

Mark 14 pt. 1 v.1-25

Mark 14 is an extensive chapter, with 72 verses of text.

It takes us up to the night of Christ's betrayal and arrest covering Jesus' anointing at Bethany, Judas' conspiracy to betray Jesus, the institution of the Lord's supper, Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, one of Jesus' trials, and Peter's denial.

Pt. 1 will deal with Jesus' anointing at Bethany and the institution of the Lord's Supper.

We find ourselves in the season of the Passover.

"The Passover was the annual Hebrew festival on the evening of the 14th day of the month of 'Abhibh (Abib) or Nisan...It was followed by, and closely connected with, a 7 days' festival of...unleavened bread, to which the name Passover was also applied by extension." (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

Both of these were observed to remember Israel's deliverance from slavery out of Egypt.

How timely that the Lord God should appoint this time for the death of our Lord Jesus if we agree with the author of Hebrews that the Law, including the Passover and all of the associated sacrifices, served as a shadow of the good things to come. (Heb 10:1)

At the forefront of the minds of the nation of Israel would be the remembrance of that great deliverance - the lamb slain, the blood on the doorpost, their freedom provided by God, the Lord God dispensing His just wrath upon their enemies as he kills all firstborn who were not marked by the blood of the passover lamb.

Jesus has been teaching his disciples that he must be delivered up to death and that he will rise again and that time is upon them. What we find in this chapter and the succeeding chapters is that Christ is our passover lamb, that he delivers God's people from slavery into His eternal kingdom, by his blood.

[1Co 5:7 NKJV] ...For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

The character of the chief priests and the scribes is still on display during this holy time - they seek to entrap Jesus by deception but they are also very fearful of the multitude - they are people pleasers to their core, rather than seeking to please God.

Contrary to that we find in v.3-9 the love and faith of a woman toward Jesus that is so profound that it makes people upset. Her display of affection even makes some of the disciples upset. This will still happen today for those following hard after Jesus.

The temptation for the Bible teacher is to make this a message about how we ought to love Jesus more. But let us consider the nature and character of this woman's love - and perhaps we shall see where it springs from, because we know that we are unable to fabricate this type of love on our own power.

This woman is none other than Mary the sister of Martha, and a recently famous Lazarus whom Jesus had just brought back to life after rotting in a tomb for four days. (John 11-12)

The dinner guests are a man named Simon, known as a leper, a recently resurrected man, Jesus, Mary, Martha, and the disciples. Quite a diverse group of people in terms of life/death experience and closeness to Jesus.

In the middle of it all Mary comes with her precious treasure, this alabaster flask of perfumed oil, Nard: "the root of an Indian

plant...growing on the Himalaya (sic) mountains.” (Easton’s Bible Dictionary)

We find that this perfumed oil is worth nearly a whole year’s worth of wages, and she anoints Jesus’ head (and feet in John) with this perfume.

The vessel containing this precious aromatic oil is broken for Jesus’ sake out of a spirit of worship and adoration, by Mary.

I can’t help but notice the similarities this shares with Old Testament typology in regards to the anointing of prophets, priests, and kings.

[Lev 8:12 NKJV] 12 And he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron’s head and anointed him, to consecrate him.

[1Sa 10:1 NKJV] 1 Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured [it] on his head, and kissed him and said: “[Is it] not because the LORD has anointed you commander over His inheritance?

[1Sa 16:13 NKJV] 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

[Psa 133:2 NKJV] 2 [It is] like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments.

Here Jesus is anointed, our prophet, our High Priest, our King, who himself is the vessel that will be broken for our sakes.

Do our hearts cry out in adoration for our Lord? Yes. Do we desire to worship Him in such a way that blesses him and attests to his death and resurrection? Yes.

But more than our own works, what we see in this precious broken flask, is the picture of a broken treasure - Jesus, broken for us. This theme will carry forward into the institution of communion.

Notice that even in this beautiful act of worship, with all of the rich symbolism, and Jesus pointing out that this serves to anoint his body for burial - that people at the table, in the room, close to Jesus, are indignant and offended by what Mary has done.

Matthew tells us that the disciples were indignant! [Mat 26:8 NKJV] 8 But when His disciples saw [it], they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste?"

Mark tells us that they began to criticize her under the guise of using those resources for something they considered more worthy than anointing Jesus.

This will happen. We sometimes take our high-minded, self-righteous assumptions about what is valuable to Jesus and begin to weaponize them against people who are worshipping God more fully than ourselves.

In fact, I am quite aware that it is common for people to hold discreet criticism sessions about other saints quite often. I know that because I have been in that position - so critical and self-righteous, so quick to correct some other saint, pastor, or bible teacher in my arrogance and pride. I have far too often identified with these critical disciples. May the Lord forgive me.

Jesus corrects his disciples on this point and if we are listening we will be corrected for our critical spirits as well. They do not have the right, nor the grounds to criticize Mary's worship of Jesus.

Mary is honored by Christ for her worship - she did what she could, and that was sufficient. She brought her offering while the others, not discerning the time, sat around criticizing.

V.10-11 We know from other gospels that this impacted Judas especially harshly. In the very next verses Mark indicates that Judas went to the chief priests to betray Jesus. And we also find out that he agreed to do so for money and as a matter of convenience.

[Mat 26:14-15 NKJV] ... Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests 15 and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver.

