

The Gospel According to

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

NOTHING RECORDED

NOTHING RECORDED

CHAPTER 7, VERSES 36-50

NOTHING RECORDED

7:36 - And one¹ of the Pharisees² desired³ him that he would eat⁴ with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house⁵, and sat down⁶ to meat⁷.

7:37 - And, behold, a woman⁸ in the city⁹, which was a sinner¹⁰, when she knew¹¹ that Jesus sat at meat⁷ in the Pharisee's house⁵, brought an alabaster¹² box of ointment¹³,

7:38 - And stood¹⁴ at his feet¹⁵ behind him¹⁶ weeping¹⁷, and began to wash his feet¹⁸ with tears¹⁹, and did wipe²⁰ them with the hairs of her head²¹, and kissed²² his feet¹⁵, and anointed²³ them with the ointment²⁴.

7:39 - Now when the Pharisee² which had bidden²⁵ him saw it²⁶, he spake within himself²⁷, saying, This man, if he were a prophet²⁸, would have known who and what manner of woman²⁹ this is that toucheth him³⁰: for she is a sinner¹⁰.

7:40 - And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon³¹, I have somewhat to say³² unto thee. And he saith, Master³³, say on³⁴.

7:41 - There was a certain³⁵ creditor³⁶ which had two debtors³⁷: the one owed³⁸ five hundred pence³⁹, and the other fifty⁴⁰.

7:42 - And when they had nothing to pay⁴¹, he frankly⁴² forgave them both⁴³. Tell me⁴⁴ therefore, which of them will love him most⁴⁵?

7:43 - Simon³¹ answered and said, I suppose⁴⁶ that he, to whom he forgave most⁴⁷. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged⁴⁸.

7:44 - And he turned to the woman⁸, and said unto Simon³¹, Seest thou this woman⁸? I entered into thine house⁴⁹, thou gavest me no water⁵⁰ for my feet⁵¹: but she hath washed my feet with tears¹⁹, and wiped them with the hairs of her head²¹.

7:45 - Thou gavest me no kiss⁵²: but this woman⁸ since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet⁵³.

7:46 - My head⁵⁴ with oil⁵⁵ thou didst not anoint⁵⁶: but this woman⁸ hath anointed²³ my feet with ointment²⁴.

7:47 - Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins⁵⁷, which are many⁵⁸, are forgiven⁵⁹; for she loved much⁶⁰: but to whom little is forgiven⁵⁹, the same loveth little⁶¹.

7:48 - And he said unto her, Thy sins⁵⁷ are forgiven⁵⁹.

7:49 - And they that sat at meat⁷ with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins⁵⁷ also?

7:50 - And he said to the woman⁸, Thy faith⁶² hath saved thee⁶³; go in peace⁶⁴.

CHRONOLOGY: After April 30, 28CE; **In the Spring of 28CE**, “The precise date and place of the next recorded event in this Galilean journey of the Christ are left undetermined.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 561). McConkie places the date much later in the chronology. He wrote, “It is now autumn, A.D. 28. Jesus has been traveling, teaching, testifying, and healing for nearly two years.” (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 135).

LOCATION: A Galilean city in relatively near proximity to Nain; possibly Magdala, Nazareth, Shunem, Sepphoris, or another towns within a day’s journey of Nain. Edersheim wrote, “It can scarcely have occurred in the quiet little town of Nain, indeed, is scarcely congruous with the scene which had been there enacted. And yet it must have followed almost immediately upon it.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 561).

COMMENTARY: Jesus was invited into the home of a Pharisee named Simon. The Pharisees were an elite group of men who considered themselves to be experts in the Law. They were scattered throughout Israel, with a presence in nearly every synagogue and town. We are not sure of Simon’s motives, but he invited Jesus to attend a banquet in his home. Jesus accepted the invitation, but when arriving at the man’s home He was denied the hospitality required by their culture. Jesus was offered no water or servant to wash his feet when he arrived. He was not greeted with the ritual kiss, or provided the expected oils or ointments for anointing the head, arms and feet. We suppose that this was disrespectfully denied to Jesus due to pride and disbelief on the part of the Simon. While they sat and dined in an open area commonly accessed by the public, a repentant woman who knew Jesus was dining with the Pharisee came in the attitude of gratitude and worship. She provided all the hospitalities that Simon neglected and did so in a very humble manner. She used her tears for water and her hair for a towel. As she proceeded, Simon recognized her as a known sinner. He questioned in his mind why Jesus, a man who many believed to be a prophet, didn’t see the uncleanness of the woman. How could He allow her to touch Him? Reading the man’s thoughts, Jesus provided a parable. The parable taught of a creditor who had loaned money to two men. The first a substantial amount and the other only a tenth thereof. When the two men could not cover their debts, the creditor forgave their loans. Jesus then asked which man would love the creditor more. Simon answered that the one who owed the most. Simon didn’t recognize that the parable spoke of the woman and him. She loved most because she had been forgiven most, and she had been forgiven most because she had loved most. Jesus then dismissed her with the peace that comes from faithful repentance.

FOOTNOTES:

1- **one** – The word “one” is translated from the Greek word “ἓν” or “tis”. It means a certain or certain one. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “And one” as “And some one” (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 36, page 118). The inference here is that the “one” Pharisee was like unto the rest, or typical in view and behavior.

This chapter stands as a separate and distinct story in the Savior’s mortal ministry. Even so, many scholars cannot help but see the similarities between stories in Matthew, Mark and John. Most feel that the account in Matthew and Mark originate from one common account. The accounts read as follows;

“Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.” (Matthew 26:6-13).

“And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come forehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.” (Mark 14:3-9).

“Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.” (John 12:3-8).

Because the various accounts have similarities; a man named Simon, a woman anointing Jesus, and the used of expensive ointment, many are tempted to declare the accounts as one story. Even so Edersheim concludes, “Yet the two narratives have really nothing in common, save that in each case there was a ‘Simon’ – perhaps the commonest of Jewish names; a woman who anointed; and that Christ, and those who were present, spoke and acted in accordance with other passages in the Gospel-history: that is, true to their respective histories.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 563).

It should be noted that the Simon in Luke is classified as a Pharisee, while Matthew and Mark classify him as a Leper. Surely, a Pharisee would not maintain his standing among the fraternity of Pharisees after contracting leprosy, which is classified as an unclean condition.

