

SUMMARY: The telling of the event at the home of Simon the leper is suggested to illustrate conflicts in the scriptures. It actually reflects writers writing from different points of view. The composite of the details is: At the home of a Pharisee called Simon the leper a woman named Mary who was a sinner took a one pound alabaster vial of very costly perfume called nard and poured it over his whole body including his head and feet.

The event of a woman anointing Jesus with perfume in the four Gospels may possibly be addressing different events, or they may all be the same event. To rise to the level of being a mistake in the Bible, it would need to show a contradiction rather than the simple reporting of different details by different writers. If all the details will reasonably fit in the same story, it would not be a contradiction.

THE DETAILS IN THE VERSES

To understand the situation, the elements of potential conflict are listed below and are color coded here and in the verses:

Where: The home of a Pharisee called Simon the leper

Who: A woman named Mary who was a sinner

What: A one-pound alabaster vial of very costly perfume called nard

How: Poured it over his whole body including his head and feet

THE COMPOSITE OF THE DETAILS:

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ACTUAL VERSES:

In the following the entire section of verses addressing the topic are listed at the start, with the verses removed from the listing which do not directly impact the topic for brevity. You should read the entire section in your Bible.

Matthew 26:6-13 | NASB 6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, 7 a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it on His head as He reclined at the table. 12 “For when she poured this perfume on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial.

Mark 14:1-9 | NASB 3 While He was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, and reclining at the table, there came a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume of pure nard; and she broke the vial and poured it over His head. 8 “She has done what she could; she has anointed My body beforehand for the burial.

Luke 7:36-50 | NASB 36 Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 And there was a

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woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume. "You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.

John 12:1-8 | NASB 1 Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him. 3 Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.