

THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

Lesson 88, Chapter 26

Last week we began what is popularly known as the Passion Narrative, which essentially dominates the remaining chapters of Matthew's Gospel. The circumstances of leading up to Christ's execution, burial, resurrection, and the immediate aftermath represents probably the most focused upon portion for all the Synoptic Gospel writers. Yet, it is not without its controversies, and these controversies are anything but trivial.

Immediately upon opening Matthew chapter 26, in verse 2 we read this statement that seems to be so straightforward, yet is anything but:

^{CJB} **Matthew 26:2** *"As you know, Pesach is two days away, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be nailed to the execution-stake."*

The controversial issue that this verse opens with is not that Yeshua is predicting His crucifixion; it is the mention of Passover (***Pesach***) being 2 days away as a prelude to what we'll soon be reading about. While the two days-away comment is repeated in Mark's Gospel chapter 14, Mark strangely injects that Passover is also called The Feast of Matza. The Gospels of Luke and John make no mention of the exact time frame only saying that Passover was near. Luke makes it clear, however, that for him, he took it that the terms Passover and Unleavened Bread were interchangeable. This is no small matter because the Torah establishes the Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread as separately ordained Feasts, each with their own significance, different requirements, and different lengths of time of observance. Then, even though the next Feast in the series of the 3 springtime Torah ordained festivals called Firstfruits isn't mentioned, the timing of Firstfruits is established in relation to the observance of Passover and Unleavened Bread.

This reality is weighty because the Messiah is some years later said by the Apostle Paul to be the firstfruits of the resurrection. It is obvious to me that Paul concluded that Christ arising from the grave on the Feast of Firstfruits (*Bikkurim* in Hebrew) was no coincidence. Rather it was symbolic of the general resurrection that would eventually come, as prophesied by Israel's Prophets of old.

The nearly universal Christian doctrine on the matter is that Christ died on Passover day, went into the grave just at the beginning of that evening, and arose on Sunday. Using a Hebrew calendar and the Torah as our guide, then it means that He died on Passover day, went into the grave moments before the beginning of the Feast of Matza (because when Passover ends, the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins immediately), and then He arose from the grave around sunrise on the 1st day of the week, about 72 hours later, on what we call Sunday. However, the reality is that the Christian timeline defies the Hebrew Traditions of that era as well as the age-old calendar of God-ordained biblical feast days that the Jews were commanded to observe... and did. The Christian timeline also typically takes no account of the crucial reality that biblically a day doesn't begin at midnight (as it does in modern times) or at daybreak. Biblically (and the way Jews observed it) a new day begins at sunset. So last week we began the complicated exploration of this matter (that we'll continue today), which also involves the Last Supper (something we haven't encountered yet) that is said to occur the night before Christ died. The Last Supper is said by traditional Christianity to have been the Passover meal (or seder). Yet, that cannot be the case because it is on Passover day that the Passover lambs are slaughtered and cooked, and then eaten just after sunset. So, if He died on Passover at about the same time the Passover lambs were being slaughtered, how could the Last Supper have been the Passover meal if the lambs had yet to be killed and cooked? Thus, as I have characterized it on numerous occasions, this entire matter can appropriately be called a can of worms because it is so complex, and because there are some differences among the Gospel accounts about the timing that seem to conflict. Or, as I prefer to think, it is not that the accounts conflict but rather it has to do with the use of different terminology that has been misinterpreted by gentile Bible translators because of a lack of understanding of the Jewish world in that era in general, and of the biblical Torah in specific.

I will not review the information I gave you last time on this subject; but I will to add to it. The way the Hebrew calendar worked beginning in Moses' era, and it

continued through Christ's era, and continues to this very day, is that Passover is a date on that calendar. In the **civil** Hebrew calendar, Passover occurs in the 7th month of the year called Nisan (also called Aviv). In the Hebrew **religious observance** calendar, Nisan is the 1st month of the year. The one-day biblical Feast of Passover (**Pesach**) occurs on the 14th day of Nisan. Therefore, it can occur on any day of the week that the 14th of Nisan happens to fall in any given year. The 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (**Matzah**) begins on the 15th of the month of Nisan. So obviously it, too, can fall on any day of the week, coming immediately after Passover. So, if in a particular year Nisan 14 falls on a Monday, then Unleavened Bread begins on Tuesday. If in another year Nisan 14 (Passover) falls on a Wednesday, then the Feast of Unleavened Bread (the 15th) begins on Thursday...etc. (not hard to grasp). But the other commandments concerning these Feasts are where it begins to get more complicated.

