

Responsive Reading: Understanding – Mary of Bethany

Mary of Bethany sat at the feet of Jesus and He talked with her about the deep Truth of the resurrection. She was one of the women “*who were with Jesus and His disciples so much during his ministry, ‘who ministered unto them of their substance,’ all represent phases of the individual soul.*” “*Mary of Bethany represents the devotional soul Mary, the inner, devotional side of the soul, is grateful for the awakening of her brother Lazarus [“whom God helps,” “grace of God”], because she depends for her manifestation on the subconscious life, which he represents.*” “*John says that Mary poured the ointment upon Jesus’ feet. Feet symbolize the understanding, and when Mary pours upon Jesus’ feet the precious ointment she is symbolically bathing His understanding with the fragrance of love.*” “*In Bethany Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, and thus overcame the sorrow, lamentation, and affliction of Mary and Martha.*”

“Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment [the woman from the city] stood behind [Jesus] at his feet weeping and began to bathe his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment” (Luke 7:37-8). ***Mary [the sister of Martha and Lazarus of Bethany] was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair”*** (John 11:2).

**Lord, open my alabaster heart.
Cleanse my understanding of all sorrow.**

“Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there, and Martha served Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil” (John 12:1-3).

**My love for Truth is fearless and outrageous.
It fills my consciousness with spiritual understanding.**

“Then Judas the Iscariot, one [of] his disciples . . . , said, ‘Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days’ wages and given to the poor?’” (John 12:4-6).

**Spiritual understanding is more precious than money.
Love for Truth is the source of permanent prosperity.**

“She has shown great love” (Luke 7:47). ***“So Jesus said, ‘Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me”*** (John 12:7-8). ***“There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her”*** (Luke 10:42).

**“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after;
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD . . . to inquire in his temple.”
“Give our servant, therefore, an understanding heart.”**