

## Episode #929 Matthew 26 Part 2-Judas the Traitor

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. In Matthew 26, the Lord was in the home of Simon the leper when a woman anointed His head with an expensive flask of fragrant oil.

III. The Lord’s Head Anointed. Matthew 26:6-13.

- A. Verse 9. “Might” is *dunamai*, it would have been inherently possible to sell it, before it was poured out. This fragrant oil was gotten by collecting bushels of flower petals and boiling them down and straining them off until in the end you would have left a drop or two of a thick oil, and this was a valuable perfume. She would put this in a bottle, and then over time collect more of it. This was one of the only ways a woman could independently make money in that day. She could sell it and become a well-to-do woman at that time. Yet this woman takes it and sacrifices it all for the Lord. Many are always ready to say what the rich ought or ought not to do with the money they have worked hard to gain. The disciples repeat the words of Judas in John 12:4-6, valuing the poor more highly than the Lord. We have no right or business ever deciding the Lord has the weaker side of an argument. Yet that is what these disciples had done. Did they remember later how they had argued with Judas against the Lord? Many women made ointment like this, and this woman copies what Mary did.
- B. Verse 10. Why would God’s people ever make trouble for His rich in such a way? Yet some do.
- C. Verse 11. This side of the kingdom we are always going to have the poor with us. As long as there is drinking and drug use, as long as there is gambling, as long as there is laziness, there always is going to be poverty. Unless the nature of men is changed, we will always have them. Some talk about banishing poverty, and that might be the ideal, but the reality is that we are always going to have the poor with us. Too often, those who speak of helping the poor really intend to help themselves to power, and create more poor in the process of “helping” them. This is the spirit of Judas. The Lord is more important than helping the poor. Notice that He does not say that helping the poor is unimportant. It seems clear that one use to which the Lord’s funds were always put was to help the truly needy and impoverished; see John 13:29. Yet we must ever keep our priorities straight: the Lord is more important even than this, and it does not do to forget this.
- D. Verse 12. “Fragrant oil” is *muron*, the weaker form of “myrrh” again. It was traditional in their culture to anoint the corpse with spices and ointments, like this myrrh. This was called embalming. The Lord claims that, by pouring this on Him, she is doing this in advance of His death. Does He mean that she did this unwittingly, but God saw the fitness of it, since He was about to die? Or does He mean that she had heard Him speak of His coming death, as He did in verse 2, and had believed Him and acted in faith in this way? Had she prepared this ointment for His burial, but then decided that she would rather use it to honor Him while He is still alive, rather than waiting until His death? We do not know exactly what He meant, but we do know that His burial was soon to follow this event.

E. Verse 13. “Assuredly, I say to you” is the Lord’s typical strong affirmation, “*Amen* I say to you.” The word is heralded or proclaimed, not “preached.” “The whole world” means the whole order, the Greek *kosmos*, an orderly system or arrangement. The Lord knew that this right message would go out to the whole world, and every place in it. A memorial or remembrance of her, a means of remembering her. Here the Lord’s words are proven true, as we are talking about it right now! This word “memorial” occurs in the parallel story in Mark 14:9, and then only once more, when the angel told Cornelius in Acts 10:4.

#### IV. Judas’ Betrayal of the Lord. Matthew 26:14-16.

A. Verse 14. This is the first time they are called just “the twelve,” rather than the twelve disciples; obviously a shortened form of that. They are called this three times in Matthew 26, and never elsewhere in the book. The sad reality is that one of His most trusted and honored followers was the traitor against Him! Many can scarcely believe it, and there are always those who try to make out that Judas was just a slightly misguided follower of the Lord, but that he must ultimately be saved. Yet his fate is sealed according to Mark 14:21. The Lord knew He had chosen a devil among His twelve, John 6:70. He knew that Judas was to be lost, John 17:12. Let us not contradict Him and make Judas out to be found after all. Judas, because of his name, was probably of the Lord’s Own tribe of Judah, the chosen tribe. John tells us that Judas was a thief, John 12:6, and probably was already a thief when he joined the twelve disciples. He used his position among them for his own gain, and then betrayed the Lord into the bargain. Chief priests are *archiereus*, the arch priests.

B. Verse 15. “Are you willing” is *thelo*, what do you desire to give me? Judas is letting them make the offer. The Lord was in the temple every day, and everything He did He did in the open, John 18:20. He traveled around in the open, and did not hide anything He was doing or teaching. His nightly place to stay would not have been that hard for them to discover. They were buying as much as anything a betrayer, so that they could say that they had one who had left Him freely. They weighed out what they thought his offer was worth in his presence. This was quite a bit of money, but pathetically little when compared with Jehovah Himself, the King and God of Israel, and the Creator Who made the worlds: this pathetic sum! Bullinger says this was in shekels of the sanctuary. Elsewhere, this was the charge when an ox had gored a servant. In the temple, it was supposed to be paid to secure sacrifices. They did not know it, but that is exactly what it was buying: the greatest Sacrifice of all.

C. Verse 16. Judas was apparently looking to get out of his commitment as a disciple. Perhaps he believed from the Lord’s language about dying that He was losing it, or that He was planning some drastic action and he needed to get out while he could. Judas was apparently looking at an arrest of the Lord as an opportunity to slip away from the disciples and be gone. He never considered that the Lord might actually be condemned to death, well knowing that He had done nothing worthy of death.

V. Conclusion: The Lord chided the disciples for criticizing the woman who honored Him. It is much easier to find things to help the poor than it is to find things to honor the Lord, yet He is more valuable. Christ honored this woman, and promised her story would be told throughout the world, as we are doing now. Judas decided it was time to get out and gain what he could, and this traitor agreed with the chief priests to betray Him. Judas might have been one of the twelve, but he was lost, and the Lord knew it.