

Episode #928 Matthew 26 Part 1-The Lord's Head Anointed

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord had finished His great prophecy of the tribulation period in Matthew 24-25. Now, we read further of the events leading up to His arrest. First, He prepares to celebrate the Passover

III. The Coming Passover. Matthew 26:1-2.

- A. Verse 1. “All these sayings” includes chapters 24 and 25, which are both part of the same discourse. This was a single, great teaching session of the Lord to His disciples.
- B. Verse 2. The Passover is that great festival God gave the nation of Israel, celebrating the fact that they were delivered from slavery in Egypt when the angel of death destroyed the Egyptian firstborn but passed over the houses with the blood. This is the fourth time the Lord predicts His death in Matthew. The details this time are
 - 1. It will happen during the Passover celebration. This is the first time He reveals exactly when this will happen: during this Passover celebration.
 - 2. He will be betrayed. This was also in the third prediction. Betrayed or delivered up. Of course, this was done by Judas, who took payment to betray Him to His enemies. Yet the religious leaders of the land also betrayed Him. These were meant to promote justice, and yet they betrayed Him by giving Him the exact opposite. All rulers are traitors to their trust when they do this.
 - 3. He will be crucified. This was also in the third prediction.

IV. Plot of the Rulers. Matthew 26:3-5.

- A. Verse 3. “Assembled together” is *sunago*. This was the great synagogue of Israel's leaders, all gathered together against Jehovah, even His anointed, like in Psalm 2:2. “Chief priests” are *archiereus*, arch priests, the top or first priests. “Elders” are the representatives of the people. It was the corrupt leadership that assembled against the Lord. The “palace” or the courtyard of the high priest. Caiaphas or *Kaiaphas*, meaning a Dell, a depression in the ground. According to the unbiblical method in that day of secular rulers appointing the high priests (!), Valerius Gratus, Roman governor of Judea in A.D. 18, removed Simon and set up Caiaphas as the high priest. He himself was removed by the governor Vitellius in A.D. 36.
- B. Verse 4. They plotted or conferred together. To “take Jesus” meant to lay hands on Him, lay hold on Him; to arrest Him. By trickery, craft, deceit, or guile. They meant to arrest Him in a way that was not open and honest, but sly and corrupt, and contrary to the laws they were supposed to be upholding as the leaders of the nation.
- C. Verse 5. Notice that this was their determination beforehand, but when an excellent opportunity arose during the feast with Judas the traitor, they did so anyway. “Uproar” indicates a tumult or uprising. The people favored Christ. They liked Him. But these rulers whose rule was threatened did not. Don't say that the Jews rejected Christ and crucified Him. They did not. Put the blame squarely where it is due: on these chief priests and scribes and elders of the people.

V. The Lord's Head Anointed. Matthew 26:6-13.

- A. Verse 6. Bethany was the city of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, but this time (unlike John) this was not in their home. That fact marks this out as a different event than that in the home of these friends of His celebrating Lazarus' resurrection in John 12:2-8.

This is a later event. There is no reason to suppose them to be the same when they are in different locations, different women do the anointing, and do it in a different way. “Simon the leper” is, of course, a different Simon and a far different home than that of Simon the Pharisee, where a woman anointed the Lord in Luke 7:36-50. The stories are so different that only stubborn unbelief would try to mash them together as the same, yet some try to do this! No dinner like this could have taken place in the home of one who was unclean. This man had formerly been a leper, and the Lord had healed Him. Bullinger calls this the figure of speech *Ampliatio*, or Adjournment, defined as “A retaining of an old name after the reason for it has passed away.”

- B. Verse 7. The woman is here unnamed. In John 12 it was Mary, but not this time. “Came to Him” is approached, *proserchomai*, as we have so often in Matthew, as people approach the King. The woman in Luke 7 had an alabaster flask of ointment as well, but as we pointed out the details differ so widely, not to mention that was much earlier in His ministry, that we have no doubt but that these were different events. This event, however, is the same as that recorded in Mark 14:3-9, which contains the same details as this record does, including that it was in the home of Simon the leper. “Fragrant oil” is *muron* or “myrrh,” a weaker form of *smurna*, which is the word for what the wise men brought the Lord. Mary poured her ointment on His feet, John 12:3, whereas this woman pours it on His head. Again, a different event from John.
- C. Verse 8. In John 12, it was Judas who said this, out of the motivation that he was a thief, and would have preferred the money put into the Lord’s treasury so he could skim off the top! The Lord had defended Mary, but the disciples had sympathized with Judas’ argument on behalf of the poor against this “uncaring” rich woman. Now, they take up the language of the traitor, having ignored the arguments of the Lord. What awful company these disciples place themselves in! But so it often is when people are swayed by the lying arguments of the self-serving: they take up wicked causes while believing the self-righteous words they have been fed. The disciples could have avoided this shameful behavior by having heeded the words of their Lord. Instead, they discounted them, and shamefully sided with the traitor against Him and a woman who truly sacrificed for Him. “Waste” could mean destruction or utter ruin. This oil, once poured out, was gone forever. They considered this a waste. Imagine, thinking that that which was spent on the precious Lord was a waste! Yet many today have the same mindset. They view it as nothing but a waste to sit at the Lord’s feet and learn from Him in His Word. Why not get out and be doing something for the Lord, they ask, rather than wasting your time with Him in a closet? Yet those who come out of the closet to speak have something to say, much more than those who never bothered to go into the closet to get to know the Lord in the first place. “Waste, waste,” cry those who care little for the Lord they claim to serve.

VI. Conclusion: The Lord announced to His disciples that in two days He would be crucified. It was not the Jews in general Who rejected and murdered the Lord, but their national leaders, the chief priests, scribes, and elders, who betrayed and murdered Him. The Lord attended a dinner at the home of Simon the leper, where a woman anointed His head. This was a later event than Mary anointing His feet in John 12. There, Judas complained, and here, other disciples agreed with him and complained against her. Do we ever suppose others have a better argument than the Lord? Do we realize the company we keep when we do this? Let us use care to agree with our Lord, for His perspective is always right!