Another significance conflict between the similarities of the associated stories is the woman in the story. Luke refrains from revealing her name, but is clear that she was a sinner, more specifically one who had sinned much. Matthew and Mark indicate that the woman in their story was none other than Mary of Bethany. Mary was one of the faithful and valiant women who followed Jesus. Ogden and Skinner wrote, “This may be one episode, with different details emphasized by various Gospel writers, or perhaps there were two separate incidents. The latter seems possible because John identifies the woman who anointed Jesus as Mary of Bethany, sister of Lazarus, whereas Luke indicates that the unnamed woman was ‘a sinner’.” (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, pages 542-543).





Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 195).

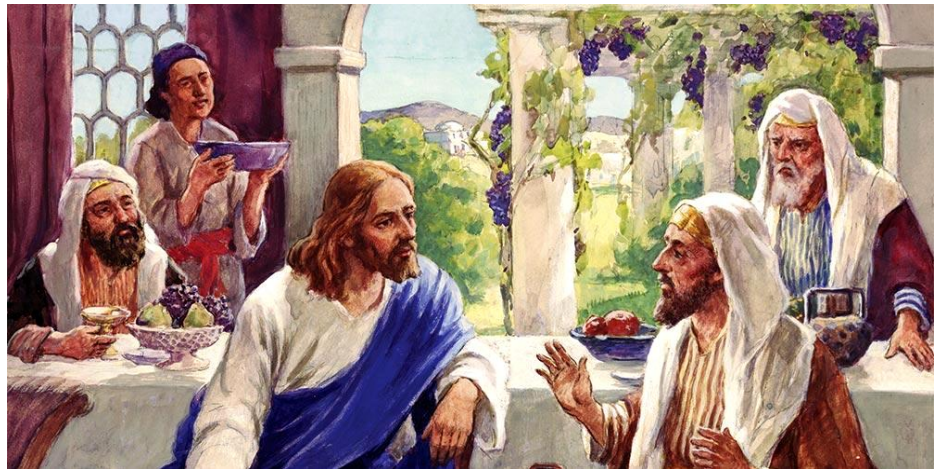
Another difference between accounts is the focus of the anointing. **“Matthew and Mark note that Jesus’ head was anointed, whereas Luke and John record that Jesus’ feet were both sacred and significant, sometimes depending on the ordinance and its purpose.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 543). Even so, the differences in the stories give cause to believe that they may be separate and distinct accounts.

One final element that should be considered when evaluating whether or not the accounts are the same story is their location. Luke’s story takes place shortly after the miracle in Nain. Though it may not have been in Nain, it was surely in a nearby city, possibly Magdala, Nazareth, or Shunem. Matthew and Mark place the setting in Bethany, just East of Jerusalem. John’s story doesn’t name a specific location, but it is set during the last week of Jesus’ life therefore the account would have taken place in or near Jerusalem. Farrar wrote, **“But not even yet apparently were the deeds and sayings of this memorable day concluded; for in the narrative of St. Luke it seems to have been on the same day that, perhaps at Nain, perhaps at Magdala, Jesus received and accepted an invitation from one of the Pharisees who bore the very common name of Simon.”** (The Story of a Beautiful

For all these reason, I would consider Luke story to be a separate and distinct narrative.

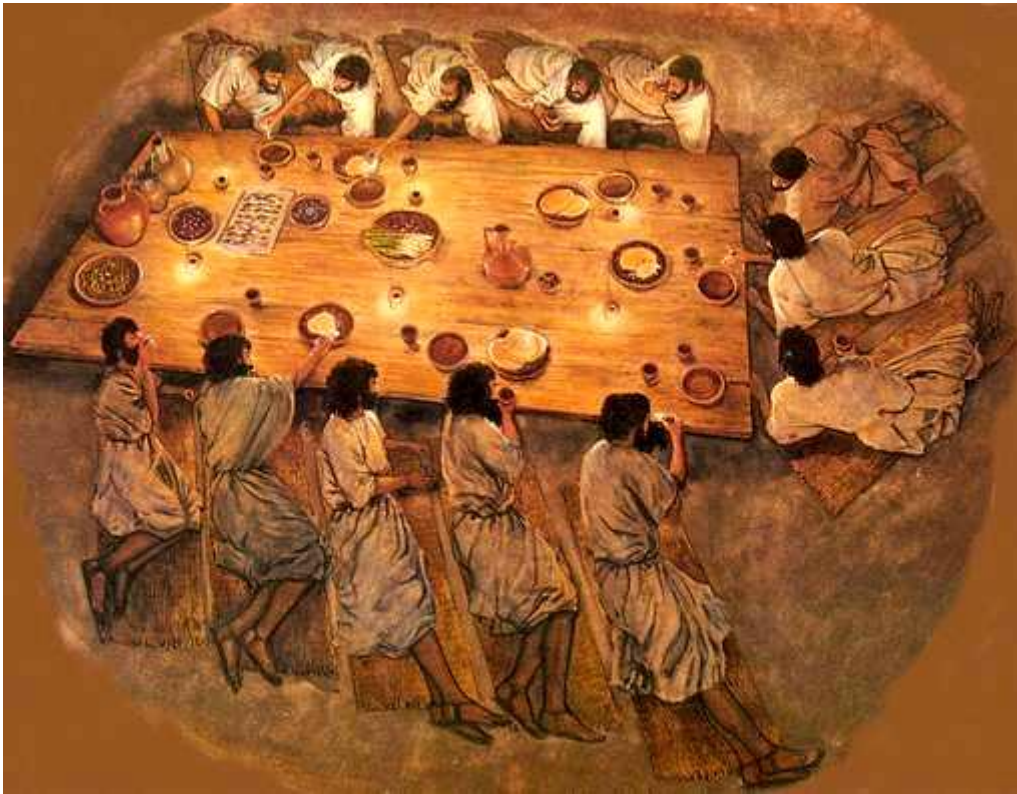
- 2- **Pharisees** – The title “Pharisees” is translated from the Greek word “Φαρισαῖος” or “Pharisaios”. It means a separatist, and refers to a sect or party of the Pharisees. The Pharisees were a closed sect of Judaism, which had strict requirements for admission. The requirements included a demonstrated mastery of the Law, an agreement with pharisaical beliefs, and a verified moral character. It often took years for the Pharisees to admit a new initiate. Unlike the Sadducees, the Pharisees did not require a priestly pedigree. They were typically lay men. **“Sociologically speaking, there is no question of including the Pharisees among the upper classes: their name means ‘the separate ones, i.e. the holy ones, the true community of Israel, and as we shall see they were for the most part men of the people, with no scribal education. But they were so closely linked with the scribes that it is difficult to separate them, the more so since the scribes’ rise to power marked the rise of the Pharisees also.”** (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament period, Joachim Jeremias, page 246).

