

FOURTH SABBATH.

SUBJECT: *The anointing at Bethany*, Mark 14: 3-9. See Matt. 26: 1-16; Luke 22: 1-6; John 12: 1-4.

The anointing took place at Bethany in the house of Simon, whom the Lord had cured of leprosy. Lazarus was at the feast and Martha served. Simon was likely a near relative of the "Family of Bethany." Perhaps he was that very leper whose case is recorded Matt. 8: 1-4. This was the last visit of Jesus to Bethany.

Vv. 3. *The woman was Mary*. See John 12: 3. *Spikenard*, pure nard, a very valuable sweet smelling ointment. In hot eastern countries such anointings were most welcome.

Vv. 4. Judas (See John 12: 4) was the spokesman of the disciples in being angry at this "extravagance."

Vv. 5. 300 pence—£9 or £10 sterling.—What was the true motive of Judas? What did he pretend? See John 12.

Vv. 6. The Lord defends her; her motive was pure; the act was timely; it was all she could do.

Vv. 7. See Deut. 15: 11.

Vv. 8. Compare John 12: 7. She did not intend it for His burying; she did not expect His death: but that death was near, and no other anointing was permitted her, though the spices had been brought to the grave.

Vv. 9. In the act of love done to Him she has erected to herself an eternal monument, as lasting as the Word of God. From generation to generation this prophecy has been fulfilled; and we are fulfilling it in the Sabbath Schools to-day.

Let us do what we can for Jesus. Those who have no caskets of nard to offer may have two mites.

Compare the wasteful prudence of Mary with the soul-destroying greed of Judas.

If we give our souls to Him we can consider nothing else too precious to offer.

FIFTH SABBATH.

SUBJECT: *The betrayal*, Mark 14: 43-50. Matt. 26: 47-56; Luke 22: 47-53; John 18: 1-12.

After the Lord and His disciples had eaten the Passover and the Supper, in the upper room, in Jerusalem, and after Jesus had spoken the words and uttered the prayer recorded by John (Chapter 14 to 17.) He with His eleven disciples passed out of the city, over the brook Kedron, and sought rest and retirement in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus knew that His "hour was come." He knew the cup which He had to drink. He prayed in agony three times, to be spared the awful conflict; but submitted Himself meekly and wholly to the Father's will. Look at the scene: the garden—the shades of night—the sleeping disciples—the Lord alone, and lonely bearing the sins of the world. Angels comfort Him. He knew well what was coming; He had warned His disciples, but they "could not watch one hour."

Judas knew the garden well, for he had been there often with the Master. None but

the disciples did know that Jesus was to spend the night there, and none of the disciples but Judas would betray the secret. The chief priests had made up their mind not to touch Jesus during the feast lest there should be an uproar among the people; but when Judas offered to deliver Him into their hands in the dead of night, in a lonely spot, where there was no friendly "multitude," they greedily accepted the offer. What was the pay for which Judas did this? Who came with him? What sign had he given them?

Look at the crowd of priests, scribes, soldiers, &c., coming with the Traitor at their head. Jesus knows they are at hand and warns the disciples.

Vv. 44, 45.—*The Betrayer's kiss!* How awful a sin it is to pretend love to Jesus when we are unfaithful to Him!—to be counted for friends when we are enemies! (Compare the accounts in the other gospels.) See the rebuke given to the traitor, and the repulse of the multitude. (John 18: 6.)

Vv. 47.—*Who drew the sword?* (John 18.) What was the servant's name? What did Jesus say and do with respect to Malchus? (See Luke 22: 57.) What aid does Christ say he could have? Meaning of *legion*? What Scriptures foretell His suffering? (See Psalms 22 and 69, Isaiah 53 and Dan. 9: 24-27.) How did the disciples act? One a traitor, eleven deserters! ("But when the eleven forsook the Lord, other disciples, such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, took a more decided stand for Him. The Church can never fail; new Christians always take the place of the old ones.")

1. Note the kiss of Judas: the sign of love become a serpent's bite. The awful change in Judas, from an honoured disciple to a base betrayer. Such changes are frequent still.

2. Jesus is taken in the name of religion by the authorities of the temple. They pretend that they are serving God when persecuting His Son.

3. The folly of violence,—illustrated by Peter's cutting off Malchus's ear. Violence of this sort in the service of God will only 'take away the ears' of people subjected to it.

4. See Christ's perfect submission and resignation: His fettered hands break the bars of death.

5. Angels—72,000 were ready to come to Jesus' aid: but the Scripture must be fulfilled: He must tread the winepress alone.

News of the Church.

Nova Scotia.

Miss JOHNS, the young lady who made application to be received as one of the Foreign Missionaries of the Church, and was accepted, took her departure from Halifax in the steamship *Nova Scotian*, on the 22nd ult, en route