



Mary of Bethany

Mary of Bethany. We know her as the sister of über-hospitable Martha and raised-from-the-dead Lazarus. We know them collectively as friends of Jesus, whom He loved and visited several times in their home in Bethany. We know her as the woman that relished the opportunity to sit at Jesus' feet, listening, learning, worshipping.

In Mary's day, the cultural norm for a woman was one revolving around *private* life. Women were almost exclusively consigned to the immense tasks of keeping the home (ensuring a kosher kitchen, spinning & weaving fabric, washing, practicing hospitality, raising children, etc.), while men took part in a more *public* life (schooling, attendance at religious ceremonies, studying the Law or Torah, pilgrimages to Jerusalem and reading Scripture in the synagogue). Against the backdrop of this cultural division of the sexes, we find Mary on more than one occasion sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening and learning *alongside the men*. Within the context of the home on those occasions when Jesus visited Bethany, the lines of the two worlds blurred and Mary, too, was "one of the guys." While Martha continued in her traditional role, Mary wholeheartedly seized those opportunities to learn from the Master Himself...and she was praised for her choice!

Because of Mary's example, because of her repeated posture before the Savior, we see a beautiful illustration of Psalm 95:6 -

"Come! Let's bow down and worship!
Let's kneel before the Lord, our Creator!"

1. List all the “facts” you know about Mary of Bethany from the today’s Bible reading.

Day 1

Read

Matthew 26:6-13

Mark 14:3-9

Luke 10:38-42

John 11:1-12:11

2. Research and describe the world in which Mary lived.

1. Write a character sketch of Mary of Bethany based on what is revealed about her life, her choices and her actions from today's readings. (Think: character qualities)

Day 2

Reread

Matthew 26:6-13

Mark 14:3-9

Luke 10:38-42

John 11:1-12:11

2. What can you infer about Mary's thoughts or beliefs based on her actions?

1. What pivotal point(s) in Mary's life do you see?
What was her response to each?

Day 3

Reread

Matthew 26:6-13

Mark 14:3-9

Luke 10:38-42

John 11:1-12:11

2. What can we learn from Mary's life or her example? Be specific.

1. How do you relate to Mary of Bethany or elements from her story?

Day 4

Reread

Matthew 26:6-13

Mark 14:3-9

Luke 10:38-42

John 11:1-12:11

2. What is God showing you through Mary's testimony?

1. What overall theme(s) do you notice in Mary's life?

2. From the above list, pick the one theme God is impressing upon you and research what His Word has to say on that specific topic.

Day 5

Reread

Matthew 26:6-13

Mark 14:3-9

Luke 10:38-42

John 11:1-12:11

3. Write a third person introduction to Mary of Bethany below based on your personal application from today.