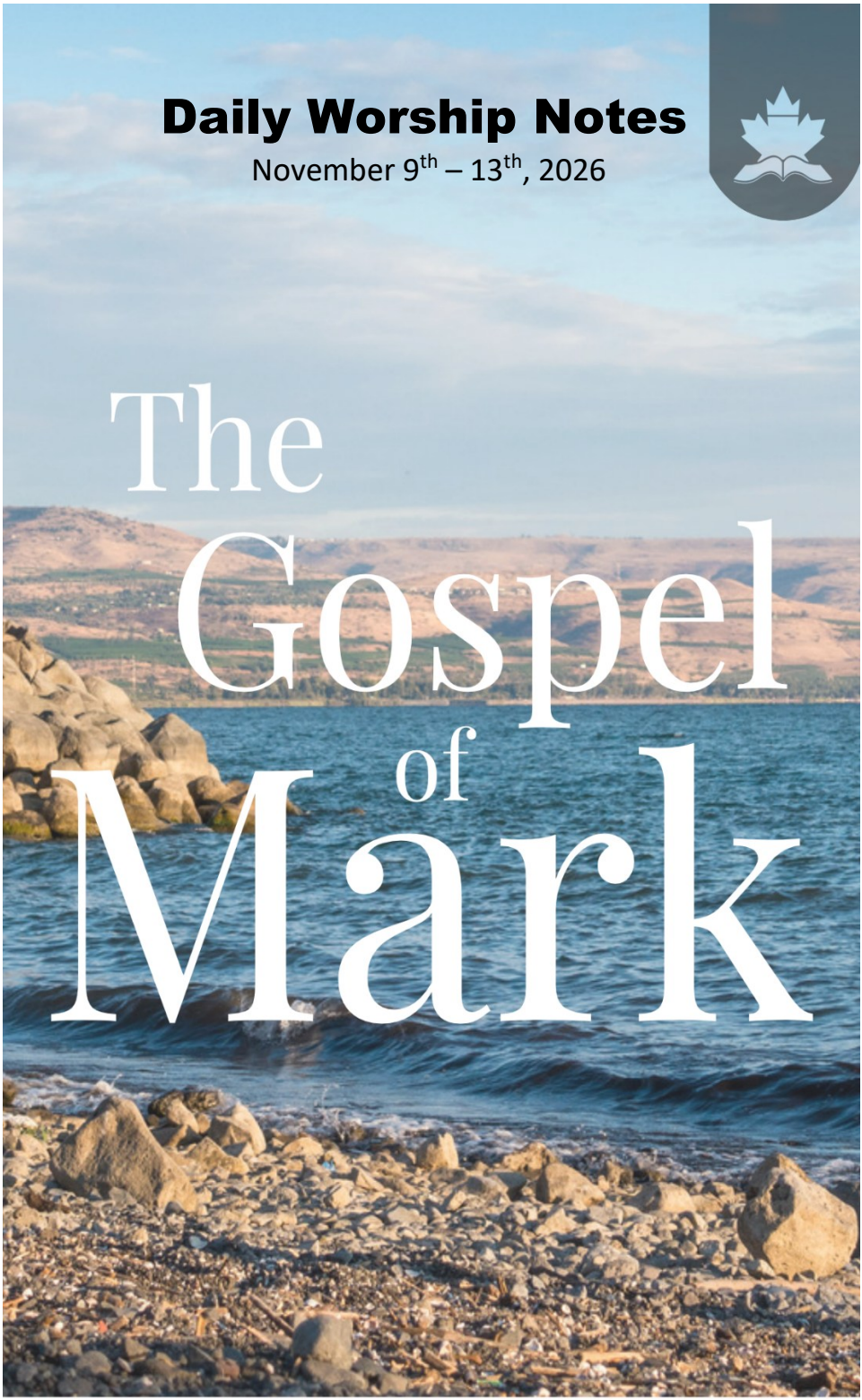
Daily Worship Notes

November 9th – 13th, 2026



This week, please:

Pray for.

Mon - Natalie Ward
Tues - Eric & Samantha, Charlotte, Abby, Hazel, Ezra, Penelope & Emma White
Wed - Ezra & Natalie, Adah & Faith Wilkinson
Thur - Bob Wilson
Frid - Nika Young

Parents help your children to learn.