Josephus records that there were only about 6,000 Pharisees at the time of Jesus. This only makes up a small percentage of the population at the time of Jesus. It is estimated that the population of Israel was between 500,000 and 600,000. That places the population of Pharisees at between 1.0% and 1.2%. Even so, **“There was probably no town or village inhabited by Jews which had not its Pharisees, although they would, of course, gather in preference about Jerusalem with its Temple, and what, perhaps would have been even dearer to the heart of a genuine Pharisee—its four hundred and eighty synagogues, its Sanhedrims (great and small), and its schools of study. There could be no difficulty in recognizing such an one. Walking behind him, the chances were, he would soon halt to say his prescribed prayers.”** (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, page 119). It is clear that the Sadducees controlled the temple and the upper hierarchy of Jews, but the Pharisees controlled the synagogues and controlled much of the thoughts and teachings of the common people. In fact, they saw themselves as the guardians and protectors of the Law. They set themselves apart from everyone else in belief, attitude and dress. **“It would have been difficult to proceed far either in Galilee or in Judaea without coming into contact with an altogether peculiar and striking individuality, differing from all around, and which would at once arrest attention. This was the Pharisee. Courted or feared, shunned or flattered, reverently looked up to or laughed at, he was equally a power everywhere, both ecclesiastically and politically, as belonging to the most influential, the most zealous, and the most closely-connected religious fraternity, which in the pursuit of its objects spared neither time nor trouble, feared no danger, and shrunk from no consequences. Familiar as the name sounds to readers of the New Testament and students of Jewish history, there is no subject on which more crude or inaccurate notions prevail than that of Pharisaism, nor yet any which, rightly understood, gives fuller insight into the state of Judaism at the time of our Lord, or better illustrates His words and His deeds.”** (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, page 119).



- 3- **desired** – The word “desired” is translated from the Greek word “ἐρωτώ” or “erōtāō”. It means to ask, to question, to request, entreat, beg or beseech. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “desired” as “asked” (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 36, page 118).

We know little about the invitation that was issued from Simon the Pharisee to Jesus. We do know that an invitation to dine was one of great importance. **“In some parts of the East, a custom of double invitations to an entertainment has been observed. Some time before the feast is to be served, an invitation is sent forth; and then, when the appointed time draws near, a servant is sent again, this time to announce that everything is ready.”** (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 77). Invited guests were considered a great honor. They were treated as dignitaries, or as if they were guests of high social status, regardless of their actual social-economic class. Even a poor guest was to be treated as though he were someone of great importance. This fact makes the invited meal that Jesus accepted all the more peculiar. Against tradition, Jesus was not treated with the respect and honor expected for a guest. Farrar wrote, **“The cause or object of the invitation we do not know; but as yet Jesus had come to no marked or open rupture with the Pharisaic party, and they may even have imagined that He might prove of use to them as the docile instrument of their political and social purposes. Probably, in inviting Him, Simon was influenced partly by willingness to show a distant approval of something which may have struck him in Christ’s looks, or words, or ways. All the ordinary attentions which would have been paid to an honored guest were coldly and cautiously omitted.”** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar’s Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 195).



One might speculate that Simon the Pharisee lacked respect for Jesus and His teachings. Jesus was not a traditionalist; supporting the false laws and doctrines created by the Jews over time. It was these laws that the Pharisees arduously protected. Edersheim wrote, “The invitation of Simon the Pharisee to his table does not necessarily indicate, that he had been impressed by the teaching of Jesus, any more than the supposed application to his case of what is called the ‘parable’ of the much and the little forgiven debtor implies, that he had received from the Savior spiritual benefit, great or small.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 563). It is more likely that Simon the Pharisee had brought Jesus to his table for evaluation. As a Pharisee, he would have seen it as his responsibility to investigate Jesus and his teachings. This would have placed him in a condescending role. Skousen writes, “A sophisticated and learned Pharisee named Simon thought he would invite Jesus to dinner and perhaps study this famous stranger at closer range.” (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 316).

It was considered a great honor to be invited to someone’s house for a meal. Likewise it would have been considered highly

offensive to decline the offer without legitimate reason. In the Jewish mindset, reasons would consist of the ritual cleanliness of the host and the house it would be held in. Jesus would have little social reason not to accept since he was known to break tradition and eat with the unclean. Talmage wrote, “Jesus accepted the Pharisee’s invitation, as He had accepted the invitations of others, including even publicans, and those called by the rabbis, sinners.” (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 190). The people might have seen the Pharisee as a righteous man with high observance to ritual purity, but Jesus would have seen him as sinner; similar to the many sinful people he had dined with prior. Elder McConkie wrote, “Now he accepts the invitation of one who wears the mantle of religion, but who has not received a remission of his sins in the water of baptism, an whose presence a woman of ill repute will come to render to Jesus the obeisance and respect that his host chose not to bestow.” (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 136). The Pharisee in this story is a great example of how pride can cloud our minds regarding our own worthiness and cleanliness before the Lord.

- 4- **eat** – The word “eat” is translated from the Greek word “φάγω” or “phago”. It means to eat, consume, take in a meal, or devour. The symbolism of eating is described as “Imparting the quality of that which is consumed to the consumer.” (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 59).

Eating or partaking of a meal, in ancient Palestine, was a special event. It was over a meal that feuds were settled, covenants between people were entered, and negotiations were made. When a banquet was held, it was assumed that significant conversation would take place. It was open to witnesses and seemingly uninvited guests to come and watch. They were not invited to partake of the food, but rather witness the proceedings. This practice gave validity to the agreements and covenants that may be entered into. While it does not appear that the Pharisees intended on any such conversation, it was still a banquet open to curious observers. Talmage wrote, “In addition to these facts relating to the usages of the time it should be further remembered that dwellings were not protected against intrusion by such amenities of privacy as now prevail. It was not unusual at that time in Palestine for visitors and even strangers, usually men however, to enter a house at meal time, observe the procedure and even speak to the guests, all without bidding or invitation.” (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 190).