Passover is, biblically, a Feast Day but in all other respects it is just a regular day. That is, a person can do work on that day if they choose to, and further they have no obligation to make a journey to the Temple for the Feast of Passover. All that is to happen on Passover is that each family is to slaughter a lamb and cook it, then wait until after sunset to eat it. In fact, when we look closely, in most respects Passover was originally intended to be a feast that was celebrated in one's own home as a family because that is how it happened in Egypt. That is, Passover is a remembrance of the event in Egypt when God killed all the Egyptian firstborn and it resulted in the release of Israel to go to their Promised Land. In Egypt, each Israelite family was instructed to slaughter and cook a lamb. Its blood was to be painted on the doorposts of one's homes, and after sunset the lamb was to be eaten. A couple of hours later God's wrath of death flowed through Egypt and killed all the firstborn males of every household, bypassing all those homes where the blood of the lamb had been painted on the doorposts. This event so devastated Pharaoh that he ordered Israel to leave Egypt. The next morning the Israelites hurried to pack up and leave. Because bread was their staple food, but the preparation of bread that included a few hours for it to rise before baking it wouldn't work because they had to leave so quickly, then the Israelites had to prepare bread that didn't include the agent that makes it rise: yeast... leaven. Thus when a few weeks later at Mt. Sinai God gave Moses the Torah, part of it included instructions to commemorate this event annually for all time by the creation of the biblical feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread, unlike Passover, **did** require a trip to the Temple in Jerusalem where certain sacrifices were to occur. But the key to

understanding the biblical timeline of these feast days is this: in addition to the requirement of Israelites being present at the Temple in Jerusalem for the entire 7 days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the first and last days of this feast were set apart as special Sabbaths. This is not the weekly 7th day Sabbath we're talking about, but rather 2 special feast sabbaths. Nonetheless, like the 7th day Sabbath, on these special added sabbaths no work was to be done. Thus, if travel to Jerusalem was required (that is, one wasn't a local resident of Jerusalem), the journey had to conclude BEFORE the 1st day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread since travel wasn't allowed on a sabbath. Therefore, it was typical that since Passover was the day before the Feast of Unleavened Bread, people that traveled (which represented most Jews) made sure they were in Jerusalem in time to also celebrate Passover. It was simply a matter of practicality; there was no way to be at home, kill and cook the lamb on Passover, pack up and transport your family and the lamb and all the makings for the meal to Jerusalem and get there before nightfall... all in the same day. So nearly without fail, those who came by the decree of the Torah to be at the Temple for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, came a few days earlier (just as Jesus and His disciples did) so that they could find lodging and obtain whatever provisions they needed to celebrate these 2 feasts before they started. These 2 special sabbath days that are part of the Feast of Unleavened Bread are in Greek called **sabaton**, and are variously translated into English by saying "sabbath" or "great sabbath", or sometimes "high sabbath". Translating **sabaton** to "sabbath", however, can confuse the special feast day sabbaths with the regular 7th day Sabbath, so translating it to something like "Great Sabbath" helps us to understand that this is a special, but different, kind of sabbath that has mostly the same rules of the 7th day Sabbath; however, these Great Sabbaths are associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

So; it goes like this. Passover on Nisan the 14th is mostly a regular day with the exception that one is to kill and cook a lamb. At sunset Passover ends (because the day of the 14th ends), and the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins (because at that same sunset the day of the 15th begins). In the next couple of hours after sunset, the Hebrews (the Jews) would have their Passover meal with the centerpiece being that cooked lamb. I'll say it another way: on Passover the lamb is killed and cooked; at the beginning of Unleavened Bread, it is eaten. But the real key is to understand that this new day that began at sunset (Nisan 15th, the Feast of Unleavened Bread) is also a Great Sabbath. All work must cease. All travel must cease. Therefore, the day before that Great Sabbath, the day of the Feast of Passover, garnered a nickname: Preparation Day. Why? Because all

preparations for the Passover meal took place then and had to be completed before sunset on Nisan 14th, at which time the next day began and the next day was a special sabbath day to begin the Feast of Matzah. Once more (because it can confuse us): even though it is casually called the Passover meal or Passover seder (with the lamb as the main dish), it is not actually eaten on Passover, it is only prepared on Passover. It is eaten during the first hours of the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

