



**The Way of the Cross Yet Again**  
**Mark 14:1-11**  
**March 17, 2019**

Jesus has been walking in the way of the cross for the last several chapters of Mark. He has done so figuratively, by serving others, and literally, by heading to Jerusalem where death awaited him (10:32ff). In this passage, he moves ever closer.

The main point of this event is that it foreshadows Jesus' death. The Jewish leaders are scheming to kill him (14:1-2). Jesus says plainly this anointing was to prepare for his burial (v. 8). Immediately after the event, Judas Iscariot agrees to betray him (vv. 10-11). Jesus is walking ever closer to the literal cross.

This woman grasped the way of the cross. Her gift was humble and sacrificial. 300 denarii was almost a year's wages. 200 denarii could nearly feed 5000 people (Mark 6:37). The very similar account in John 12:1-11 suggests that this woman was Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha. By sitting at the Lord's feet, listening to his word (Luke 10:38-42), Mary grew a deep faith and love for Jesus and understanding of his ways.

In contrast, "some of those present" were bad-mouthing her to each other and directly to her (Mark 14:4-5). Matthew says the critics were disciples (26:8). John names Judas as the real culprit (12:4ff), and his motives were not what he stated (v. 6). Jesus rebukes these critics, and in doing so endorses Mary's actions. Neither Judas nor any of his co-complainers understand the way of the cross.

**The Last Supper**

Passover (Mark 14:12) refers to God delivering His people from captivity in Egypt by passing over their homes and not executing judgment on them like He did the Egyptians. Passover also refers to the annual feast to remember this deliverance (Exodus 12; Numbers 9; Deuteronomy 16). This feast involved the sacrifice of an unblemished lamb, a special meal eaten in haste, an opportunity to teach children, seven days of eating bread without leaven, seven days of daily food offerings, and two holy assemblies when no work was to be done. It was intended to remind the people of God's salvation (Exodus 12:14).

That Jesus began the Lord's Supper at a Passover meal connects the two events and enriches our understanding of the Lord's Supper. Jesus, our (unblemished) Passover lamb, has been sacrificed, forgiving our sins even though we are unworthy (cf. 2 Chronicles 30, esp. 18-20). This calls us to cleanse ourselves from our old ways and put on new ways appropriate to Christ (1 Corinthians 5:7-8). We, too, remember the Lord's salvation in a holy assembly. We share the Lord's Supper together as the people of God, with reason for celebration and joy. We, too, have an opportunity to teach our children (Exodus 12:26-27). Although we are not prohibited from working, we do well to recognize that it is God who does the work of salvation.

Jesus described one of the cups at the meal as his blood of the covenant which is poured out for many (Mark 14:24). We are the many; His death is on our behalf. We committed the sins; he was executed for them. By removing our sins, he paves the way to a new and better covenant relationship between us and God. God, the greater party in the covenant, can and will save us and take care of us. Our part is to be loyal to Him and follow the terms of the covenant, especially to love one another (John 13:34-35). As we eat the Lord's Supper, we pledge our loyalty and obedience and look forward to eating and drinking with Jesus in person in the kingdom of God (Luke 14:15-24).

