

## JESUS WAS ANOINTED BY A WOMAN

Mark 14:1-11

Key Verse: 14:9

"I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

In the last passage we studied the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in clouds. When he came first, he came as a baby in a manger and as a broken-hearted shepherd. Finally he became not symbolic, but the real Lamb of God. When he comes again, he will come with the mighty power of Almighty God, riding on the winds with his powerful angels to collect from the four winds his elect who suffered and gave their hearts to live for the glory of God. Jesus who was slain for the sin of the world as the one and only Son of God is worthy of being our Messiah. He is the Lamb of God who deserves power and glory, honor and wisdom and all praise. It is because he was slain in order to save all sinful mankind. Today's message is significant. It is because Jesus, in this message, tells us the right value system. In this passage, we see the pompous Pharisees who were decorated with well-ornamented robes. In addition, they ate abundant food which looked beautiful and was very tasty and at the same time looked luxurious. On the other hand, a woman appeared before Jesus with an alabaster jar. She was smelly and she looked too sorrowful to appear at the banquet. She seemed to shame all the honorable guests who were invited to the banquet. Let's listen to the stories of Mark chapter 14 one by one.

First, the last pilgrimage to Jerusalem (1-2). Look at verse 1a. "Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away...." The Passover commemorated that the people of Israel were saved from the bondage of Pharaoh in the Egyptian Empire after 430 years. God raised Moses for 80 years. When Moses had no strength of his own and had to only depend on God, God called him as a deliverer of his people. Pharaoh the Egyptian Emperor depended on his powerful army. Moses depended on God absolutely. Through ten rounds of terrible contest, Pharaoh the Emperor of the Egyptian Empire surrendered to Moses. In this way God delivered his poor people who had been slaves in the Egyptian Empire. God told them to remember this deliverance in the name of the Passover. During the Passover, from all the corners of Israel, men brought lambs to slaughter and gave them as a sacrifice for their sins.

The true Lamb of God is our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ came up to Jerusalem. Now it was two days before the Passover. This refers, in terms of Bible prophecy, to the day of our Lord Jesus Christ's crucifixion. Before his crucifixion, Jesus ate the last supper as the Passover meal with his disciples. We call it "The Lord's Supper." As he was eating the Lord's Supper he said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (24). In saying this, Jesus indicated that he would become a ransom for many, just as the Paschal Lamb was killed at the Passover for the atonement of men's sins. May God help us know the deep meaning of his blood.

It was two days before the Passover. Following the custom, adult males who lived within 15 miles of Jerusalem were bound to come to

Jerusalem with sacrifice animals to observe the annual event of the Passover. Along with the Passover Feast, there were three more compulsory feasts. They are the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut 16:16). The Feast of Unleavened Bread is closely connected with the Passover Feast. Perhaps many adult males were walking toward Jerusalem two by two, or three by three, or in groups, talking and sharing many unforgettable events which were virtually constant sufferings and hardships and very little joy under Roman rule during the previous year. Obviously, the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were on their minds. They must have remembered the historical significance of the glorious event of the Exodus, later celebrated as the Passover, which commemorated the deliverance of the people of Israel from their bondage in Egypt.

During this Passover time there were several kinds of people in the crowd. There were the chief priests and teachers of the law, who wanted to kill Jesus in "some sly way." Let's see what kind of people they were. Another kind were the ordinary people who were observing the annual event habitually. The Pharisees and the Teachers of the law were chosen people by the grace of God among so many people of the nations. God wanted to make them his chosen people and use them as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. When they accepted God's blessing and through the Jewish community became somebodies, they could not think more than their situation at the present. They lost their holy mission. They lost being God's chosen people from among all nations. Finally they became politicians under Roman rule. They thought Jesus was so poor and not political. They had nothing to do with Jesus. But they became jealous and competitive toward Jesus. Finally they wanted to kill Jesus in a sly way. What I want to explain is the phrase, "in a sly way." This is the entire summary of politics. Politicians do not kill people openly, but they kill people in a sly way. In the United States during the last six years these words, "a sly way," ruined our national joy and made the government and Congress extremely inscrutable. This happened when a powerful man in the Congress wanted to destroy the Chief Administrator in a sly way. America's moral reputation came down to the bottom of the world. Lethal criticism about the base moral criticism has never ended by the nations around the world, especially the Buddha-believing Indian people and Tibetan people. It was caused by a man who wanted to destroy his political opponent's reputation. After six years, his political opponent finished his two terms, while he, in his anger, divorced and remarried, abandoning all his family members. He looked very gentle and noble, more than the Pharisees-who wore ceremonial costumes and well-decorated beards and moustaches. We must know that the political world throughout history has been characterized by "in a sly way," and no more than that. In this circumstance, Jesus was preparing for his upcoming crucifixion as the Paschal Lamb-as the ransom sacrifice for the sin of the world.