I mentioned this in the previous lesson but it bears repeating: just as in the Western world we have all sorts of nicknames and terms for the days surrounding Christmas and New Year... terms such as the Christmas season, the Holiday Season, the Holidays, Christmas Eve, and a few more, we are familiar enough with their meaning and intent to understand all of these terms as used in a conversation. We're not confused because these terms are not meant in their most technical sense (that is, technically Christmas is a one-day event on December 25th and New Year is a one-day event on January 1st). It was the same concerning the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread in Christ's era. Because of the logistics involved, the 2 feasts would usually be conflated into one term in casual conversation among Jews: Passover regularly meant both of the feasts, and equally Unleavened Bread also meant both the feasts. Yet, the Jews fully understood one another when the conversation might switch from those casual terms to their technical meanings. This is all so challenging for us because most Believers aren't familiar with how the biblical feast days work, but it is also especially challenging because we use a modern version of the Roman calendar. While the Bible defines days as beginning and ending at sunset, we go by a mechanical clock whereby days are defined as beginning and ending at 12 midnight. So, every biblical (every Hebrew) calendar day winds up spanning parts of 2 Roman calendar days because when a calendar day begins and ends is different for a Roman calendar day versus a Hebrew calendar day.

As we go forward in Yeshua's march to the cross as recorded in the Gospels, and everything that surrounds it, we must keep these facts in mind (and these are facts, not speculations). It affects exactly when and what the Last Supper was. It affects whether Christ was killed on Passover day or on the 1st day of Unleavened Bread. It effects on what day He went into the grave, and it affects whether the sabbath the Bible says the Jews were in a hurry to get Christ down from the cross and buried before this sabbath began was a Great Sabbath (a special feast sabbath) or it was the 7th day Sabbath. And then since He definitely arose on the 1st day of the week (what we call Sunday), did He actually remain in

the tomb 3 days and 3 nights, as the sign of Jonah, which Yeshua prophesied He would, or was He there a lesser amount of time? We'll use this information I gave you last week and today as we go along in Matthew, and as we encounter this series of various events (like the Last Supper) as the basis for understanding what occurred, when it occurred, and why it occurred as it did as it encompasses Messiah's death and resurrection. Let's move on now to Matthew verse 3. Open your Bibles to Matthew chapter 26; we'll just read a portion of it.

RE-READ MATTHEW CHAPTER 26:1 - 13

There are 2 events that are being described in what we just read: first, the conspiracy of the Temple authorities to get rid of Yeshua, and second, the "anointing" of Him by the woman in Bethany (do not misconstrue what I mean by anointing, which is to pour out something). I want to create a little background to help us understand what the true motive of the Jewish religious authorities was for this determined drive to do away with this troublesome Galilean man. While it was the Temple authorities (the Sadducees) that seem to be leading this effort to kill Jesus, we also have mention of the scribes and the elders. The scribes and the elders were the religious leaders associated not with Temple but rather with the Synagogue. Likely, however, these Synagogue leaders also were associated with the Judicial branch of Judaism in that era, the Sanhedrin, which was made up of a group of men from both the Temple and Synagogue authorities. Matthew makes it clear that the highest leaders of the Jewish religion wanted this Holy Man from rural Galilee dead; but why? It was primarily for a political purpose, even though these leaders would use their religion as the means to spin matters to accomplish their evil intent.

The Sadducees were the highest Temple authorities and generally speaking were hated by the common Jews because the Sadducee aristocrats were all too happy to work with the Romans. The local Roman authorities had no interest in the Jewish religion, nor did they have anything against it. All they wanted was peace in the region, and for the Jews to pay their taxes, and to find some way to convince the Jewish population to honor Caesar as was required of everyone in their vast empire. It was mandatory that all people of the empire worshipped the Caesar as a god; but the Jews refused and for a long while much bloodshed ensued. Interestingly enough, in time Rome decided it was better to switch than fight and made an exception for the Jews in this regard. Therefore, all they demanded from the Jews was proper respect for Roman law and Caesar as their sovereign; they did not have to worship Caesar as a god.