When a banquet was held, the host was required to offer the guest hospitalities. He would provide water in ritually clean pots by the entrance for the washing of the hands and face. He would provide servants to remove the sandals of the guests and wash their dirty, travel worn feet. The servants would then anoint their dry, sun weathered feet and body with oil. Finally, the host would greet them with a ceremonial kiss on their cheeks. They would enjoy the best food together. Dancing and songs were typically part of the meal, and the guests was treated with great respect and honor.

In spite of tradition, Fitzmyer notes that the Pharisee treated Jesus as a degenerate rather than a respected prophet. Fitzmyer translated this passage “would eat” as “to dine with him... Here he is depicting treating them in the same way he would treat tax-collectors and sinners. No motive for the invitation is assigned. The Pharisee has heard about Jesus, just as has the sinful woman.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 688). While they might have dined together, it was not the banquet one would have expected for a guest. Matthews clarifies, “These men of the East believe that a person who becomes their guest is sent to them by God. Thus their hospitality becomes a sacred duty. When one such a host entertained Westerners, he was so happy that, he wept tears of joy that ‘Heaven had sent him guests!’.” (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 87). Even an enemy, when invited to dine, was shown these honors. “One remarkable feature of Oriental hospitality is that sometimes an enemy is received as a guest, and as long as he remains in that relationship, he is perfectly safe and is treated as a friend. There are certain Oriental tribes of tent-dwellers who have the rule that an enemy who has ‘once dismounted and touched the rope of a single tent, is safe’.” (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 89). The Pharisee failed to treat Jesus with accepted hospitality, and consequently treated Him offensively. He treated Jesus as though He were a sinner, most especially someone who had committed a grievous sin. Even an enemy would have been treated with greater hospitality.

- 5- **the Pharisee’s house** – The term “house” is translated from the Greek word “οἶκος” or “oikia”. It means a house, an inhabited edifice, a dwelling, or property.

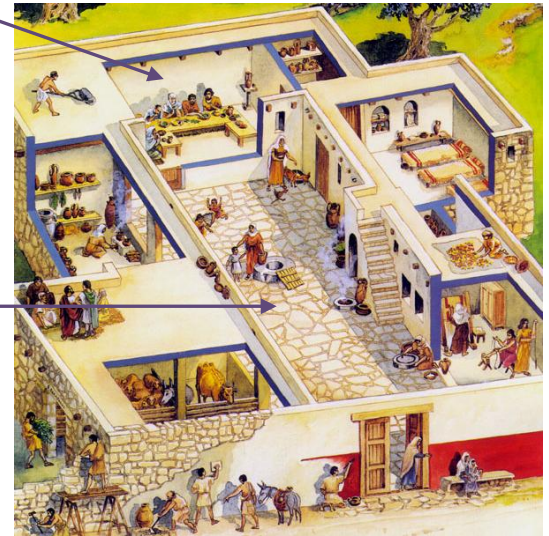
As stated previously, most Pharisees were members of the upper class. They were, for the most part, rich. It could be assumed that this Pharisee enjoyed a wealthy lifestyle, and this idea is supported by his house. Poorer Jews lived in simple homes without a courtyard, or adequate space to hold a banquet. In this scriptural passage, “the scene is the courtyard of the house of Simon the Pharisee. The houses of well-to-do people were built round an open courtyard in the form of a hollow square. Often in the courtyard there would be a garden and a fountain; and there in the warm weather meals were eaten. It was the custom that when a Rabbi was at a meal in such a

house, all kinds of people came in—they were quite free to do so—to listen to the pearls of wisdom which fell from his lips. That explains the presence of the woman.” (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 94).

According to the tradition of the time, an invitation to the wealthy home of a Pharisee would have been a great honor. Jesus and any other guests would have “removed their sandals, lest the pollutions of the street contaminate the mats and rugs on which family prayers were offered.” (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 136). They would have been treated with hospitalities before proceeding into the rest of the house. Most feel that the banquet, or meal, was enjoyed in the open courtyard of the house, though Edersheim speculates that it may have been offered in a special dining room common to the rich and powerful. He wrote, “And now, from the open courtyard, up the verandah-step, perhaps through an antechamber, and by the open door, passed the figure of a woman into the festive reception-area and dining-hall – the Teraqlin (triclinium) of the Rabbis.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 564). Whether in the courtyard, or in a triclinium, is probably of little consequence. It was “at the dining table they reclined on couches with their feet outward from the table, and the dining hall was accessible to others than those bidden to partake of its appetite-satisfying bounties.” (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 136-137).