Second, a woman who broke her alabaster jar of perfume (3-6). Jesus was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper. I checked to see if Simon the Leper was really a man with leprosy. But there was no comment about this. According to tradition, even a leper who had money could possess a spectacular mansion house and could invite any kind of renowned guests to his house to have a feast. He was called Simon the Leper. But he didn't mind about Jesus' popularity. In light of this, he was not aware of the intimidation of

the Pharisees and Teachers of the law. He was a man of great wealth who was above the events revolving around the society.

At that moment a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on Jesus' head (3). How did the people around her respond to her action? "Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, 'Why this waste of perfume? It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor'" (4,5a). What they said seems to be their scintillating acumen for the socio-economic situation of the country. And their philanthropic clamor seems to be laudable. But their error was that they did not care for the woman who needed the hand of God's mercy. Moreover, they did not see the sacrificial character of a woman who came to thank Jesus for the forgiveness of her irrevocable sin. This sin had bound her soul to the extreme measure so that she was not happy for even a day. But since Jesus came into her heart, she was happy and Jesus was priority number one, and to her, Jesus was all the world. She had the alabaster jar of perfume as her treasure. But it didn't mean much to her now, even though she earned it by selling her flesh. Out of her joy and thanksgiving mind for Jesus' forgiveness of her sins, she invaded the aristocratic banquet where she was not privileged to enter. She broke the alabaster jar of perfume out of love, to make Jesus more handsome. And she poured out the perfume on Jesus from head to toe. Jesus became like a man from an oil factory. But he understood her heart and her happiness after receiving the forgiveness of sins.

Those who were in the banquet only saw the drops of perfume spilling from Jesus' head to his shoulders and to the floor. They rebuked her harshly, saying, "Why this waste of perfume? It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." In fact, they were not rebuking the woman, but they were expressing their own greediness with reasonable words.

Let's see how Jesus saw this woman. Look at verse 6. "'Leave her alone,' said Jesus. 'Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.'" What does it mean that she had done a beautiful thing to him? To Jesus, her pouring the expensive perfume on him was not a waste. It was a winsome and lovely act with an untenable charm to it. Maybe the perfume was for her marriage. Maybe she had purchased it by saving money for a long time. But she broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. When she poured the perfume, in actuality, she poured out her heart to Jesus. When she poured the perfume on him, she was pouring out her love to Jesus: She loved God with all her heart. She gave extravagantly all she had. Indeed, she gave all her soul to Jesus. She gave everything recklessly to Jesus because she saw God in Jesus and she had been happy since Jesus came to her and forgave all the dirty power of sin which had tormented her day and night. Do you have this kind of experience, that you are happy after Jesus came and forgave your sins?

Sometimes we are moved to do something good for Jesus, but the tragedy is that the impulse is so often strangled at birth. Why? Because we calculate. But this woman was impelled by her love for Jesus; she refused to count the cost. It was an act of love. It was a beautiful thing to Jesus.

She was happy when her sins were washed away. Probably she was

the woman in Luke 7:36-50 who had lived a sinful life. While Jesus was eating at a Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping and weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. She came to Jesus as she was and asked his mercy for her sinsick soul by pouring out an alabaster jar of perfume. Jesus accepted her as she was, though he became too greasy to bear it. Jesus washed all her sins away when she came to Jesus as she was.

Third, Jesus accepted her perfume as anointing his body for burial (7-9). Look at verses 7-8. "The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial." In these verses, Jesus clearly tells us that he is going to be the Lamb of God by crucifixion on the cross. But no one cared for him before his crucifixion. No one knew. No one prayed for him. Even the woman who poured the alabaster jar of perfume did not know. But Jesus accepted it and honored it as anointing his body for burial in his redemptive history. Jesus said in verse 9. "I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her." From a human point of view, she had done a very poor job and she also embarrassed Jesus. But Jesus as the Son of God who was going to be the Lamb of God on the cross, saw her act as the most unforgettable gospel account throughout history.

From time to time we wonder how far our material giving goes in getting rid of the forlorn destitution of the world, and how much it ameliorates the pain-stricken heterogeneous societies. But in this event we learn that what we give to Jesus is our realization of the forgiveness of sin. Without a blood relationship with Jesus through forgiveness, one cannot be a child of God. He cannot praise God from his soul.