Westminster Shorter Catechism

Question 82:
Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?
Answer: No mere man, since the fall, is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed.
Scripture Proofs:
Genesis 8:21; Romans 3:9 ff., 23.

Check out these Bible-by-chapter questions.

Question: Who did the Lord tell Moses to consecrate in this chapter?
Answer: Leviticus 8:2
Question: Where did the Lord tell Moses to assemble the congregation?
Answer: Leviticus 8:3
Question: How many days did the ordination take to be completed?
Answer: Leviticus 8:33

Please pray and ask the Holy Spirit for help as you study Mark.
Rev. Dr. Andrew Quigley wrote these notes

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Monday – Mark 14:1:2 – The Sanhedrin and stealth.

The second half of Mark's gospel begins in chapter 8, verse 27, and is divided into two halves. One records the announcements and the final journey to Jerusalem (chapter 8:27 - chapter 13:37), and the other presents the events of the Lord's last week in Jerusalem. So, we are entering a period in the life of the Lord that we want to handle with care as we walk through the next three chapters.

Mark, as we have seen in our study of his gospel, is concise in recounting what takes place. Matthew includes several parables, some of which also appear in Luke. This shows that the Lord was still teaching in and around the Temple during this period, and possibly more intensively.

The dating is specific: two days before the eating of the Passover Feast, on Thursday evening, so it's still Tuesday. (It's not that there were two Feasts; in using 'Feast of Unleavened Bread', Mark is simply stating the other name for the Passover.) The Sanhedrin, the supreme Jewish legislative and judicial council, is meeting. The word 'Sanhedrin' comes from the Greek word for 'assembly'. Based in Jerusalem, this assembly consisted of 71 members: 70 elders plus a president, a number probably derived from the model in Numbers 11:16, where the Lord told Moses to gather seventy of the elders of Israel to stand with him. Matthew tells us this meeting took place in the palace of the high priest, Caiaphas (Matthew 26:2), which was abnormal, and that's because this meeting wasn't going to be about normal Jewish business. The decision to kill Jesus had already been taken, but now it was time to determine how it would be carried out. And no one was surprised when they showed up to find that was the sole item on the agenda for the evening. Everything about this is covert, because that's how they're going to execute their objective. Stealth is the key word. Just like a lion stalking its prey, it keeps its head bowed between its shoulder blades, moving quietly through the bush, one silent step at a time, advancing as if it has all the time in the world; if it does make eye contact with the prey, it casually turns its head away, looking away as though it is totally uninterested, until it's within range and then it strikes for death. The men were discussing how they could strike for death in a way that would rouse the least attention and as little suspicion as possible before the deadly blow could be administered. That may sound dramatic, but this is dramatic, unbelievably so, for this is the death of the Son of Man that these men are conspiring together over.

Questions:

1. What period are we now entering in the life of the Lord Jesus?
2. Who are the Sanhedrin, where do they meet, and for what purpose?

Memory Verse: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures." Psalm 23:1,2a



Tuesday – Mark 14:1-4 – The meal at Bethany.

We left the study yesterday in the private hall of Caiaphas, the high priest, where the 71 men of the Sanhedrin are discussing the one item on the agenda of their abnormal meeting. The one thing they agree on, and many are keen to add their voice to, is that the killing of Jesus must not take place "during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people." This is no spur-of-the-moment decision; these men know exactly what they are doing and the reaction it could cause. The people had acclaimed Jesus on the Sunday before, as he had entered the city on the back of the unbroken colt. The Sanhedrin were right to fear what might happen should they get this wrong. As we have seen, 'an uproar' in the West can be very different from an uproar in the Middle East. It's not an orderly flow of people rhythmically chanting a simple slogan while waving placards. In the Middle East, people are caught up, propelled forward in and by the anger of the mob, beating their breasts, screaming at the top of their lungs, and often such a chaotic mass gathering ends in death. The Sanhedrin knew this all too well, and in the cool light of a balmy evening they connived carefully and deliberately together. We will leave them for now.

Verse 3 takes us to another event, which we have more details about in John's gospel, chapter 12. Not that I am taking you there, just pointing it out, because I will be drawing information from that passage.