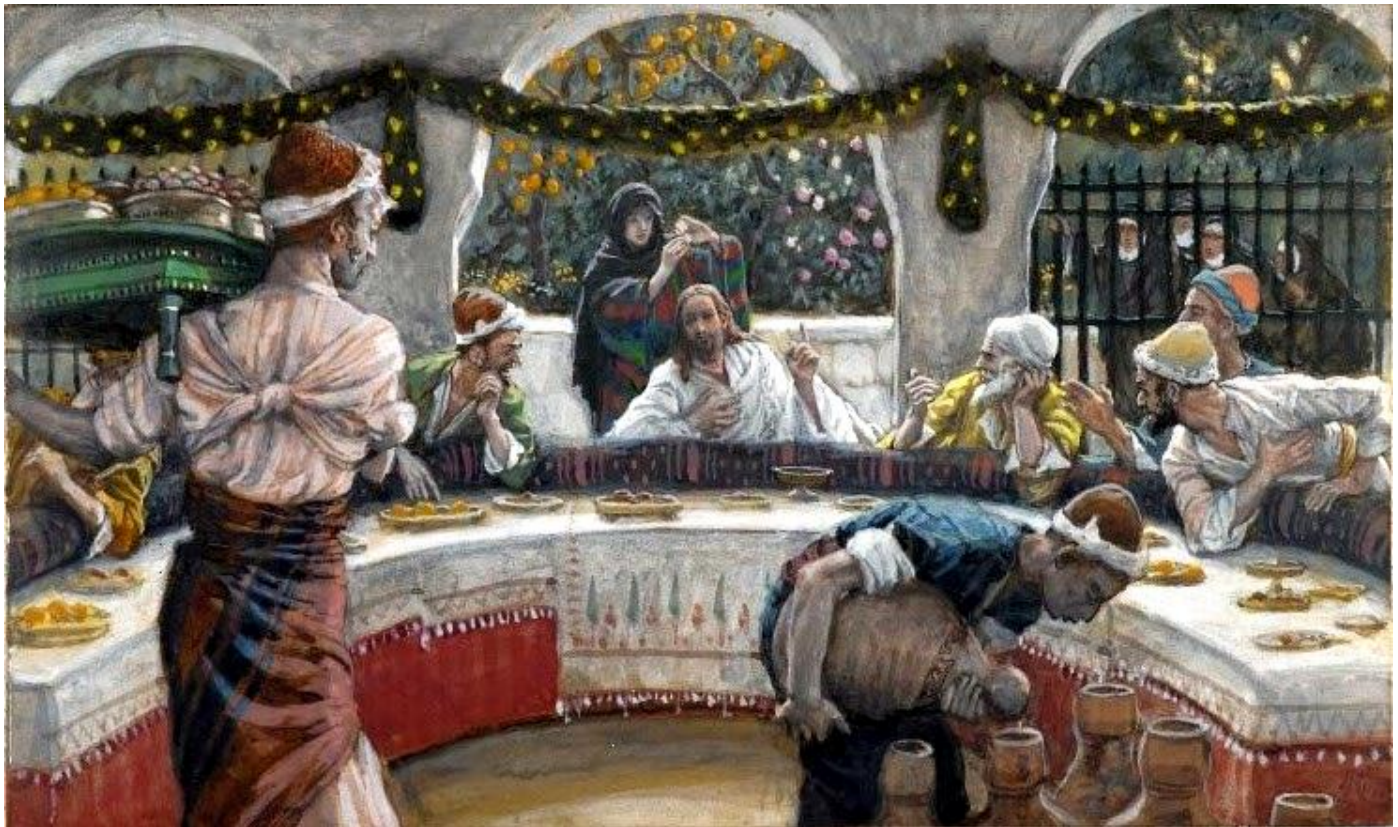
TRICLINIUM
– SPECIAL
DINING
ROOM

OPEN ROOF
COURTYARD



The house of wealthy

an image OF JESUS eating in a TRICLINIUM



- 6- **sat down** – The term “sat down” is translated from the Greek word “ἀνακλίνω” or “anaklinō”. It means to lean against, lean upon, to lay down or to make or bid to recline. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the term “sat down” as “reclined at table”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 36, page 118). Fitzmyer translates the passage as “**reclined at table. The verb *kateklithe* (or *aneklithe* in the Koine text tradition; or *katekeito* in ms. N*) reveals that dinner was a festive banquet, since reclining at table was practiced only for such occasions in Palestine of that time. Jeremiah even regards this as a Sabbath-meal, to which Jesus would have been invited after preaching in the synagogue; if so, Luke does not tell us this.**” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 688). “**In the east the guests did not sit, but reclined, at table. They lay on low couches, resting on the left elbow, leaving the right arm free, with the feet stretched out behind; and during the meal the sandals were taken off. That explains how the woman was standing beside Jesus’ feet.**” (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 94). Talmage reinforces this custom as he wrote, “**Jesus took His place, probably on one of the divans or couches on which it was usual to partly sit, partly recline, while eating. Such an attitude would place the feet of the person outward from the table.**” (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 190).

The scene at the Pharisees house seems to support the idea that they were dining on low couches surrounding a low table. Though many Biblical scholars seem to indicate that this was the typical dining method of the time, that is not true. The everyday family lacked the wealth and resources for such extravagancies. "In ancient times, as we find throughout the Old Testament, it was the custom of the Jews to eat their meals sitting cross-legged – as is still common throughout the East – in front of a tray placed on a low stool, on which is set the dish containing the heap of food, from which all help themselves in common." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 196). If Simon the Pharisee was a man with diminished means, the meal would have been enjoyed on mats without table or couch. They would have sat cross-legged, with their legs in front of them and the feet on either side. This would have made it at the very least difficult for the woman to approach Jesus' feet from behind, if not impossible. We must assume that Simon the Pharisee was well to do, and that they ate reclined as the Greek word used in the passage would indicate. "Matthew and Luke mentioned that Jesus 'sat' at meat, though the Greek verb means 'recline'. It is much easier to visualize Jesus and other guests reclining at a low table with their feet extended away from the table when the woman 'stood at his feet behind him' to anoint and kiss and wipe his feet." (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 543).



A typical Jewish home, at the time of Jesus, was simple. They ate in a common room that was used for many different functions, including cooking and meal preparation. Each member of the family had a woven or leather mat that was used to sit on during meals, kneel upon for various prayers during the day, and to sit upon for leisure. Surely, a family would have additional mats for guests. "In many cases the Arab custom would seem to indicate to the Westerner that they use no table at all, when serving a meal. Actually, a mat spread upon the ground serves the purpose of a table. This is especially true of the tent Arab. This was the early Semitic table of Old Testament times, for the Hebrew word 'Shool-khawn,' usually translated 'table,' has as its root meaning, 'a skin or leather mat spread on the ground.' With this sort of a table in view, the Psalmist can be understood when he said concerning his enemies, 'Let their table become a snare before them.' David's meaning would be, 'Let their feet become entangled in it, as it is spread on the ground.' If the Arabs use more of a table than this mat, then it is likely to be a polygon stool, no higher than about fourteen inches, and those eating would sit on the floor around this Stool." (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 72). The idea of reclining while eating was reserved for the elite and rich. The typically family sat on a mat, and another mat was used to set the food on. It probably resembled more of a modern day picnic than anything else. Matthews further explains, "According to general Arabic custom, the seemingly posture while eating is 'to sit erect on the floor at the low table, with the legs either folded under the body, or thrown back as in the act of kneeling.' Thus in the desert tent of the Bedouin, or in the simple house of the Fellahin, this would be the position of those eating a meal. And we can be sure that this was the posture of the common people of Bible days in most cases. The exception to this rule is the custom of the wealthy, or the habit of the people on special occasions such as suppers or feasts." (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 71).