Another thing that Rome demanded was for the Jews to obey Roman law... to a point. Accommodations were made when Jewish Law and Roman law collided in some cases, but not in others. For instance, even though the Sanhedrin could order the death sentence for a Jew found guilty of breaking a religious law, they couldn't carry out the sentence unless the local Roman governor officially agreed to it. And apparently that didn't happen very often. Rather the Romans were more interested in spending their time executing those Jews who broke Roman laws, and in this matter the Temple leadership had little power other than to appeal it.

In Yeshua's era, the major issue for the Romans was to identify potential Jewish rebels and trouble makers, and deal with them; always in the most gruesome and public way possible... crucifixion. Generally speaking, the Temple authorities had little interest in stopping this atrocity against their own people because it didn't threaten or enhance their power base or their wealth. And... this is critical... the head of the Temple authority in that era (the High Priest) was always an aristocrat, and never of the proper line of Levite Priests, as commanded in the Law of Moses, to be the High Priest. Quite literally, the High Priest was not only illegitimate in that respect but also he occupied an office that was bought and sold, and usually with the support and blessings of the local Roman governor. It was really a political office that masqueraded as a religious office, and its purpose was personal profit and power. All of this background to explain that we must not become distracted by the false accusations against Jesus of blasphemy and insurrection as the supposed reasons that the High Priest wanted Him dead. The concern was one that every politician worries about: a rival coming along and taking the focus off of them. A person that wins the affection of the people, thereby threatening the politician's hold on them. Further, the Temple authorities were charged by Rome with keeping the peace. So, the blame for Jewish riots and uprisings landed on the desk of the High Priest. If he couldn't control the Jewish people, the Romans would facilitate his ouster and get another High Priest who would do a better job of it for them. Therefore, the Temple authorities, while perhaps making a public show of outrage, were (behind the scenes) perfectly fine with Romans soldiers threatening, beating, injuring and even killing those Jews they suspected as being fomenters of unrest because, in the end, it served their purpose.

As good politicians, their decision to kill Christ was never in doubt; it was only how and when. Here in Matthew, it is Caiaphas that is identified as the High Priest, and it was in his palatial home that the conspirators met. They agreed that

they needed to be quite careful about how they went about this, but killing Him was the goal. This might be a good time to note that Caiaphas is not mentioned in the Gospels of Mark or Luke, but he is mentioned by name a few times in John's Gospel. I continue to maintain my belief that the writers of Mark and Luke were gentiles, and so some of the nuances of Jewish society that would matter to Jews (like who the High Priest was at the time) aren't so prevalent in their Gospels because it didn't particularly matter to them. Matthew and John, however, were written by Believing Jews, and so facts such as who occupied the High Priesthood were important to them. There are also extra-biblical records of Caiaphas identified as the High Priest at this time, and Josephus provides one of those reliable records. I highly recommend you get some of the works of Josephus as a wonderful biblical study aid for your library. As a good start, specifically try to obtain Carta's Illustrated "The Jewish War". One place you can find it is online at holylandmarketplace.com. It is a beautiful book, lots of colorful maps, and it will give you some additional context for what was happening in the 1st century in the Holy Land from an eyewitness.

Verse 5 makes clear the political sensitivities that the conspirators were trying to navigate. It was after all the festival period. Jerusalem and its suburbs were swelled by 10-fold their normal size during these feast days with hundreds of thousands of Jewish pilgrims descending from all over the continent and even from North Africa. Religious zeal ran high creating a powder keg of emotions, and something like the murder of this beloved Holy Man whose name was now well known, could spark riots and unrest, which in turn would get these Jewish religious leaders into hot water with the local Roman governor, Pilate. Let's be clear who these rioters would be; likely not the immediate residents of Jerusalem unless they were part of the Zealots party. It would be mostly Galileans who traveled a 2 day's journey to get there, since Yeshua was one of their own. The Judeans had little use for Jesus, although to be sure some would have sided with Him. It is within this backdrop that we find Christ and some of His disciples venturing to nearby Bethany (a Jerusalem village suburb) and the story of Him being anointed with expensive perfume occurs.