We know that this event takes place six days before the day when the Passover was observed (John 12:1). We know that during this time Jesus was spending time in the home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, but not exclusively. For here we read that he is at the home of a man called Simon the leper. The fact that he is identified as a leper doesn't mean that Jesus is spending time dining with lepers along with others; that doesn't make sense, given that when someone was diagnosed with leprosy, they would take the hard decision to cut themselves off from their family and friends so as not to pass on the contagious disease. So, the only practical explanation is that Simon had been a leper and, at some point, Jesus healed him.

Jesus is reclining at the table, so what transpires takes place while the meal is ongoing. Mary comes to the home. Mark doesn't tell us that it is Mary, maybe because she was still alive when he was writing and he wanted to protect her. Who knows, but we do know the woman is Mary because John tells us that Martha is serving, as was Martha's practice, that Lazarus was at the table, and that Mary is the one with the alabaster jar of pure nard.

Questions:

1. What were the Sanhedrin concerned about?
2. Whose home is Jesus now in and what is he doing?

Memory Verse: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures." Psalm 23:1,2a



Wednesday - Mark 14: 1-9 – The nard and anger.

Mary comes to Simon's house carrying something; it is not pre-prepared food, but bringing it shows she came to this meal with forethought, and we'll see later why her premeditation is important.

The 'something' is a vessel or vial made of semitransparent stone, sealed so that to access the contents the neck must be broken; and once broken, because of the nature of the contents, it had to be used at once. It wasn't a case of using some and putting the rest into another bottle to use later. And what were the contents? It was a rare 'ointment' of pure nard, or spikenard, derived from a small perennial herb in the honeysuckle family native to the high-altitude (10,000-15,000 feet) Himalayas of Nepal, India, and China. Matthew, Mark and John all refer to the cost of this ointment. Mark tells us it is "very costly". So, this was a highly luxurious perfume, it was not some relatively expensive eau de toilette, which is typically bought at an airport duty–free; this is a really, really expensive ointment. To put a figure on it: it was worth three hundred denarii (verse 5), and a denarius was a labourer's daily rate, so you're in the region of CAD $70,000. This ointment was for the wealthy elite (and I'll explain why I think Mary came to have it, on Friday), and it was reserved for exceptionally special occasions. Possibly to celebrate a wedding or to perfume the body of a deceased loved one because it gave off an intensely spicy, musky aroma. (When Mary breaks the vial, John tells us the whole house was filled with the perfume's beautiful aroma.)

Mary does what we shall see is unthinkable in everyone's mind, but her and Jesus; she breaks the neck of the bottle, and as Jesus reclines at the table, she pours the nard over his head, which flows down his body and onto his feet, and John tells us that she proceeds to wipe his feet with her hair. This indicates the sheer amount of the ointment. (Now don't confuse what is happening here with what the woman did in Simon the Pharisee's house, recorded in Luke 7:36-50. These are two different events.)

To say that what Mary has just done doesn't go down well is an understatement. Mark says some were indignant, saying to themselves that it was an incredible waste. John tells us that the main source of the outrage was Judas Iscariot, and he doesn't keep it to himself; he lets everyone know what he's thinking as he barks out at Mary, "For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." It may seem a plausible, laudable thought, but as Judas Iscariot breaks the neck of his vile heart and articulates its contents with vitriol, the foul odour of his deceitful thoughts fills the room. What hatred and brutality there is in the heart of those who reject Christ, both for him and those who love him.

Questions:

1. What did Mary do, and why was it such a staggering thing?
2. How did Judas Iscariot respond?

Memory Verse: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures." Psalm 23:1,2a



Thursday - Mark 14: 1-9 - The thief and the name that will never be forgotten.

The house is filled with the powerfully beautiful aroma of the nard flowing down Jesus' body. The room is filled with the stench of Judas Iscariot's words and the disciples' indignant thoughts and scolding words to Mary about how stupid and uncaring her totally unwarranted actions are. A year's salary for a labourer could certainly have provided many meals for the hungry and poor, so surely some righteous indignation surfaced amid the deluge of anger lavished on Mary as Judas thrashed her with words of incandescent rage, liberally supported by the expressions on the others' faces. Absolutely not! There was nothing righteous in what these men were thinking, let alone a single word that came out of Judas' mouth. He wasn't interested in the poor, no more than he was in doing the will of the Father. For him it was all about the money. John makes that clear; speaking of Judas, he writes, "He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it." (John 12:6).

