

das's native town, and "Simon's son" is added to distinguish him from another disciple named Judas. John fixes this complaint on Judas; but others also grumbled. (See note on verse 10.) **Which should betray him.** Who afterward was a traitor.

5. Why was not this ointment sold. Such a question, it has been suggested, would astonish Mary, and very likely make her feel guilty. **Three hundred pence.** The word "penny" here stands for the denarius of the Romans, "the common sum paid for a workman's daily wage." It is not unlikely that the penny of the early English was of the same relative value, hence was used by our translators as an equivalent. But there was no certain value in old English attached to the word "penny." Three hundred shillings—from forty-five to fifty dollars of our money, with a purchasing power five or six times as great—would fairly represent the ~~sum~~ here mentioned. **Given to the poor.** While one remembers that Judas was neither paying for nor spending this luxurious perfume, one hears an echo of his words in much modern talk. "Why is not this collection taken for home missions instead of foreign missions?" asks a man who gives nothing to either cause. "The running expenses of our church are extravagant; better by far put up a new town pump, or endow a bed in a hospital, and economize church expenditure." But when the town pump is put up and the hospital bed is endowed we find that it was not the grumblers who contributed the money, but the people who had done their financial duty toward the church.

6. Not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief. Any money that he could possibly embezzle he wanted to have within his reach. **Had the bag.** He kept the chest or bag in which the treasure of the little company of twelve was stored. **Bare what was put therein.** Revised Version: "Having the bag, took away what was put therein." Why did Jesus permit Judas to be treasurer? He gave to Judas, as to each of the others, the best opportunities for spiritual growth. Judas's financial abilities were at once his best means of grace and his most dangerous temptation. It is always so. Opportunity brings perils.

7. Then said Jesus, Let her alone. This was addressed not only to Judas. Others, who cherished no covetousness and planned no theft, had, nevertheless, "murmured" against Mary because she spent money on sentiment (Matt. 26. 8, 9; Mark 14. 4, 5), for they also, like certain folk nowadays, thought such expenditure crime. **Against the day of my burying hath she kept this.** Or, "Suffer her to keep it against

the day of my burying," as if only a part of the ointment had been used, and the rest was to be reserved for the burial. Probably Mary knew no more about the coming death of Jesus than did the rest, but, as true lovers are sure to do, she builded better than she knew. There was no calculation in what she did. It was Judas, not Mary, who knew the value of the ointment. She only knew that it was all she had to give. There are many now of the same mind as that of the guests at Bethany, who asked to what purpose is that waste. They see here and there a life wholly given to Christ, and cannot help counting it a mistake, a waste, a loss. The divine answer is, "Perhaps such a sacrifice, judged by worldly prudence, is injudicious, but these have done what they could."

8. For the poor always ye have with you. Not, therefore to relieve them is a duty that can be any time attended to; but, therefore to relieve them one should not depend upon exceptional gifts or emotions; they are constantly with you, and you should be constantly relieving them. The gift of a fifty-dollar flask of perfume for their relief would be as availing as the gift of a Christmas dinner to all the poor in a great metropolis, such as is annually proposed by some well-meaning organizations. Christmas dinners are well enough, but the poor get hungry three times each day, three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, and what they need is opportunity to support themselves. **Me ye have not always.** How soon they were to lose him none of them surmised—not even (probably) the traitor.

9. People of the Jews. See our note in the last lesson on John's use of the phrase "Jews"—partly to distinguish residents of Judea from Galileans like himself and hundreds of others who now crowded to the feast, and partly to make the story plain to readers who, Gentiles themselves, knew little about the Jews. **They came not for Jesus' sake only.** They came from a poor reason, then; nevertheless, it was better they came. Curiosity is not the best of God's angels, but it has beckoned many a soul to the Saviour; even those who come to scoff sometimes remain to pray.

10. Put Lazarus also to death. "We read of no such deep malignity as this toward the other recipients of our Lord's mercies. Was it a crime to have received such a surpassing benefit? Was it mere envy and rage that one should live to bless so great a benefactor? Not altogether so; but their object was, as we have seen in the case of the blind beggar (John 9. 24), at all risks to destroy the credit of our Lord's miracles. The poor beggar's testimony they might