We're told that they went to the home of a man named Shim'on, and he is further identified as the man who had ***Tzara'at***. Nearly every English Bible instead assumes this disease is leprosy, because that's essentially how the Greek is written (the Greek is ***lepros***). But what the Jewish Matthew is describing isn't the horribly disfiguring disease of leprosy. The Bible has no interest in such things because fundamentally the Bible is all about spiritual matters, what we

could loosely call theology. The reason that the disease is even mentioned by name (or really, by kind) is because it is a disease brought on by an impure spiritual condition. **Tzara'at** is not a specific disease but rather it's a class of diseases that God is said to bring upon people as an outward revelation of their inward spiritual condition. Generally speaking, these people were outcasts and isolated outside of cities and villages because such impurity could be spread and the people greatly feared it. Why in this case Shim'on seems to still be living in his own home while being afflicted with such a disease I'm not sure and therefore I think we have to reconsider what is being said. It seems to me that what we are reading is not to be taken as "Simon who currently has **Tzara'at**", but rather as "Simon as the man who had **Tzara'at** in the past". That is, he became known in the area for having had it at one time, but no more. Shim'on was such a common name in that era that some other means of knowing which Shim'on was being referred to was needed. So, saying the Shim'on who had **Tzara'at** was a way to do that, and thus to identify whose house Yeshua and the disciples went to.

However whose house they went to is probably not the real issue, but rather what we're meant to notice is the great contrast between the ruthless, wicked, wealthy High Priest Caiaphas with his fabulous mansion, and the evil plotting of he and other Jewish religious leaders to kill God's Son, over and against the humble home of an afflicted but now cured common Jew, Yeshua's unconcern of being near this former outcast, the hospitality this family offers to Jesus and His disciples during the festival period, and then of course this lower-class woman using what must have been her prized possession (maybe an inheritance) to anoint God's Son, Yeshua. How might she have come by such an expensive perfumed ointment we're not told because it's not relevant to the story... at least it isn't to Matthew.

It seems Yeshua was dining with the family when, quite unexpectedly, this unnamed woman produces this expensive ointment (**muron** in Greek), walks up behind Him, and pours it on his head. This expensive stuff is not something a woman would "pour" onto herself; she'd carefully dab it on, making it last as long as possible. But for her, this Holy Man eating at her table is somehow worth more than her most prized possession and so gives it all to Him by literally dumping it on His head as He eats. Let me pause for just a moment to remind you of something: she is in no way thinking to herself "this is God's Son", or "this is the Messiah". These sorts of details have so far been limited to the knowledge of Yeshua's 12 disciples. To my mind, I'm most curious as to why

she did this somewhat shocking act. It is a common thought in Christianity that she was anointing Jesus for His death just as He was anointed for His ministry. Another thought is that she is anointing Him as king. I think we can also guess that perhaps she was simply overcome by this famous man who sat at her table. So, what was her reason? Although Yeshua will supply a definite reason why this was done (as a symbolic act of His traditional Jewish burial preparation), I think it much more likely that she didn't have had a clue why she did it.

I want to share a personal anecdote that may lend some insight into her action. Starting when we were children, we (at least I) might do something, get in trouble for it, and of course my mother would ask: "Why would you do such a thing?" Sometimes I could offer a ready excuse. Other times I was as puzzled by my own behavior as she was. "I don't know" I'd say. Most of the time it was the truth; I didn't know. I think even as adults, and then in later adult life, there are things we do that defies what we have ever normally done, or what any typical person might do. I don't mean this as necessarily bad or unwise things, but rather things that are out of the ordinary for us. I want to give you a real-life example that I still can't fully fathom.

Not long ago I received an unsolicited email from someone (I get quite a few of these). It had Chinese language characters all over it so immediately I was suspicious. Against my better judgment I opened it anyway (something I'm not in the habit of doing) and I can't tell you why I didn't instantly delete it. Attached was a CV... a resume... along with a note. The note said the sender lived in China, and as I read the CV it was an impressive list of education, experiences and achievements in the world of IT and digital communications. He said he had been following Torah Class for some time in China (he could speak English) and that if he could do anything for the ministry, he'd like to. I get these sorts of emails from time to time, and usually don't pursue them because of their uncertain source. But, uncharacteristically for me, I responded and after a couple of intriguing emails back and forth he suggested we have a Zoom meeting. It was an interesting meeting to say the least; but my natural skepticism remained, so I contacted a person I know in Israel and sent him the resume and note to look over. "Too good to be true" he replied. I thought, yeah that's what I thought, too. Still, I said how about I schedule another Zoom meeting with this fellow and include my friend in Israel to give him a chance to interrogate this man and see if he could crack the code. The meeting lasted about an hour, and a few minutes after the meeting my friend emailed me: "I think he's for real".

