

The Harmony of the Holy “Week” Accounts

The Anointing of Jesus:

Mt 26:6-13 vs. Mk 14:3-9 vs. Lk 7:36-50 vs. Jn 12:1-11

Study by Jason Labonte

I. Chronology: Two Views (of a Very Many):

A. A More-Traditional View

1. Friday, 8th of Nisan — **Jesus arrives in Bethany from Jericho**¹
2. Saturday, 9th of Nisan — A normal sabbath²
3. Palm Sunday, 10th of Nisan — Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey³
4. Monday, 11th of Nisan — Jesus curses a fig tree and clears the temple
5. Tuesday, 12th of Nisan — Jesus teaches in the temple; **a woman anoints Jesus**
6. Wednesday, 13th of Nisan — Nothing is known.
7. Maunday Thursday, 14th of Nisan, Passover — Jesus eats the Passover meal, his last supper with his disciples.
8. Good Friday, 15th of Nisan — Jesus the Christ is crucified for the sins of the world
9. Black Saturday, 16th of Nisan — A normal sabbath
10. Easter Sunday, 17th of Nisan — Jesus the Christ is raised from dead!
Hallelujah!

¹ Some believe this trip was on Saturday, but they forget that Jesus would not have travelled on a sabbath day.

² This view assumes that when John writes, “on the next day” that he really means, “on the next non-sabbath day”.

³ Some believe the triumphal entry was on Monday, falling on a 10th that year, such that he died on Passover instead of the day after.

B. An Alternate View

1. Friday, 8th of Nisan — **Jesus arrives in Bethany from Jericho; a woman anoints Jesus**
2. Saturday, 9th of Nisan — A normal sabbath, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey (a sabbath day's journey and it was late, so the sabbath was probably over)
3. Sunday, 10th of Nisan — Jesus curses a fig tree and clears the temple
4. Monday, 11th of Nisan — Jesus teaches in the temple
5. Tuesday, 12th of Nisan — Nothing is known
6. Wednesday, 13th of Nisan — Jesus eats the Passover meal, his last supper with his disciples.
7. Thursday, 14th of Nisan, Passover — Jesus the Christ is crucified for the sins of the world
8. Friday, 15th of Nisan, 1st Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread — A high sabbath
9. Saturday, 16th of Nisan — A normal sabbath
10. Sunday, 17th of Nisan, The Feast of First Fruits — Jesus the Christ is raised from dead! Hallelujah!

II. The Anointing of Jesus: Three Views:

Compare the tables and discuss.

- A. There was a single anointing of Jesus.⁴**
- B. There were two separate anointings of Jesus.⁵**
- C. There were three separate anointings of Jesus.⁶**

⁴ Some believe that "Leper" was mistranslated. Others believe that Mary the sister of Lazarus was Mary Magdalene.

⁵ John never says that the meal was at Lazarus' house.

⁶ Matthew and Mark seem to indicate that the event takes place after the Triumphal Entry.

III. Discussion

Discuss the questions below.

- A. Why do you think all four Gospels have an anointing story?**
- B. Does the parable given in Luke's Gospel imply that only love is needed to be saved?**
- C. Does the statement in the other three Gospels mean that it is more important to worship God than to give to the poor? What does it mean for us?**