

Matthew 26:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

Analysis

For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial—The Greek pros to entaphiasai (πρὸς τὸ ἐνταφιάσαι) means 'in preparation for burial.' Jesus interprets Mary's act as prophetic anointing for His imminent death. Jews anointed corpses with spices and perfumes before burial (John 19:40) —Mary anoints Him while He lives.

This reveals profound irony: after His crucifixion, the women who came to anoint Jesus's body found the tomb empty (Mark 16:1-6). Mary's anointing beforehand was the only burial preparation Jesus received while still alive. She understood what others missed—the King must die before He reigns.

Historical Context

Jewish burial customs required washing the body and anointing it with aromatic oils and spices within hours of death. The anointing preserved the body temporarily and covered the odor of decomposition. Jesus's actual burial was hurried due to the Sabbath, making Mary's anointing providentially significant.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How did Mary gain spiritual insight into Jesus's approaching death when the twelve apostles remained blind to it?
2. What does it mean for you to 'anoint Jesus for burial'—to honor His death and sacrifice in your worship?

Interlinear Text

βαλοῦσα γὰρ αὗτη τὸ μύρον τοῦτο ἐπὶ τοῦ
hath poured For in that G846 G3588 ointment this on G3588
G906 G1063 G3464 G5124 G1909

σώματός μου πρὸς τὸ ἐνταφιάσαι με ἐποίησεν
body my it for G3588 burial my she did G4160
G4983 G3450 G4314 G1779 G3165

Additional Cross-References

Mark 14:8 (Parallel theme): She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

John 12:7 (Parallel theme): Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

Mark 16:1 (Parallel theme): And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

2 Chronicles 16:14 (Parallel theme): And they buried him in his own sepulchres, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art: and they made a very great burning for him.