After pondering this for a few days, I contacted this man again, and after speaking with him for a few minutes I said I sure wished there was a way we could get together in person (I'm old school about these sorts of things). He said we could. I was a little taken aback since he was in China. Well, it turned out, after our first couple of communications, he was no longer in China; now he's in a city not far from our facilities, having traveled here just a couple days earlier. We meet, he tells me he'd like to do this amazing technology work for us to help get Torah Class into China in a form that could aid the millions of Chinese Christians there with understanding God's Word from a Hebrew heritage faith perspective, and this help included translating the hundreds of Torah Class transcripts to Mandarin. He says he and his non-English speaking wife (both Believers) simply took a leap of faith, packed a couple of suitcases, put their lives and his career in China on hold, and flew to the USA from Shanghai, not knowing if this was simply his own religious zeal driving him to do this, or if it was the Lord directing him, or if it was something I would even consider pursuing. So, I asked him why he did this. He said: "Truthfully, I don't really know", and then followed it up by explaining that he just had this strong inner feeling that wouldn't leave him alone that the Lord wanted him to go to the USA without having any idea what... if anything... might come from this.

In the end I was so taken by his candor that I managed to find a little bit of budget to hire him (for a fraction of what he had been earning back home), and while I really can't talk about it just yet, we are well down the road to launching something pretty big concerning the distribution of Torah Class lessons on a true worldwide basis, including into China. Something which will allow us to reach areas of our planet in ways that were until now, impossible for us. This faithful Chinese man couldn't explain where this thought came from or why he took such a risk. I think, as with this humble and obedient man from China, this obedient and humble woman in Bethany did something that only moments earlier she couldn't have imagined herself doing. If asked afterward why she did this amazing act of pouring such expensive perfume onto Yeshua's surprised head, I imagine she would have said: "I don't know; it's just something I knew I was supposed to do". And that my friends, is how it often goes when our God intends to do His will through us, without us having a clue about what's going on. Yet, we move forward... even taking risks... in faith.

Naturally since this perfumed ointment-pouring event was only between this woman and Yeshua, none of the other people in the room felt that same divine impulse nor could they fathom why anyone would do such a seemingly irrational

thing which, on the surface, appeared as rather senseless and luxuriously wasteful. So, Christ's disciples' instant reaction was to be incredulous. Most of them were poor fishermen who daily struggled to provide for their families, and they just witnessed a woman suddenly dump a lot of money's worth of perfume on their Master's head. Being men, I'm certain they thought... yeah, leave it to a female to do something impulsive like that based on what was most likely only an emotional outburst. It didn't impress them, it infuriated them. Why waste something so valuable like this? And since they and Jesus had a natural concern for their truly poverty-stricken brethren, all they could think was that if she was bound and determined to do something good with this valuable ointment then she should have given it them, then they could sell it and assist many poor people with the funds. But now it's gone and the only good it did was to make Yeshua smell nice and the woman feel good. But Christ knew exactly why she did it, even though she nor anyone else did.

^{CJB} **Matthew 26:10-12** *"Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing for me. ¹¹ The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. ¹² She poured this perfume on me to prepare my body for burial.*

This breathtaking symbolic act was done without her understanding why she did it; but there is also no reason for us to criticize the disciples because if we were standing there in that home we, too, likely would have been astonished... and not in a good way. There's really no reason to think they should have understood. This good work by this woman can only be truly deciphered in retrospect; no one in that house could foresee what is about to happen over the next couple of days as Yeshua gives up His life for sinful humanity. And, I can't imagine that Christ telling His disciples not to get so upset about it because the poor are always going to be around anyway (which of course is true) would have settled very well. This statement of course wasn't to dismiss the poor, but probably was meant to say that while there will always be innumerable and ongoing opportunities to serve the poor, Jesus their Lord and Master will only be here to be served for a precious few more hours.

In fact, Yeshua says that instead of her strange act becoming something that goes unknown in later times as everything eventually does with the vapor of life, wherever the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven is preached well into the future, this is a story that will be heard and loved and remembered by all.

We'll close for today and continue when next we meet.