

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	αὕτη	τὸ	μύρον	τοῦτο	ἐπὶ	τοῦ
hath poured	For in that			ointment	this	on	
G906	G1063	G846	G3588	G3464	G5124	G1909	G3588
σώματός	μου	πρὸς	τὸ	ἐνταφιάσαι	με	ἐποίησεν	
body	my	it for		burial	my	she did	
G4983	G3450	G4314	G3588	G1779	G3165	G4160	

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.