There are examples in the Old Testament that reinforce the idea that the rich and powerful ate while reclining on couches, "It has already been observed that on ordinary occasions the people of the Bible age mostly sat or squatted on the floor around a low table at mealtime. In the King's circle, or at other times of special ceremony, seats were sometimes provided. The prophet Amos is the first sacred writer to refer to the custom of "stretching themselves upon their couches" when eating (Amos 6:4). By the time of Jesus, the Roman custom of reclining on couches at supper had been adopted in some Jewish circles. The Roman table and couches combined was called a *triclinium*. There were three couches which were located on the three sides of a square, the fourth side being left open, so that a servant could get on the inside to assist in serving the meal. The guest's position was to recline with the body's upper part resting on the left arm, and the head raised, and a cushion at the back, and the lower part of the body stretched out. The head of the second guest was opposite the breast of the first guest, so that if he wanted to speak to him in

secret he would lean upon his breast." (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 80). That being said, many scholars speculate that the custom of reclining on couches to partake of a meal originated with the Romans and Greeks. Though this is not the case, it is most probable that these progressive cultures had great influence on the Jewish higher class. The Jewish elites seemed to be infatuated with the Roman and Greek cultures. Talmage wrote, "The Roman usage of arranging the tables and adjoining couches along three sides of a square, leaving the fourth side open for the passage of the attendants who served the diners was common in Palestine. Tables and couches so placed constituted the *triclinium*. In reference to the ceremonial of the Pharisees in the matter of prescribed washing of articles used in eating, Mark (7:4) specifies 'tables'; this mention is conceded to be a mistranslation, as couches or literally beds, are meant by the Greek expression. (See marginal reading, 'beds' in Oxford Bible, and others.) A person reclining at table would have the feet directed outward. Thus it was a simple matter for the contrite woman to approach Jesus from behind and anoint His feet without causing disturbance to others at the table." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 191).



The Pharisees and Scribes were largely responsible for the writing of the Mishnah or the Oral Law. They were so infatuated with reclining at meals that they actually mentioned it in the Oral Law. Edersheim wrote, "They were all sitting, or rather 'lying' – the Mishnah sometimes also calls it 'sitting down and leaning' – around the table, the body resting on the couch, the feet turned away from the table in the direction of the wall, while the left elbow rested on the table." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 564).

Regardless of the speculation surrounding the Jewish culture for dining styles, "The beautiful and profoundly moving incident which occurred in Simon's house can only be understood by remembering that as the guests lay on the couches which surrounded the tables, their feet would be turned towards any spectators who were standing outside the circle of bidden guests." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 196).

- 7 - **to meat** – The word "to meat" is implied in the translation and not derived directly. The Codex Sinaiticus omits the term "to meat" from the translation. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 36, page 118). "The meat eaten at these suppers included the best lambs from the flock and calves that had been stall-fed. The drinking of wine at the feast was considered an important feature. Playing on stringed instruments was another activity, and the guests evidently vied with one another in anointing their bodies with very costly ointments." (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 83).



The common foods at the time of Jesus were; nuts, lentils, grains, fish, leeks, pomegranates, grapes, dates, figs, olives, olive oils, breads of various kinds, lamb, and beef, though lamb and beef were reserved for special circumstances. Fish was the staple meat for the common people, and even fish was reserved for Sabbath meals. Meat was not necessarily eaten daily. Banquets brought out the best foods. "Banquets were held in open type houses; spectators or visitors often came in and viewed the proceedings." (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 265).

Eating was more than taking in nourishment. "The sharing of food is in the East a very special act of hospitality. It means far more than it means in the West. It is a way of making a covenant of peace and fidelity." (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 98). "An Oriental considers as sacred the expression, 'bread and salt.' When it is said, 'There is bread and salt between us' it is the same as saying, 'We are bound together by a solemn covenant.' A foe will not 'taste the salt' of his adversary unless he is ready to be reconciled to him." (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 98).

- 8 - **a woman** – The word "woman" is translated from the Greek word "γυνή" or "gyne". It means a woman of any age; whether a virgin, or married or a widow. It is often used in reference to a married or betrothed woman.

Women, at the time of Jesus, were restricted from public life and were largely confined to domestic work. They would have generally been excluded from banquets where any business or public business would have been discussed. Men were restricted from hugging or talking to women in public. It would have been unseemly for a woman to approach strange men in public. The woman that came to the banquet was breaking social protocol, and furthered her violation by approaching Jesus. Though it was not unheard of to have a woman present at a banquet, she was not invited and was ritually unclean. Talmage writes, "Among those who entered Simon's house while the meal was in progress, was a woman; and the presence of a woman, though somewhat unusual, was not strictly a social impropriety and could not well be forbidden on such an occasion. But this woman was one of the fallen class, a woman who had been unvirtuous, and who had to bear, as part of the penalty for her sins, outward scorn and practical ostracism from those who professed to be morally superior." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 190).



We gather that Jesus' view of women was different from the culture of the time. He preached to the Samaritan woman at the well, and did so without hesitation. He healed women and men alike, and was not afraid to approach a woman in need. The events of this chapter do not deviate from Jesus' consistent attitude towards them. "The name of the woman who thus came to Christ, and whose repentance was so sincere as to bring to her grateful and contrite soul the assurance of remission, is not recorded. There is no evidence that she figures in any other incident recorded in scripture. By certain writers she has been represented as the Mary of Bethany who, shortly before Christ's betrayal, anointed the head of Jesus with spikenard; but the assumption of identity is wholly unfounded, and constitutes an unjustifiable reflection upon the earlier life of Mary, the devoted and loving sister of Martha and Lazarus. Equally wrong is the attempt made by others to identify this repentant and forgiven sinner with Mary Magdalene, no period of whose life



was marked by the sin of unchastity so far as the scriptures aver. The importance of guarding against mistakes in the identity of these women renders advisable the following addition to the foregoing treatment.” (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 191).

One of the possible locations for the events of this chapter is Magdala, since it was relatively near to Nain. Additionally, there is another gospel story of a woman named Mary Magdalene (supposedly Mary of Magdala) who was possessed of seven devils. The Jews believed that possession of a devil is consequence of great sin, and seven devils would indicate grievous sins. Somewhere in time, biblical scholars connected all these pieces of information and decided that they were related. It became a common belief that the woman of this chapter was Mary Magdalene. Farrar writes, “An Ancient tradition – especially prevalent in the Western Church, and followed by the translators of our English version – a tradition which, though it must ever remain uncertain, is not in itself improbable, and cannot be disproved – identifies this woman with Mary of Magdala, ‘out of whom Jesus cast seven devils’.” (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar’s Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 200). There is no proof of Mary Magdalene was the woman of this chapter.