Jesus speaks; his words are direct in his defence of Mary. How many times has he allowed verbal attacks on himself to go unaddressed? But he is not going to stand back and let this onslaught on Mary go without confrontation. Oh, how the Lord loves his people; remember how he stopped Saul, who was on the road to ravage the church in Damascus, and confronted him with the words "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" (Acts 9:4). *Remember, the Lord has loved you from before the foundation of the world, and he manifested his love for you when he offered up his beloved Son for you as a propitiation (wrath-bearer) for your sin 2000 years ago, and he loves you today as the world laughs and scoffs at you; Jesus sees, Jesus knows, and Jesus will not let it pass by, and you can be assured of that.*

The rebuke is simple and has three parts, each of which is worth resting on for a moment:

- A declaration of protection - "Leave her alone"
- A cuttingly direct question – "Why do you trouble her?"
- A pronouncement of blessing, and explanation, and a wonderful promise – "She has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you…. wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Questions:

1. Why was Judas so angry at Mary?
2. How did Jesus respond?

Memory Verse: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures." Psalm 23:1,2a



Friday – Mark 14:1-9 – Anointing of Christ.

Jesus' words cut to the heart of the matter, and the heart of the matter is LOVE. I said on Wednesday that I would explain why I thought Mary had the highly expensive vial of pure nard. This is purely conjecture on my part, but I think it's reasonable. At some point, Mary, on becoming aware that Jesus was going to die - he had begun speaking about it in the third year of his public ministry, after Peter's confession at Caesarea Phillipi (Matthew 16:21-23; Mark 8:31-32), and he had spoken of his violent death on many occasions since - she had invested her savings in the vial containing the nard, and sensing that things were reaching ahead, she had either brought it with her to Simon the leper's home on this evening or she had gone home to get it.

By breaking the neck of the vial, she declared, 'I love this man, the Messiah, as my Saviour and Lord, the one at whose feet I have sat and listened and learned the wonders of eternal life. I love him so much that I am giving him my all in anointing him. I love him so much that I want him to be bathed in the fragrant aroma that will fill this home for many days and stay with him for whatever transpires in the coming hours and days.' Oh, how much she loved him. Jesus knew it, and he said so – "She has done a beautiful thing to me… She has done what she could". And he blessed her for it, not only by protecting her in a room filled with vile animosity in words and expressions directed towards her, but also by blessing the continuance of her name until the day he returns.

You and I talk of our love for Jesus, our Saviour and Lord, and I know that we do; I observe it in the many kind, gracious, and good decisions in your lives that I witness constantly in the life of the church; but this woman's actions have challenged me to think, as I have increasingly been doing – about how much am I willing to invest in the anointing of his name for his glory? What self-denying choices am I willing to make to see Jesus' name, character, and saving work raised up as a sweet-smelling aroma in Ottawa?

I mentioned a couple of weeks ago, I can't remember the context but it was in the Adult Bible Class, that I went through a period as a child when I would say, "no one loves me; no one cares for me." Yesterday, as I sat beside a hospital bed in Northern Ireland holding my sister Donna's hand, I could place exactly where I was when I made that grossly untrue, selfish statement, as I saw my seven-year-old self sitting on a sofa in our small home at 159 Lisnamuck Road, Aghadowey. It was sometime not long after Donna was born, and today, as I write, she is on the verge of glory. Life is incredibly brief, and we need to grasp every moment of every day and invest everything we have in living to fill the world with the aroma of the gospel of our beloved Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Questions:

1. What does Jesus say we are to do and why?
2. Who is to stay awake? Is there a particular onus on anyone to stay awake, and why?

Memory Verse: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures." Psalm 23:1,2a

Sing praise to God

https://newcreationrpc.org/psalms

Psalm 75B

1. To You, O God, we render thanks,
To You give thanks sincere,
Because Your wondrous works declare
That Your great name is near.
"When My appointed time is come,
I'll judge with even hand.
Though earth and all its dwellers melt,
I make its pillars stand."

2. "'Boast not!'" I said to boastful men,
To vile men, 'Lift no horn!
Do not lift up your horn on high,
Nor speak with haughty scorn!'"
From east or west or wilderness
None comes to glorify.
But God is Judge, debasing one,
Another raising high.

3. The LORD's hand holds a foaming cup
Which potent wine contains;
He pours and makes the wicked drink
Until the dregs he drains.
But I forever will declare,
To Jacob's God sing praise;
All horns of sinners He'll cut off,
The righteous' horns are raised.