SHE HAS DONE A BEAUTIFUL THING FOR ME

MARK 14:1-11

Key Verse 6

 “Leave her alone,” said Jesus. “Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.

**Introduction**



 Today’s passage is about one woman who poured all her perfume on Jesus. It was so called extravagant worship. The people rebuked her harshly. But Jesus praised her action as a beautiful thing to him. This passage is about not only her story but also the beautiful love story of Jesus Himself, who poured out his life for us as the Lamb of God. Praise Jesus!

1. Read 1-3. As the Feasts were approaching, what were the religious leaders plotting against Jesus? (1, 2) What unexpected event occurred while Jesus was eating at Simon's home? (3)

1-1, Read 1-3.

 Now the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were scheming to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. 2 “But not during the festival,” they said, “or the people may riot.”

3 While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.

1-2, As the Feasts were approaching, what were the religious leaders plotting against Jesus? (1, 2)

***Now the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were scheming to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. 2 “But not during the festival,” they said, “or the people may riot.”***

* The time of Jesus’ sacrifice is drawing nearer. The Passover was almost here. The passage says that it was two days away.
* The Passover, which would have a sacrifice of a lamb, and the people would eat it, would occur on Thursday night.
* The Passover was celebrated at sundown, about the time of the evening meal. This Passover lamb was sacrificed, cooked and eaten at sunset on Thursday.
* So, when the passage says that the Passover was two days away, it means that it would start in two days.
* That being said, this passage could be on Wednesday. The chief priests and the teachers of the law were trying to arrest Jesus and kill him.
* These religious leaders hated Jesus and Mark mentions a number of times that they were wanting to kill Jesus, going all the way back to chapter 3.
* Now, they were all the more adamant to have Jesus killed. He needed to die as soon as possible.
* Yet, they didn’t want to upset the people. During the Passover, many people gathered in Jerusalem. The religious leaders didn’t want to start a riot.

1-3, What unexpected event occurred while Jesus was eating at Simon's home? (3)

***3 While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper,***

* Jesus was in Bethany near Jerusalem, eating dinner at the home of Simon the Leper. Simon had been a leper once, and was healed by Jesus.
* But he kept the name, “Simon the Leper,” to remember Jesus’ grace. He invited Jesus to express his thankful heart.
* Ordinary people must have hesitated to have dinner at the former leper’s house. But Jesus was happy to receive a dinner invitation from Simon.

***a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.***

* What unexpected thing happened while Jesus was eating delicious food. A woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard.
* She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. This act seems rather strange and unusual.
* Luke’s gospel tells us that this woman had been living a very sinful life. (Lk 7:37, 47) Whatever her past, she was in the depths of her sins.
* Her sins made her feel condemned, dirty. She had no way out from her sinful life. But then one day, she met Jesus who had great mercy on her.
* In his love Jesus freed her from all her sins. He accepted her as his precious daughter and gave her a life free from guilt and shame.
* Now she was a new creation in Christ. So out of her thankful heart she expressed her love to Jesus by breaking this jar of perfume and pouring it on Jesus’ head.
* John’s gospel shows that she was Mary, a sister of Lazarus who poured out the perfume on Jesus’ head and on his feet and wiped it with her hair. (Jn 12:3)
* The jar contained a very expensive perfume. This jar of perfume represented her life’s savings for her marriage.
* She knew no other way to express her gratitude to Jesus. Jesus was covered in perfume from top to bottom. The perfume filled the house of Simon the Leper.
1. Read verses 4-7. Why did some of those present rebuke the woman harshly? (4, 5) What does their response reveal about them? How did Jesus view the woman’s action? (6) How did He defend her further? (7)

2-1, Read verses 4-7.

 Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, “Why this waste of perfume? 5 It could have been sold for more than a year’s wages[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+14&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24760a)] and the money given to the poor.” And they rebuked her harshly.

6 “Leave her alone,” said Jesus. “Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. 7 The poor you will always have with you,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+14&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24762b)] and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me.

2-2, Why did some of those present rebuke the woman harshly? (4, 5)

 ***Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, “Why this waste of perfume? 5 It could have been sold for more than a year’s wages and the money given to the poor.” And they rebuked her harshly.***

2-3, What does their response reveal about them?

* At a glance, people could calculate that this perfume was worth more than a year’s wages. The footnote says a year’s wages is about three hundred denarii, in contemporary terms about $30,000-40,000.
* Indeed, this perfume was very expensive. Now we can understand why people were so upset.
* This woman had taken her entire life savings and completely wasted it. The expensive perfume dropped to the ground from Jesus’ body and disappeared.
* That perfume could have been converted into cash to buy food, blankets and so on for the poor. That would have been far more practical. What a waste it is!
* To their eyes, the woman’s action was insensible, unreasonable, extreme and utterly impractical. But their error was that they did not understand her pure heart.

