

Mark 14:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

Analysis

And there were some that had indignation (ἀγανακτέω, aganakteō)—strong displeasure or irritation, not mere disappointment. John 12:4-5 identifies Judas Iscariot as the primary objector, though others joined his protest.

Why was this waste of the ointment made? (ἀπώλεια, apōleia)—the Greek apōleia means "destruction, loss, ruin," the same word used for eternal perdition (Matthew 7:13). The irony is profound: they accused Mary of "waste" for honoring Jesus, while Judas himself would become the "son of perdition" (John 17:12). What appears wasteful in human economy—extravagant worship, sacrificial devotion—is precious to Christ. Their calculated objection masked spiritual blindness to Jesus' imminent death, which Mary alone seemed to grasp (Mark 14:8).

Historical Context

This occurred in Bethany at Simon the leper's house, six days before Passover (John 12:1). The ointment of pure nard (Mark 14:3) cost 300 denarii—nearly a year's wages for a laborer. In first-century Jewish culture, such extravagant acts toward a rabbi were unusual but reflected deep devotion and recognition of Jesus' messianic identity.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What acts of devotion to Christ might others criticize as "wasteful" that are actually precious to Him?
2. How does viewing worship through an economic lens (cost-benefit analysis) reveal spiritual blindness to Jesus' worth?

Interlinear Text

ἦσαν	δέ	τινες	ἀγανακτοῦντες	πρὸς	ἐαυτούς	καὶ	
there were	And	some	that had indignation	within	themselves	and	
G2258	G1161	G5100	G23	G4314	G1438	G2532	
λέγοντες,	Εἰς	τί	ἡ	ἀπώλεια	αὕτη	τοῦ	μύρου
said	Why	G5101	G3588	waste	this	G3588	of the ointment
G3004	G1519			G684	G3778		G3464
γέγονεν							
made							
G1096							

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