Another theory is that the woman in this chapter was in fact Mary of Bethany. Like the theory of Mary Magdalene, it has ancient origins. Mary of Bethany was the sibling of Martha and Lazarth; Jesus’ closest friends. This theory is even weaker than the prior, in that there is not even a remote connection with Mary of Bethany and grievous sin. Additionally, Bethany is about 95 miles away and it is improbable that she would have known that Jesus was eating at the Pharisees house and conveniently showed up there. “In Western Church traditions, at least since the time of Gregory the Great, Mary of Bethany has been conflated with the sinner of Galilee...however, no basis for this conflation in the New Testament..” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 688).

The fact is, we do not know who the woman in this chapter was. We do know that she was “not Mary Magdalene and Not Mary of Bethany (Matthew 26:6-13, John 12:2-8), both of whom were righteous women of good character.” (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 264-265). We don’t know the woman’s name, but we know that she was a woman who had repented of great sins. “The first impression on our minds is, that the history itself is but a fragment. We must try to learn from its structure, where and how it was broken off. We understand the infinite delicacy that left her unnamed, the record of whose ‘much forgiveness’ and great love had to be joined to that of her much sin.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 563).

- 9 - **the city** – The word “city” is translated from the Greek word “πόλις” or “polis”. It means a city. It can be used of any city, but is commonly used to refer to one’s native city, or the city in which one lives. The reference to the city is left vague, with neither name or location. Given the most probable chronology of events, we assume that Jesus has left Nain and was ministering in a nearby, neighboring city. It could not have been Nain, since Nain was not large enough to have a synagogue with a predominate Pharisee. “From the place of this incident in Luke’s narration of events, it appears that it may have occurred on the day of the visit of John’s messengers.” (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 190). This makes cities like Magdala, Shunem, Nazareth, and Sepphoris all probable candidates.



Cities at the time of Jesus were always eager to hear the words of great Rabbis who were passing through. Such Rabbis were traditionally issued a formal invitation to read in the synagogue and expound on the reading. “If Jesus had taught in the ‘city,’ and, as always, irresistibly drawn to Him the multitude, it would be only in accordance with the manners of the time if the leading Pharisees invited the distinguished ‘Teacher’ to his table..” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, pages 563-564).

Word of a great Rabbi visiting a city would have spread fast. It was common for the entire city to quickly know when something of interest occurred. Houses in a city were typically built right up against each other. Families spent the evenings on their roofs enjoying the evening breeze. They would spread gossip from roof top to roof top in a very efficient fashion. It is of no wonder that the woman knew Jesus was in the city and eating with Simon the Pharisee.

- 10 - **a sinner** – The word “sinner” is translated from the Greek word “ἁμαρτωλός” or “hamartōlos”. It means devoted to sin, or a sinner. It can be used to refer to tax collectors or heathens. Fitzmyer translates this passage as “literally ‘who was in the town a sinner’... No hint is given of the kind of sins that she has committed. Many commentators identify her as the town harlot, guilty of ‘habitual unchastity’. Possibly this is implied in the Pharisee’s thoughts; but it is at most implied, not being said openly in the text. M. Black thinks that the Lucan text is playing on the Aramaic word for ‘sinner’, *hayyabta*, which really means ‘debtor’, and is thus providing a connection between the pronouncement-story and the parable. Possibly.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, pages 688-689).

Sin is defined as any action, thought or deed that is contrary to the will of God. A sinner is anyone who has committed sin. Many of our sins are not obvious to others. Sins of pride, greed, and coveting are often concealed by the sinner. Even gross violations of the law can, for a time, be hidden from public eyes. The sinner in this chapter was a known sinner. Her sins must have been public, or at the very least well known. She was **“presumably an unvirtuous woman.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 265). Barclay goes as far as saying she was a prostitute, probably because her sins seem to be so widely known. He explains, **“The woman was a bad woman, and a notoriously bad woman, a prostitute. No doubt she had listened to Jesus speak from the edge of the crowd and had glimpsed in him the hand which could lift her from the mire of her ways.”** (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 95).



Many biblical scholars wrongly suppose that the woman came to Jesus in her sins in hopes of being forgiven. If she did not come for forgiveness, then **“why did she do it? What would impel a woman whose life had been other than one of gross immortality – what would impel such a person to come uninvited, face the Sinless One, and, as her tears bedewed his feet, wipe them with her tresses and seal the washing thus made with an anointing of costly ointment?”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 137).

As we understand the workings of the gospel, we understand that there is an order and a process to forgiveness. One does not just walk up to the Jesus or His authorized representative and ask that

forgiveness be granted without any effort on our part. This woman, who was a sinner, approached Jesus having taken the necessary steps towards repentance. **“Here is a woman who once was a sinner but now is clean. Jesus is not going to forgive her sins – he has already done so; it happened when she believed and was baptized in his name; it happened when she repented with full purpose of heart and pledged her life and every breath she thereafter drew to the cause of righteousness. We are dealing with a convert who has come to pour out, in the spirit of thanksgiving and rejoicing, the gratitude of her soul to him who has freed her, freed her in times past, from the chains of bondage and hell.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 137). All who have truly repented can relate to the overflowing feelings of gratitude displayed by the woman towards Jesus.

As stated previously, we do not know the woman’s name or her circle of friends. **“Scholars have wondered who this woman was. Some have speculated that she might have been Mary, the sister of Martha, who is later described as anointing the feet of Jesus in the home of another man named Simon. However, this is a pure coincidence. Mary, the sister of Martha, was a righteous woman. She was no sinner. Some have also thought this woman might have been Mary Magdalene who was the first to see Jesus after his resurrection, Luke himself provides the best evidence that the ‘sinful woman’ was not Mary Magdalene. As we shall mention in a moment, just two verses after Luke discussed the incident of the ‘sinful woman,’ he began listing several righteous women who had ministered to the needs of Jesus and the apostles. The name of Mary Magdalene leads the list. It is difficult to believe that he would have failed to identify the sinful woman and then mention Mary Magdalene two verses later as being among some of the most notable women in Galilee.”** (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 317).

11 - when she knew – The phrase “when she knew” is translated from the Greek word “ἐπιγινώσκω” or “epiginōskō”. It means to become thoroughly acquainted with, or know thoroughly. It can also mean to recognize by sight, or hearing. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the term “knew” as “learned”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 37, page 118). Much of the city must have known that Jesus was dining with Simon the Pharisee. **“To the chagrin of the Pharisee, right in the middle of the dinner, a woman who was well-known as ‘a sinner,’ came quietly into the room, knelt before Jesus, and began anointing and kissing his feet.”** (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 316). Hearing that Jesus was at a banquet, she came to worship Him, acknowledging Him as the source of her forgiveness.

