

The Lord's Message: Jesus Anointed at Bethany

Date: March 24, 2024

Where: Tilghman Methodist Church

Scripture Reference: Mark 14:1-9

What does the name Messiah mean? Anointed One. When a person is anointed, he or she is marked or has a change of identity or status. Jesus is literally just a few days from His trial and crucifixion. Beginning with the palm parade, Jesus will be anointed over and over again. His identity and status will constantly be changed by the people who anoint Him.

Let us pray.

I want you to count how many times Jesus is anointed; His identity and status is changed.

The first anointing comes in Mark 11, starting in verse 1, with Jesus coming into Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives riding on a colt of a donkey. People are cutting palm branches and laying them on the road. Some of the people are also spreading their cloaks on the road. They are all shouting, in **Mark 11:9-10**, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!" Jesus, who was once an unknown carpenter from a hated place called Nazareth, who becomes a miracle worker, a healer, and a teacher is now anointed King of Israel. The people think that Jesus will reestablish the Davidic Kingdom. "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"

After Jesus overturned the money changer's tables and cleared the temple, the chief priest and the teachers of the law anointed Him as a criminal. Jesus was angry at the money changers for taking advantage of the people who had come to worship God. The people who traveled great distances and, when they got to Jerusalem, would purchase animals to be given to God for sacrifice. These money changers told the people that the Roman coins were not acceptable in the temple, they had to exchange their Roman currency for the Tyrian shekel. They charged excessive rates for the exchange. In **Mark 11:17**, Jesus scolded them for their abuse with the words from Isaiah "My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations" then Jesus added, "But you have made it a den of robbers." After this action, the chief priest and the teachers of the law look for a way to bring Jesus to justice. Jesus, who they once considered a missionary, now has been anointed as a criminal.

Jesus is anointed as a great Teacher of the law. After the teachers of the law tried to find some way to trick Jesus and find something to bring him to justice on, one of them finally asked Him, Teacher, what is the most important commandment. In **Mark 12:29-31**, Jesus responded, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength and love your neighbor as you love yourself." The teacher who asked the question anointed Jesus as a great Teacher of the Law in his response in **Mark 12:32-33**, "Well said, teacher. You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but Him. To love Him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." Not all the teachers of the law agreed as this teacher did.

Jesus is anointed as a prophet. His greatest prophecy occurs in Mark 13. In verse 1, Jesus was leaving the temple area and one of His disciples said to Him, "Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!" Jesus replies in verse 2, all these buildings will be destroyed and not one stone will be left on another. Sometime later, as they were resting at the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Jesus when will this occur? Jesus answered their question by telling them the prophecy found in verses 5-37. Part of this prophecy came true in AD 70, when the Romans destroyed the temple and knocked down every stone, leaving no stone on top of another. You can see the effects of this today. The second part will come true when Jesus comes back in all His glory and takes the believers home to eternal life.

Jesus is anointed for burial. Jesus has returned to Bethany, the place of His good friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. According to the Gospel of John Jesus had, just a few days ago, raised Lazarus to life who had been dead for four days prior to Jesus' arrival. In **John 11:32-44**, is the event of raising Lazarus from the dead. In **Mark 14:3**, a woman comes in and anoints Jesus by pouring an expensive perfume from an alabaster jar. In the Gospel of John, we are told that this woman is Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus. It was custom in Jesus' day for the host to put a dab of oil on the guests' forehead, but not the entire bottle. Another use would be to use perfume with other spices to prepare for the burial of a person. That is how Jesus views this in **Mark 14:8**. Mary has anointed Jesus for burial. Mary, the one who was scolded for not helping her sister Martha prepare food for Jesus and the rest of the disciples, is the one who understands that Jesus is going to die. Jesus has been telling the disciples over and over again about His betrayal, being handed over to the religious leaders, who would in turn hand him over to the Romans for Jesus to be crucified. The disciples will not believe what Jesus has been telling them, but faithful Mary does. She anoints Jesus by breaking the jar of costly perfume and pouring it on top of Jesus' head. She is the one who believes. Jesus says this about her in **Mark 14:9**. Jesus is anointed for burial.

Jesus will be anointed over and over again the last days of His life. Judas will anoint Him with betrayal. The chief priest and religious leaders will anoint Him with false accusations and condemn a sin-free man to death. His disciples will anoint Him with desertion. The Romans authorities will anoint Him with death on the cross. God, His Father, will anoint Him with the sins of all human beings. Your sins and my sins, past, present, and future. If that were not enough, God will anoint Jesus with loneliness, when God turns His back on His only Son whom God has placed our sins upon. Last, Jesus will be anointed with death. Eternal God will die for your sins and mine.

Jesus was anointed many times. The people anointed Jesus as the Davidic King. The chief priest anointed Jesus as a criminal. One of the teachers of the Law anointed Jesus as a great teacher. Some of the disciples anointed Jesus as a great prophet. Mary anointed Jesus for burial. What would you anoint Jesus as? The correct answers should be a Savior and/or a Friend. Only you can answer that, by faith and the relationship that you have with Him. It is through our relationship with Jesus that we are able to grow together in faith. Amen.