“Regarding Judas: it is...noticeable, that the remotest hint was never given to the Eleven of his true character, nor did the disciples most favored with the intimacy of Jesus ever suspect him, till a few minutes before he voluntarily separated himself from their company—for ever!”

Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). [*Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 89). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

There is more of Judas than Jesus to many of us - as a matter of money and convenience and criticism.

About this bargain for Jesus' life it has been written: “(Gregory of Nazianzus): He is sold, and cheap was the price—thirty pieces of silver; yet he buys back the world at the mighty cost of his own blood.² A sheep, he is led to the slaughter—yet he shepherds Israel⁴ and now

the whole world as well.” Oden, T. C., & Hall, C. A. (Eds.). (1998). [*Mark \(Revised\)*](#) (p. 191). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Gregory of Nazianzus (b. 329/330; fl. 372–389). Cappadocian father, bishop of Constantinople, friend of Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, and author of theological orations, sermons and poetry. [*Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Introduction and Biographic Information*](#). (2005). (p. 494). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

V.12-16 Listening, obedience, and preparation.

It's interesting that Jesus never tells the disciples - you figure it out.

He directs them, pairs them, sends them knowing what awaits them - although all of the details may not be known to them but only those details needed to move forward in and for the Lord's will.

V.17-21 Foretelling of betrayal, self-examination, self-doubt.

Betrayal is not what one would consider fun or jovial dinner conversation. Jesus is straightforward here, there are no pulled punches - a tone many desire to adopt.

Jesus' nature is not like ours though. Rather than adopting a straightforward attitude framed in love, we often adopt the attitude of being straightforward in abrasiveness because in our hearts we desire to inflict pain on other people or rule over them.

Jesus isn't ONLY straight-forward and stern and cold and domineering. He is also warm, gentle, caring, patient, longsuffering and gracious.

Sometimes we go off the rails because we would like to adopt only one of Christ's attributes without the others - and so we find ourselves to be heavy handed or conversely overly gentle - rationalizing our position as "that's how Jesus was," without fully being transformed into his likeness by the Holy Spirit and the Word.

This straightforward announcement of betrayal by Jesus causes much consternation and sorrow among the disciples, as it would any of us.

We see too that they know the certainty of Jesus' word and each disciple is compelled to ask, "Is it I?" "Am I the one who will betray Jesus?"

There is room for self-examination in discipleship. We ought not think too highly of ourselves, or overestimate our spiritual stamina.

Furthermore, on this side of the cross, we ought not rely too much on our own strengths - those things will fail us, but Christ will never fail us. It is His strength that will carry us when we look into ourselves and find we are lacking the spiritual grit required to endure to the end. It is His strength that will keep us when in a moment of self-examination, and hopefully repentance, we find that we do share a common nature with Judas.

V.22 Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper, or communion, with his disciples.

We understand these things to be symbolic in nature. However, be warned, it is true that we run the risk of being too flippant with these symbols Christ gave to us. This is the danger that the Corinthian church fell into. (1 Cor 11:27-31)

[1Co 11:27-31 NKJV] 27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks [this] cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many [are] weak and

sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

This institution of communion is a significant moment for Jesus, his disciples, and us.

Consider the moment. They are all eating, Jesus has discussed betrayal, hearts are heavy but Jesus has so much more to share with them. (We find the most detailed version of this night, relative to instruction, recorded in John's gospel.)

But as they are eating Jesus takes this unleavened bread and breaks it before them all, not incidentally, or on the side, but dramatically, purposefully, intentionally.

“When the bread was lifted up at Passover, the head of the meal would say: “This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let everyone who hungers come and eat; let everyone who is needy come and eat the Passover meal.”

i. Everything eaten at the Passover meal had a symbolic meaning. The bitter herbs recalled the bitterness of slavery; the salt water remembered the tears shed under Egypt's oppression. The main course of the meal—a lamb freshly sacrificed for that particular

household—did not symbolize anything connected to the agonies of Egypt. It was the sin-bearing sacrifice that allowed the judgment of God to pass over the household that believed.” Guzik, D. (2013). [Mark](#) (Mk 14:22–25). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

But here Jesus chooses deliberately to teach the disciples about this new Passover that He is instituting before their eyes. No longer will they only call to mind the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, but now and forevermore they will remember the deliverance of mankind from the slavery of sin by the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Here again we see the theme of brokenness in the bread just as we saw with the alabaster flask.

Jesus then gives the bread, representative of His body - his self, and tells them to eat this broken bread.

It is by His body that we are nourished, that we are sustained. We profess, as Jesus declared, that He is the bread of life, who was broken for our sakes.

[Jhn 6:35 NKJV] 35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

V.23-25 - The blood of the new covenant, the wine.

As the one who establishes this New Covenant Jesus inducts his disciples as vested participants into it by sharing this cup with them.

The wine is representative of the blood that He will be emptied of, and those who are found in the New Covenant have indeed shared in the fullness of the blood of Jesus Christ.

We see too that this covenant is not exclusive to only those present but for many who will believe in His name and will share in His cup.

Finally we see that attached to this covenant is the promise of a reunion. Though this is the final Passover that Jesus will share with his disciples it is not the final time that they or we shall commune with Him.

We shall all gather together one day in eternity at that great marriage supper of the Lamb, once this New Covenant of redemption has been closed - and THAT is good news, that is cause for joy. (Rev 19:9)