



## Matthew 26:6-13

We will meditate upon Mary's act of devotion to Christ. Her devotion is so significant, Christ not only commended her act, but made it a memorial of true saving response for gospel.

Let us understand this passage vs 6-13 in 3 headings –

- Woman's Act.
- Reactions to this act.
- Lessons from this act

### I. Woman's act

First, let us see the place and time of this memorial act?

**Place of the Act:** In vs 6, our attention is drawn to the place where it occurred “while he was in Bethany.” When Jesus came to Jerusalem this time, during the day, he ministered in the temple, and at night, he would go to small town around 2.5 miles outside the city called Bethany and stay there.

**Why Bethany?** It was a small village of his closest friends – Lazarus, Mary, Martha lived there. Just a few days before he raised Lazarus from dead. Think of how much love and affection that family will have for him.

We very well know the struggles that Martha and Mary went through with regards to their brother Lazarus death. How they cried “Lord only if you could have come sooner, our brother wouldn't have died.” Lord completely reverses their negativism and situation by calling Lazarus from the grave after 3 days of burial! How will you treat someone who raised a dear one from the dead in the funeral, so we see great loving fellowship and respect for Jesus in this house. Not only that, they believed Jesus is Messiah. We know Mary was known to be a keen listener to truth. Lord appreciated Mary saying she has chosen a portion that will not be taken away from her.

But vs 6 says he is at the house of Simon the leper, not in Lazarus, maybe there is a second house where Jesus was loved, welcomed in spite of religious opposition.

It says Simon, the leper. Did they go to leper's house to eat? Jews would never do that. He doesn't have leprosy now. He would have had leprosy, so much so, he is called Simon the leper. Out of the 100s of lepers Jesus healed, this was one of them.

You know leprosy in that day was incurable, they become outcast of outcasts from society. Jesus healed and gave Simon a new life. So Simon, out of his gratitude, love, appreciation, he welcomed Jesus and hosted this dinner to honor Jesus in his house. Oh, the excitement would be unspeakable. Away from the bitter, hate filled, murderous crowd in Jerusalem, our Lord would have found some comfort and fellowship; while he felt full weight of terrible suffering of cross being very close. Lovely evening of gratitude and joy.

Time of the Act: Leaders plotting in 26;3-4 and Judas going to leaders to betray Jesus in verses 14-15 all happening on Wednesday as verse 2 says it is the Passover, but this scene of anointing happened last Saturday even before triumphal entry. This is a flashback. How do we know this? John records the same event in chapter 12 and in verse 1 he says it was six days before the Passover, that's Saturday.

Matthew pulls in a very special incident that happened in the past and puts it sandwiched between leaders plotting and Judas betrayal.

Why? To show us a sharp contrast of the worship of this woman. So we have seen the place and time of this memorial act.

Now, let us see the act.

Imagine Jesus with all his disciples and Judas there. Lazarus is sitting with them. John 12:2 says Martha was serving. Mary is not to be seen. They are all dining in typical eastern posture, lying down on side, relaxed and enjoying the delicious feast prepared to honour Christ.

Suddenly an unusual event happens, 'Mary', only John tells us it is Mary, comes near to our Lord Jesus, she is holding a size of small syrup bottle or a salt bowl, an alabaster flask, made of natural marbled china material. It was rounded at the bottom with a long narrow neck which prevents you from abruptly pouring out all the perfume at once and helps you to measure the perfume by drops. It was tightly corked or plugged at the top with a cap, so it doesn't evaporate in air.

It had costly perfume made from rare plants grow in India in Himalayan mountain. Plant called Nard an aromatic herb that grows in the high Himalayan mountain. It was very costly because it had to be gathered in such remote regions and had to be shipped such great distances on camel back. John makes a point of telling us that this nard was the genuine article, pure nard, not a less expensive mixture.

Very precious perfume. How precious? Mark tells us, it was 300 denarii, which would be a year's wages. Only very wealthy people had it. Maybe Mary's family was wealthy, or Mary saved or sold whatever she had and brought this. We don't know. It was customary when you had guests in for a meal to anoint guests with few drops of perfume.

