ask God to open their eyes.

The Lord Witnesses for Himself 12:44 – 50

Jesus stressed His own truthfulness, and the need that man must follow Jesus – or else live in darkness. He reveals His unity with the Father and that the Father's work and the Son's work are one

The Lord Jesus Christ came to save the world and not to judge it. The words of the prophets who have prophesied concerning the Lord will condemn unbelievers. Now is the time for mercy. Later, the time of judgment will come as written.

Memory Verse: 12:25 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Lesson Conclusion:

What makes a life truly memorable in the eyes of God?

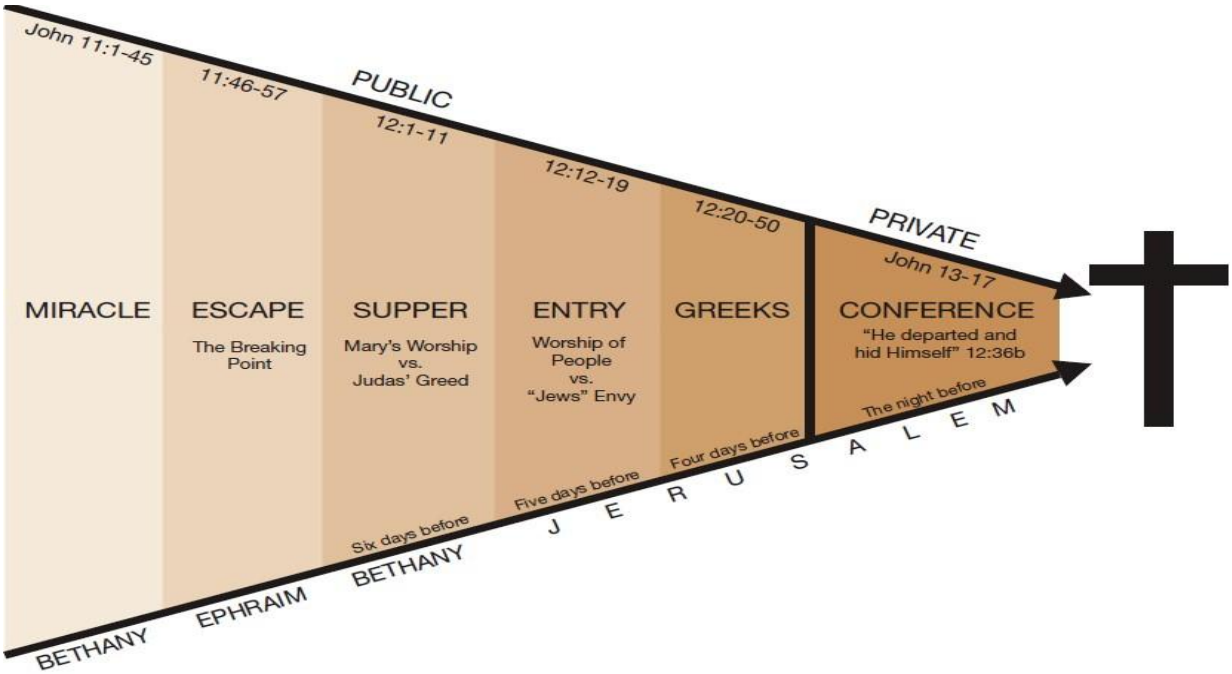
In John 12, as Jesus approaches the cross, we encounter a remarkable act of worship from Mary of Bethany—an act so precious that Jesus declares it must be remembered wherever the gospel is preached. In this message, we examine Mary's legacy and learn what God honors in a life fully surrendered to Him.

From Mary's sacrificial gift to her quiet humility and profound spiritual insight, we are reminded that it's not fame, wealth, or achievement that leaves an eternal impact—but a heart that deeply loves and honors Christ.

Key Points:

1. Mary's Sacrifice
2. Mary's Humility
3. Mary's Insight
4. Mary's Love

This message calls us to lay our lives at the feet of Jesus—whether through giving, serving, learning, or loving. In doing so, we find the path to a life that heaven remembers.



References: Bishop Youssef: https://www.suscopts.org/diocese/bishop/bible-study/new-testament/holy-gospel-according-to-st-john

Fr. Tadros: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1USxNacY0RpvkchQRIe1mq9bQwrhld3cn/view?pli=1