

Sabbath Rest
Jesus Honors and Protects Extravagant Worship
By Robin Davenport, Guest Writer

Today's Treasure

Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. A dinner was prepared in Jesus' honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, "That perfume was worth a year's wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor." Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples' money, he often stole some for himself. Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

John 12:1-8

Jesus enters his final week on earth. He will become the Passover lamb in just a few days. He accepts a dinner invitation from his friends, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. His friends' motive for this invitation was to honor Jesus. Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead. Their hearts were full of gratitude, and they wanted to spend time honoring Him in their home.

Each one honored Jesus in their own way of expressing worship. Martha served the meal. Lazarus ate with Jesus, and Mary is once again at His feet. The focus is drawn to Mary as she opens an expensive jar of perfume, anoints Jesus's feet with it, and wipes his feet with her hair. The fragrance of the perfume fills the house drawing everyone's attention to her act of worship. The house becomes a reflection of Heaven where prayers are mixed with incense as an offering on the gold altar before the throne of God. (Rev 8:3-4).

The aroma of worship draws out Judas's greed. He attempts to masquerade his greed with concern for the poor. "This perfume is worth a year's wages! What waste when it could have been sold and given to the poor!" (paraphrase; mine) At the time, John did

not know that Judas was a thief masquerading as a true disciple. But as the author of this Gospel, he had seen who Judas had proven himself to be. A thief who had often stolen the disciples' money for himself.

Jesus responded to Judas by protecting Mary's act of worship. "Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial." Mary does not have to explain or defend her actions to Judas. Her act of worship was validated, given purpose, and continued to fill the house with the fragrance of worship.

LIFE GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

During the 2023 Super Bowl, two 30-second ads called "He Gets Us" were aired costing a total of fourteen million dollars. "He Gets Us is a movement to reintroduce people to the Jesus of the Bible and his confounding love and forgiveness." [About Us - He Gets Us](#). I remember reading a post circulating on Facebook stating that Jesus would not approve of spending seven million dollars for 30 seconds of commercial time during the Super Bowl. He would instead use this exorbitant amount of money to feed and clothe the poor. As I pondered this point of view, I remembered Judas's response to Mary's extravagant worship.

Jesus honors and protects extravagant worship. When we are moved by our love and appreciation of Jesus to worship extravagantly, He honors and protects us from the naysayers and critics. He is Lord and worthy of our praise and worship. Follow Mary's example and continue to worship at His feet as He addresses the critics. Set aside that time of Sabbath rest for worship, and when called for, worship extravagantly. There is purpose in our worship as Heaven is reflected, and the sweet fragrance fills the house drawing out the sins of the critics and lifting up our Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

Father, Thank you for honoring and protecting times and actions of extravagant worship. Thank you for speaking to the critics and naysayers as we continue to sit at your feet and worship. Thank You for using our worship to draw out sin and to lift You up as Lord and Savior. We are so honored to be a part of your plan and purpose. In Jesus name. Amen