Here is Mary, she takes this expensive perfume. Suddenly comes, she doesn't turn the bottle and allow drops to trickle down; no that will not satisfy her heart. She snapped the narrow neck and broke it and turned the bottle upside down, so the perfume gushing out came over the Lord's head. Imagine, she comes in the side or behind him, and next thing this expensive perfume bottle, she shatters and poured on his head, the costly liquid trickles down his ear and beard, upper garments, and according to John, having anointed his head, she takes the remaining fluid and empties out rest of it upon his feet, and placing the flask on one side, and she lets down her long hair, removes the ribbon, and takes the hair and begins to wipe off the perfume from his feet with her hair. By the time she is finished, empty the flask and wiping his feet with hair, Mark says the whole big house was filled with the pure perfume

This is unusual, generally they would use 1 or 2 drops. This woman shatters the whole bottle.

Matthew says she poured it on His head. John says she poured it on His feet. The sum of which to say she poured it all over Him. She covered Him with the whole thing –costly perfume that takes a year's wages to earn. That's expensive.

This is the act of the woman.

## 2. Reactions

First reaction from the disciples –

They responded in 2 ways. First, they were angry, aroused, upset. Second, they made a judgement – this is all waste? Instead of being economical with such expensive perfume, she poured the entire contents on him, and the flask is empty now, they made a judgement ‘this was waste of money.’ Filled with indignation at this waste, they feel it could have been used in a better way. They were angry, made a judgement, and then Mark 14:5 says they criticized her sharply. They kind of surrounded her with their criticisms and rebukes and the verb indicates they kept continually doing it.

What was the reaction of Judas? He was part of the group, and we see in John 12:4, he made a suggestion ‘But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, who would betray Him, said, “Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?”

He calculated the amount of loss, and maybe he was the one who instigated the group, though he essentially said what others said, but though his language was the same. But he had a completely different motive. Verse 6 says “This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.” There was not a drop of compassion for poor in his heart. He was angry because there was so less to rob from the total balance.

Now, let us see the reaction of Jesus.

Vs 10 “But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me.”

He who allowed all this to happen, who allowed her pour the perfume on his head, and on the feet, and wipe with hair. What is his reaction? Firstly, it began with a rebuke with the disciples. Vs10 “Why do you trouble the woman? Back off, get off her case. He begins with a rebuke.

Next, he vindicates her action in 2 ways.

First, her action was a good deed. It was morally inherently, excellently good and pleasant in the sight of God. She has done what brings pleasure to the heart of God who also has compassion for the poor. Why are you making her feel bad or guilty as if this is a wrong thing? She has done excellently, a beautiful deed worthy of praise.

Secondly, it was accurately timely.

Vs 11 “For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. Always referring to the time.”

The Bible is very careful to say we need to meet the needs of the poor as much as possible for us. Jesus is not overturning that teaching. He is just saying it’s a question of priority; timing, this is time for worship. And there’s a time and opportunity for charity, and there is time for worship and ministry. Christ in his bodily presence in his humiliation form will not always be with u. It was expedient that he should go away. She has done it at the right time.

Thirdly, he gives an explanation of her actions given the present circumstances of his impending death. Anointing the body before burial was regular customer for Jews. It was only criminals who were buried without any dignity of anointing. It was criminals who are taken from cross and thrown in their graves. Our Lord has been prophesying all along son of man will be crucified, and he shall die the death of a common criminal. He will not even have the dignity of ordinary anointing that occurred prior to the burial of the body.

She did what she can. She showed her faith, love, devotion by taking her most precious possession, she poured it all out, as pre anointing to the body of Jesus. Saying in essence, “my Lord, while men will treat you as a criminal unworthy of dignity of even the common anointing, I will not allow you my Lord to go without anointing. I will make it most expensive anointing! I cannot prevent your death, and I realize it is only through that death you can save me from God’s eternal wrath.



