

John 12a 1-19

1 In just another day, Jesus would make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. This is the last week of His life. John specifically points out that it is six days to Passover. If we accept the traditional timetable, it would be a Saturday. Some of the nights of the last week He would spend in this home (Matthew 21:17).

2 Martha is doing her usual serving ministry. The people of Jesus' day reclined when they ate. She is living out Jesus' words in Luke 14:12. This was to honor Jesus for who He is and what He had done for them in raising Lazarus. It took place in the home of Simon the Leper (Matthew 26:6).

3 Mark says that she broke the jar to release the perfume (Mark 14:3). There may be a lesson in brokenness producing fragrance in a life, but that is not John's point in relaying the story. He seems to be showing us that extravagant worship is welcomed. You've probably heard of the story of the man who sold his watch to buy beautiful hair berets for Christmas. The wife sold her hair to buy her husband an expensive chain for his watch. What a surprise when they opened their gifts.

Several scholars have suggested that there is a double meaning to the fragrance filling the house. They suggest that the story of her expression of love has filled the church with an example of expressive worship. (Mark 14:9)

4-6 Judas speaks up because he is greedy and has been sneaking money for himself. The Lord must have known this, but He never dealt with his greed directly. The Lord is patient and compassionate. How many things does He endure because of me? Often our strong points or gifts can be our area of temptation. Judas may have been the perfect money manager because he loved money, but Jesus showed a willingness and trust that would allow him to work through it if he would make the effort.

Interesting isn't it, how people come up with great reasons for doing something according to their plan when their desire is something altogether different. Judas used the excuse of the poor, but greed was behind his words.

7-8 As the crucifixion preceded a Sabbath, they would not have time to anoint His body before putting it in the tomb. The poor will always be there to give to. It is only six days until the burial. Deuteronomy 15:11

Show your love to those who are with you while you can. The story is told of a man whose wife died. After the funeral he began to read her journals and began to realize what a difficult husband he had been. The more beautiful her expressions of love and appreciation, the more his pain for not expressing in some generous way how much he loved and appreciated her. Don't wait to show love. Especially don't wait to express your love to the Lord.

9-11 Remember that the priests are of the Sadducean group. Lazarus was evidence that the cornerstone of their convictions is wrong. If they claim there is no resurrection, what is Lazarus doing walking around. Instead of admitting their error, they want to silence the truth by killing him a second time. What a pitiful state man succumbs to when he is willing to suppress the truth to cling to what his soul desires. James 3:14-16

12 The crowd in Jerusalem flows out to meet this One who raises the dead while the crowd from Bethany flows in to meet them. Matthew 21:8

13 Hosanna is the greeting to a conqueror. It is like saying, "God save the king!" This crowd is aware of Lazarus resurrection. If you can raise the dead then your army is invincible. They are quoting Psalm 118:25-26. This is traditionally sung during Passover but is the central song for the Feast of Tabernacles. The Hallel songs are some of the first portions of Scriptures that Jewish males had to memorize. This is the last of the Hallel songs. Simon Maccabaeus was greeted with this song when he returned from his victory over the Syrians.

14-15 A fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9. An ass was a noble animal to the Jews, not as we think of it today. Jesus was making a statement that He was indeed the Messiah, but He had come in peace, not to fight and overthrow Rome.

16 We often don't see all that God is doing until we look back and see His invisible hand was at work. The same thing happens in our lives if we will look. They may have realized this when Jesus opened up the Old Testament to them. Luke 24:45

17 – 19 This was an incredibly bold move. There was a death warrant out on Him, (11:57) and He rides right into town and cleans out the Temple. He knows the time has come. The popularity of the crowds will keep Him safe until the hour is upon Him. Then in the darkness His enemies will act. In the next passage we see that the world really is seeking after Him as the Greeks request an audience with Jesus.