We must have this kind of value system. In view of history, we cannot deny that America was chosen by God as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Americans call it "a city on a hill." In short, America sent the greatest number of missionaries to all of the countries. They came also to Korea. They taught us to work hard for six days. So Korean people worked hard for six days. After working hard for six days they had no washed clothes. So they began to wash clothes from 10:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m. to attend church with new clothes and a new heart. American missionaries came to church at 5:00 a.m and gave prayer topics, and they prayed for one hour and a half. Then they ate rice and kimchee brought from their homes. American missionaries also ate rice and kimchee, laughing and rejoicing in Jesus. From 10:00 a.m. Bible study began. Bible study was very sincere and naive Korean people believed the teachings of the Bible as it is. They put what they learned into practice. Finally the whole village became a Christian community under an American missionary family. From 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. they had lunch. They had the same food again for lunch. But they ate very deliciously and joyfully, laughing and rejoicing. Some Korean church members danced to the tune of hymn songs, dancing so wonderfully. It was because dancing was from the joy of their souls after Bible study. In the afternoon, they visited those who were absent or sick. They gave everything they had. Four times a year: Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter they had a Bible Revival meeting. Whether the content of the Bible teaching was good or bad, the listeners' believing and understanding the spiritual

depth of the teaching was remarkable. Bible study continued to 10:00 p.m. Korean people really waited for Sunday to come. From that time on, Korean people waited for Sunday. In the past, Korean people took a shower when they married and when they died, as Pearl Buck said in her work, "The Good Earth." American missionaries taught the Bible and helped Korean people live up to the teachings of the Bible and they lived simply and purely and they wanted us to follow them. As a result, the Korean church began to revive. Then the Japanese Army, which occupied Korea, made a name list of all Korean Christians to massacre them. Because of American missionaries' martyrdom spirit from Pyongyang, North Korea to the Yuh Soo lepers' asylum, more than 1,000 martyrdoms came to pass. Half of them were in Pyongyang, North Korea. At that time, American missionaries were the spiritual power source to Korea as well as the spiritual power source to stand against Japanese occupation. Now we are praying that God may once again make America a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Prayer takes time and waiting. These days American students are praying and gradually making decisions to go as missionaries to the whole world. May God raise 10,000 staff shepherds. May God make America once more a missionary sending country. May God once more make America a shepherd nation for the whole world. May God restore the gospel spirit which our forefathers had.

Fourth, Judas was a selfish person (10-11). Look at verses 10,11. Mark juxtaposes Judas Iscariot with the woman to explain further what Jesus said to them concerning the woman. Judas Iscariot was the treasurer of the apostolic band. But he went to the chief priests to betray Jesus. After making a deal to hand Jesus over to them for thirty silver coins, he began to watch for an opportunity to hand him over. How could he do such an evil thing to his master Jesus? Judas Iscariot never had such an idea. But money is the source of all evil. When he contacted the Pharisees and Teachers of the law, he was already swimming in the pond of money which is the source of all evil. Paul said in 1 Timothy 6:10, "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." Judas loved money more than Jesus. John 12:6 says, "He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it." When Judas' motive was not pure, the devil came into his heart and made him extremely selfish until he was ready to get some money by selling his master Jesus. At the time, he was not Judas, but he was by himself with Satan.

John 13:2 says, "The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus." The devil's power was growing stronger and stronger. The sinful desire for money can make anyone as selfish as a devil. Money itself is good and useful. But love of money is the root of all evil.

Both Luke and John say quite simply that the devil entered into Judas. Luke 22:3 says, "Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve." John 13:27a says, "As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him." In the last analysis, Judas followed Jesus not to become a disciple of Jesus, but to work out the desires of his own heart. Then sweet Satan did not leave him alone. The devil tempted him to become a small devil. Dante sets Judas in the lowest of all hells, which was a hell of cold and ice, a hell designed for those who were cold and selfish sinners against the love of God.

Let's read verse 9. "I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her." In light of this verse, we can see that Jesus is the Son of God. The circumstances did not matter to Jesus. The woman's outer appearance did not matter to Jesus. But Jesus thought her forgiven heart and soul really mattered. Jesus came to this world to save men from their sins as the Lamb of God. Jesus knew that he would be the Lamb of God through crucifixion on the cross after two days. But it didn't matter. Here we learn how to please God. When we are in sin and in a guilty conscience, we try to justify ourselves even before God. It is indeed the act of suppressing the truth. Those who hardened their hearts cannot taste the happiness of heaven which comes from Jesus' forgiveness. We must come to Jesus and taste the joy of heaven which comes from the forgiveness of sin by the blood of the Lamb. May God richly bless you to find your fundamental life solution in Jesus' forgiveness like the woman who broke her alabaster jar of perfume for Jesus. God be with you.