2-4, How did Jesus view the woman’s action? (6)

***6 “Leave her alone,” said Jesus. “Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.***

* To Jesus, her pouring the expensive perfume on him was not a waste. 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 Jesus with all her heart. She gave lavishly all she had to Jesus.
* Her excessive and extreme expression of love to Jesus moved and comforted Jesus’ heart greatly. She has done a beautiful thing to Jesus.
* Similarly, it seems to be wasting time and energy to go fishing on campus and chase after Bible students. But God sees our hearts to feed His sheep.
* It is a beautiful thing when we give our hearts to serve Jesus’ sheep that have been abandoned in this selfish generation.
* Sometimes God’s work seems like a lot of waste. Thank God for those who are doing a beautiful thing to Jesus overcoming the pragmatic way in our generation.
* May God help us to express our love to Jesus and continually pour out our jar of perfume on Jesus with thanksgiving and full devotion.

2-5, How did He defend her further? (7)

***7 The poor you will always have with you,[***[***b***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+14&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24762b)***] and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me.***

* Jesus clearly tells us that they would not always have him. He meant that his time of trial, crucifixion and burial was fast approaching.
* It would all be over very soon and the disciples would not have any chance to express their true love and loyalty to Jesus.
* But this woman seized the moment and expressed her love to Jesus by breaking the jar and pouring the perfume on Jesus.
* Here we learn that we should express our love for Jesus now and here, because there may not be available in the future.
1. Read verses 8-11. How did Jesus relate this woman’s actions to His burial? (8) How did Jesus want this woman to be remembered? (9) Why might this event have prompted Judas to betray Jesus? (10, 11)

3-1, Read verses 8-11.

8 She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. 9 Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

10 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. 11 They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

3-2, How did Jesus relate this woman’s actions to His burial? (8)

***8 She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial.***

* In fact, so far no one cared for Jesus before his crucifixion. No one knew it was coming. Even this woman did not know.
* But Jesus accepted her perfume and honoured it as anointing his body for his upcoming burial.

3-3, How did Jesus want this woman to be remembered? (9)

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

* Jesus was going to be the Lamb of God on the cross. He saw her act of pure love as a precious event that should be remembered with preaching His gospel.
* God has raised many beautiful and sacrificial women of God in UBF history. May God continually raise many beautiful women of God.

3-4, Why might this event have prompted Judas to betray Jesus? (10, 11)

***10 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them.***

* Mark contrasts this woman with Judas Iscariot. Judas was the treasurer of the apostolic band. But he loved money more than Jesus.
* Judas never had such an idea. However, when his motive of following Jesus was not pure, the devil came into his heart and made him extremely “selfish.”
* That was the difference between the woman and Judas. Judas loved the benefit Jesus could offer him. But the woman loved Jesus more than anyone or anything.
* To some extent, Peter loved His own agenda or human dream more than Jesus. But later he repented thanks to Jesus in John 21. But Judas did not repent!
* It is by repentance that we can grow as God’s servants to become beautiful and handsome disciples of Heavenly Kingdom. Praise Jesus who is the lamb of God!

***11 They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.***

* Finally, this story of the woman’s lavish expression of love to Jesus points to Jesus himself.
* Because of his amazing love. Jesus sacrificed himself totally for our sake. Jesus loved us so much that he buried his honor, glory and power for us.
* This Jesus was broken, poured out, and used up for us. When we know his love, we begin to know how beautiful Jesus is.
* Beautiful Jesus is worthy to be served and glorified. He is worthy to give your life and my life to.
* What Jesus is looking for from us is not titles, accomplishments, degrees and achievements. What Jesus looks for in us is a life laid at his feet.

**Conclusion**

 The way we live our lives is indicative of our beliefs. It is not with our words that we will show what we believe, but with our actions, and especially our reactions. If we are not thankful, then we have not accepted what Jesus has done for us. Mary did a beautiful thing for Jesus, not out of obligation or duty, but out of love for who he is to her. In these strange pandemic times, it is important to look to Jesus. It is more important now to remember that Jesus is our savior, our healer, our source of strength, and our source of peace. He is the ruler of the universe and not even a virus can stop the spread of the gospel. Above all, sin is the most contagious virus in all generations. But Jesus who is the Lamb of God and the cure-all of all our sins. So nobody can stop the spread of His death and resurrection even by Judas’ type materialist or capitalist people. So we should continue to give our all to Jesus. We should see Mary as a beautiful example. Let us break our alabaster jar and pour it out to Jesus. Money, time, and sweat could be our alabaster jar for Jesus. But Jesus will accept whatever we pour out for Him as a beautiful and precious thing to him. Above all we can offer our hearts to Jesus. When our lives of faith are over, Jesus will welcome us, saying, “”You have done a beautiful thing to me.”

**One word: A beautiful thing!**