In my overwhelming bubbling love and devotion for you, I could break my heart and pour all its love on you. Here as an expression of my overflowing love for you, I break this alabaster flask and pour this precious perfume on you; this is the most expensive thing I can buy. If I could buy all the perfume in the world, I would. So I pour it and express my love, admiration, adoration and devotion to you.

Our Lord explains why this was not a waste and an act without any care for the poor. Lord is saying she has done what she could in the light of my coming death. You may be blind disciples, you are a traitor Judas, this woman sees what none of you see. She has anointed by body beforehand for the burial.

Nothing held value to this woman in comparison to Christ! Nothing would she withhold from Him whom she recognized to be her Savior and King! Lavish, extravagant, costly, uninhibited, limitless focused worship. And her Lord finds it to be "a beautiful thing." He received it with pleasure and commendation.

Finally, the way of prediction concerning her action. Vs 13 "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

Assuredly, the Majesterial statement of Jesus indicates unusual importance, solemnity. I say unto whosoever the gospel shall be preached in the whole world 'What this woman has done shall be spoken of her as a memorial of her.'

What this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her. This prophecy is fulfilled before our eyes. Is this not what I am doing now? We have been talking and writing of what this woman has done. Literal fulfillment 2000 years later! Here we are two thousand years later, seeing the loveliness, the sacrificial selfless worship of this very dear lady who loved Jesus Christ.

Here we are two thousand years later, seeing the loveliness, the sacrificial selfless worship of this very dear lady who loved Jesus Christ. So wherever the gospel is preached, the gospel of Matthew, the gospel of Mark, and the gospel of John, wherever that's preached, wherever anyone reads that, you're going to remember what this woman did as a memorial of her loving worship."

### 3. Lessons from this Act

1. Primarily, she is an illustration of saving response to the gospel. She is an illustration for true worship.

She is the memorial for saving response. You want to know how a sinner when he understands his sinful state and what Christ has done in the gospel will respond. Here is clear memorial illustration in Mary. May we examine our lives, if we don't know in principle what is to take flask of our heart and break the neck and pour out our heart's devotion limitlessly upon Jesus, we know nothing of true saving faith.

2. Her act is not only clear example of how truly saved people will respond to the gospel, but how truly saved people will worship God and serve him.

She is illustration for true worship. We should rethink how can we become like Mary, in worshipping Christ. There was such a love in her heart for the Lord Jesus, such a love mixed with such a joy and gratitude and thrill, that she absolutely had to find some way to express it. She expresses it with a very expensive sacrifice on her part. Isn't this true worship we all are called to offer?

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

*-Pastor Murali*

**Grace Reformed Baptist Church  
Bangalore**

# Book Review

'Paavathinall yerpadam theegirkana  
saatchiyangal'

Written by Ralph Venning, translated by Pastor  
Bala.

I read this book and this book states clearly

1. Christ is our witness against Sin

Everything which causes us to sin is against our  
Lord. He never accepts any act which causes us to  
sin. Christ is against sin and he expresses his  
anger through punishment.

For example; we know how God sent Adam out of  
Eden garden for committing the sin.

2. Christ came to rebuke the Sin.

Christ came to this world to rebuke such sins. He  
came, he died and he bore our sins and this  
accomplished the work of redemption.

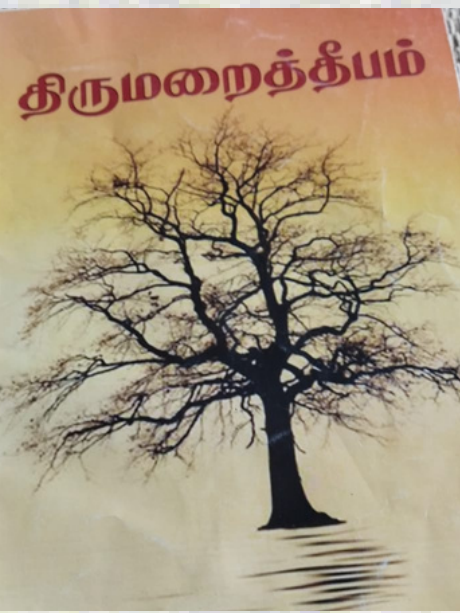
Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; We have  
turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord  
has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

