

## **Anointed for Burial**

Matthew 26:1-16

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Jesus said to his disciples, "As you know, Passover is two days away, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

Passover would be followed immediately by the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and religious leaders gathered in the home of Caiaphas, the high priest. They were still looking for some stealthy way to apprehend Jesus and kill him. "We can't do anything during the Feast," they agreed, "or the people may riot."

Meanwhile, Jesus was in Bethany at the home of a man known as Simon the Leper. While they were eating, a woman came to Jesus with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head.

The disciples were indignant. "What a waste! That was expensive perfume. It could have been sold for a small fortune and the money given to the poor."

But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Don't criticize her. She has done a beautiful thing for me. You will always have the poor among you; you will not always have me. By pouring this perfume on my head, she has anointed my body for burial. I tell you the truth, wherever the good news is announced throughout the world, the story of what this woman has just done will be told. She will be remembered."

Then one of the Twelve, Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and asked, "What will you give me if I hand Jesus over to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver, about four months' wages. So Judas began looking for a convenient opportunity to hand Jesus over to them.