

'THE REALLY GOOD LIFE!'

(The Life of Christ Series)

Gospel of Luke

The Next to Last Supper(s)

(John 12:1-11)

Holiday gatherings and meals are special times for families and friends. Meeting and eating with loved ones is part of the festivities. The culture of Jesus' day was no different. When people came early to Jerusalem for the triple springtime feast days of *Passover*, *Unleavened Bread* and *First Fruits*, the days preceding the holy traditions were filled with many fellowship meals together. All the gospel writers except Luke record a meal(s) in Bethany, the guest house of Jesus and the 12, during *Passion Week*. There are similarities and differences in the accounts that have caused conflicting opinions about when this special supper or suppers took place. The parallel authors **Matthew** and **Mark** imply that a special anointing of Jesus happened at a supper 2 days before Passover (**Matthew 26:1-13** and **Mark 14:1-9**). But **John 12:1-8** says that Jesus arrived in Bethany 6 days before Passover and a supper was made for Him that closely resembles the accounts of **Matthew** and **Mark**. And **Luke** doesn't record the meal(s) at all. What are the options of interpretation if all three other accounts are to be understood as the infallible, inerrant, authoritative Word of God? In the end there must not be any contradiction, but a harmonizing of the three accounts.

A strong factor that seems to imply 2 nearly identical meals (one 6 days prior to Passover on the Friday night Jesus came to Bethany and another almost identical meal Tuesday night 2 days prior to Passover), is that **Matthew** and **Mark** record an anointing by an unnamed woman upon Jesus' head in contrast to **John's** anointing by **Mary** (as in *Mary & Martha*) upon Jesus' feet. If this scenario is accurate, a *welcome meal* for Jesus happened on Friday night when He and the 12 arrived after traveling to Bethany from Jericho that day. Then a few days later another almost identical meal took place on Tuesday evening. The only way that all three accounts could have happened at the just same time is if **John 12:1** is only talking about arrival in Bethany, but the **John 12:2** verse about a supper, referring to a meal given a few days later (*Tuesday*). But this does not explain the difference in anointing of Jesus' feet in **John 12** and anointing His head in both **Matthew 26** and **Mark 14**. How can the differences best be explained?

A probable scenario: Jesus and the 12 arrive in Bethany on Friday night after traveling up from Jericho during the day on Friday (not Saturday, the Sabbath which was unlawful). This would be 6 days before Passover on Thursday the 14th of the month. After the meal served by Martha, her sister Mary anointed Jesus' feet (*dedicating His Passion Week walk toward the cross*). Then on Tuesday night (2 days before Passover) another meal is served at the end of one very long and tiring day of attack on Jesus by His religious critics. After this meal to refresh and encourage the Lord, an unnamed woman moved by the previous anointing of Jesus' feet repeats the loving act only pouring precious oil upon His head (*an act of recognition of Jesus' status as King as He faces the cross, burial, and resurrection*). Then, the next night (*Wednesday at sunset, began the next day, Thursday starting Passover Day*) Jesus officiated the last Passover Supper while initiating the first Lord's Supper (*a symbolic anointing of His coming sacrifice as the only way of eternal salvation*). If this 3 holy week meals and anointings scenario is correct, it is typical of God's triune way of doing things. It also explains Judas Iscariot's escalating aggravation with Jesus' acceptance of expensive anointing oil upon Himself (**Matthew & Mark** – all 12 disciples grumble about it on Friday night; **John** - Judas Iscariot alone criticizes it for happening again (Tuesday night) and then on Wednesday night at the Passover he finally deserts and betrays Jesus and the 12, thus finalizing his final defection and apostasy).

What does it matter? Between Lord's Supper communion services of Christians, it's important to remember the Spirit of the Lord is present at all of our gatherings and fellowships. All believers should remember His presence in all our fellowships by spiritually anointing Him with the holy oil of Spirit-filled acts of love, praise to Him and prayer. And as God's love flows from His Spirit to us and through us, our thoughts and feelings (*anointing of the head*) and walk (*anointing of the feet*) graciously prepare us to live victoriously on our way to remembrance of Him at the Lord's Table 'til He comes' (**1 Corinthians 11:23-26**). **PtL**

The King's Comings
(Christ's Triumphal Entries – Past, Present & Future)
Luke 19:28-40

Text review & Background: (Jericho to Jerusalem)

- 1) Healing of blind Bartimaeus,
- 2) Conversion of Zacchaeus,
- 3) 'Parable of the Perks',
- 4) Jesus and the 12 arrive in Bethany (6 days prior to Passover/ Friday),
- 5) Triumphal entry (Nissan/ April 10th, AD 30/ Lamb inspected/ Sunday),
- 6) Passover (Nissan/ April 14th, AD 30/ Lamb of God sacrificed/ Thursday),
- 7) Feast of First Fruits (Nissan/ April 17, AD 30/ Lamb of God raised from the dead/ Sunday)...

God's Word Precedes His Entry

*“When (Jesus) had said this (the ‘perks’ parable / 19:11-27), He went on ahead, going to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet that **He sent two of His disciples, saying, “Go into the village opposite you where, as you enter you will find a colt tied on which no one ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it? ... you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’”** **19:28-31***

- When you sense God's Word moving you to do something, why is it so important to pay careful attention to every word said and do it exactly as God's Word says?
- What might have happened if the two disciples had not obeyed exactly and just ‘sort of’ did what Jesus commanded them?
- By obeying exactly and immediately what did the disciples learn about the Lord?
- How will these verses help you in your precise obedience to the Lord for your life?

God's Workers Prepare His Entry

*“So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you loosing the colt?” And they said, “The Lord has need of him.” Then they brought him to Jesus. And they set Jesus on him. And as they went, many spread their clothes on the road.” **19:32-35***

- The donkey owner could have brought it to Jesus. Why did Jesus have disciples go get it, talk to the owner and bring it back to Him? (What lessons do you see?)
- Do you think the disciples were surprised how easily getting the donkey was? Are you learning how well things go when we simply obey what He says? (examples?)
- What else did they bring back in addition to the donkey (spiritual lessons learned?)
- Discuss the significance of people laying their garments on the road before Jesus.

God's Worshipers Praise His Entry

*“Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen saying, “Blessed is the King Who comes in the Name of the LORD!” Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.” But He answered and said to them, “**I tell you that if these should keep silent the stones would immediately cry out.**” **19:36-40***

- The blessing of hearing the Word of God and doing whatever it tells us to do are the new insights, joy and devotion disciples get for obedience (**John 15:7-8**). Talk about when you last experienced the joyful fruits of obedience like this.
- When we are walking close to the Lord like this procession, even the scoffers and critics aren't able to *rain on our parade of praise*. How did the disciples of Jesus respond to the hecklers in the crowd? What lesson is there here for us?
- Discuss what Jesus meant when He said, ‘the stones would immediately cry out’? Is this possible?
1 Peter 2:4-5 Will that ever happen in the future? **Ezekiel 48:35**