I learnt many lessons by reading this book:

1. There is nothing which contaminates us like  
Sin.
2. One can face trials and yet live a life pleasing  
God, hating sin.
3. The one who commits sin will surely face  
enormous trials in his life.
4. To live a holy life and to gain eternal life, it is  
necessary to know Christ and live in Him.

-Sis Elizabeth



கிறிஸ்தவன் யார்?



அல்பர்ட் என். மார்டின்

Who is a Christian?

Book by Albert N Martin.

By reading this book I learnt who can  
be a true Christian? And I have  
started examining myself whether I'm  
a believer of Jesus Christ or not?  
This book gives us the clear thoughts  
to examine ourselves where we are  
standing on Christ and how true is  
our faith in our Christian life?  
Bible says that all human born in this  
world are sinners by birth and also by  
our nature we carry the sin  
throughout our life. We are not only  
sinners by committing a crime but we  
commit sin when the evil thought  
comes to our hearts and mind itself.  
Just examine how bad we are by our  
Nature. The true Christian realizes  
this and comes to God believing that  
Jesus Christ is the only redeemer for  
all our sins and repents to Him of all  
sins and believes God with all his  
heart and also starts living for his  
glory. The goal of his Christian life  
will be doing God's Will throughout  
his life and waiting for God's kingdom  
of eternity. How merciful is our God  
no matter where and how we are, He  
is ready to accept us and show His  
love abundantly to us. Do we realizes  
this in our Christian life? We must self  
examine and seeks His Grace for  
living a life pleasing Him.

-Sis Shanthi Elias



# Dealing with Temptation

Everyone deals with temptation, the Bible is filled with stories of people being tempted - even Jesus Himself was tempted by Satan.

We must remember that we are all sinners who will face temptation at some point in our lives. However, just because we are born sinners does not provide us with the right to indulge in wicked inclinations over and over again.

Being in a world like this, getting tempted is the first test for a believer. Worldly things look so enjoyable and pleasurable until we realise its ugliness and filthiness.

As youth, temptation is our first enemy.

Where do all these feelings come from? Keep in mind that God will not tempt us. It's the satan who's behind the temptations. He is on the prowl, roaming the earth like a hungry lion, and we're his prey. There's nothing good about sin, but the satan deceives people into thinking its good.

In every temptation the devil goes about his work of destroying people - he deceives us.

What to do when we get tempted?

- 1) Realise - Realise that this is against God, this is sin and how you are being trapped by Satan.
- 2) Pray about it - Prayer strengthens us spiritually and is a powerful weapon against the devil and his schemes.
- 3) Engage yourself in religious activities - Read the Holy Scripture, listen to sermons, meditate on the same. This will not give way for satan to enter again.

The Bible says, "the wages of sin is death".

No matter how tough it may seem at times, we must always reject temptation!

Each time you are tempted you must choose between two things:

- 1) God's will
- 2) Your own lust

If you choose God's will, the result will be righteousness and life. If you choose your own lust, the result will be sin.

Which one will you choose?

# Guess Me Right Challenge!!!



**Bible character who was swallowed  
by a great fish.**

**I killed 1000 men with a donkey jawbone.  
Who am I?**

**Commander of the army of the king of Syria,  
I was healed  
of leprosy by Prophet Elisha. Who am I?**

**According to the Bible, who was the oldest man  
who ever lived?**

**I died after my husband Ananias died  
because of a lie. Who am I?**

**Who went to the tomb of Jesus early on the first day  
of the week, while it was still dark, and found an  
empty tomb?**

**I am a giant and was killed with a stone  
by a small boy. Who am I?**



**Editors**

*Sindhu Vinoth*  
*Asha Regene*