12 - alabaster– The word “alabaster” is translated from the Greek word “ἀλάβαστρον” or “alabastron”. The Greek word means a box made of alabaster in which unguents are preserved. Alabaster is a fine-grained, translucent form of gypsum, typically white, often carved into ornaments. Ogden and Skinner define it as follows; **“Alabaster was a translucent stone, well known to the ancient Egyptians (Tutankhamen’s tomb, for instance, contained many beautifully carved alabaster boxes) and was available throughout the Near East, though at some expense. The vessel in question was used as a perfume flask. The long, narrow neck or the seal placed on it had to be broken before the perfume could be poured out.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 542).



ALABASTER BOX

The Biblical record seems to be clear that the **“woman came with an alabaster box containing costly ointment or perfume.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 542). Even so, it would appear that an alabaster flaske would be a more probable container carried by a woman of the time. Edersheim records, **“She brought with her an alabastron (phial, or flask, commonly of alabaster) of perfume. It is a coarse suggestion, that this had originally been brought for a far different purpose. We know that perfumes were much sought**

after, and very largely in use. Some, such as true balsam, were worth double their weight in silver.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 565). Such flasks **“were generally made of soft stone (yellow or creamy calcareous sinter) and of variegated shapes.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 689).



ALABASTER FLASK

13 - box of ointment – The term “box of ointment” is translated from the Greek word “μύρον” or “myron”. It means ointment. The authorized LDS footnote says that the word box should be written as “flask”.

It was common for women of the time to wear small alabaster vessels containing perfume or scented ointment around their necks. The rich would fill their vessels or flasks with expensive ointments while the poor would often have scented oils. **“Oil was cheap, ointment was expensive.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 265).



which was commonly burnt after a feast. As regards word 'alabastron,' the name was given to perfume phials in general, even if not made of alabaster, because the latter was so frequently used for such flasks." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 565).

- 14 - **stood** – The word "stood" is translated from the Greek word "ἵστημι" or "histēmi". It means to cause or make to stand, to place, put or set.

Standing in a room where everyone was reclining to eat would have drawn attention. The woman's gratitude far out weighted any fear she might have had of being judged. For a woman to be so bold, in a public forum, would have been seen as socially incorrect. The audience must have been astonished "as she stood behind Him at His Feet, reverently bending, a shower of tears, like sudden, quick summer-rain, that refreshes air and earth, 'bedewed' His feet. As if surprised, or else afraid to awaken His attention, or defile Him by her tears, she quickly wiped them away with the long tresses of her hair that had fallen down and touched Him as she bent over His Feet." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 566).

- 15 - **his feet** – The word "feet" is translated from the Greek word "πούς" or "pous". It means a foot, whether of men or beast. The symbol of the foot or feet symbolize "freedom of movement; willing service, humility; the lowly. Kissing or washing the feet signifies complete abasement and reverence." (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 66).

Feet in the ancient world were subjected to harsh environmental conditions. They were typically clad in open sandals, and consequently were coated by the dirt of the roads and walkways. They were also exposed to extreme heat and dryness. One could only imagine the calluses, dryness and cracking that would be common to one's feet under such conditions. Caring for one's feet has many figurative messages. Dirty feet represent the sins common to mortal activities. Cleaning one's feet is a symbol of spiritual services. Likewise, the cracks and damage common to the feet



represent the dangers of mortality. Anointing one's feet symbolizes mortal healing. The washing and anointing of someone's feet represents both mortal and spiritual healing.

The ancient Jews recognized the deep symbolism associated with the feet, and incorporated it into their system of hospitality. "Upon entering a house to be entertained, a guest does as all Orientals would do, he takes off his boots, shoes, or slippers before entering a room. This becomes necessary since they sit on a mat, rug, or divan, with their feet beneath them, and shoes would soil the couch and the clothes, and would also make a very uncomfortable seat. The idea of defilement from the shoes led to the custom of removing the shoes upon entering sacred places. Thus at the burning bush the Lord told Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exod. 3:5)." (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 96). Thereafter, the host was obligated to provide water for the washing of the feet. The host would wash the feet of the guest, unless he had the means to employ a servant or slave to the task. The washing of the feet was considered a base and humiliating task. After the feet were washed and dried, the feet were anointed with at least an olive oil laced with various forms of incense or perfumes. More expensive ointments were used as means and hospitality increased. It is interesting that all the symbols associated with washing and anointing feet seem to point to the work of salvation conferred upon the Savior of mankind. Only He is truly capable of healing us spiritually and physically.



Mark tells a similar story, that is most probably a separate and distinct event, with a woman anointing Jesus with ointment. "Mark notes that the liquid was spikenard, a costly, scented ointment imported from the Himalayas. A pound of pure spikenard could be sold for more than three hundred denarii, the better part of a year's wages. Its costliness is emphasized by the petulance of those present when the woman anointed Jesus." (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 542).

The ointment of this chapter is not defined, though we would assume that if such a costly material was used that the gospel writer would have made mention of it. We might also assume that the Pharisee would have objected to the waste of such a costly use of ointment. Even so, alabaster boxes and flasks were used for expensive oils and ointments. Edersheim wrote, "It is well known that scents and 'ointments' were greatly in vogue, and often most expensive (Matt 26:7). The latter were prepared of oil and of home or foreign perfumes, the dearest being kept in costly alabaster boxes. The trade of perfumer was, however, looked down upon, not only among the Jews, but even among heathen nations. But in general society anointing was combined with washing, as tending to comfort and refreshment." (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, page 121).

Spikenard and Myrrh, seem to be the most suggested ointments for this chapter, though I believe a less costly ointment was used. The Hebrew word used for Myrrh is often used to refer to other ointments. Edersheim explains, "The word is evidently Hebrew and Rabbinic מִרְרָה which, however, is not always the equivalent for myrrh, but seems also to mean musk and mastic. In short, I regard it as designating any fluid unguent - or generally speaking, 'perfume.' So common was the use of perfumes, that Ber. Vi, 6 mentions a mugmar, or a kind of incense,

16 - **behind him** – The word “behind” is translated from the Greek word “ὀπίσω” or “opisō”. It means back, behind, after, or afterwards. Standing behind someone, especially among the oriental customs, represents submission and inferiority of the person standing behind. The woman described as a sinner, “**approached Jesus from behind, and bent low to kiss His feet as a mark of humility on her part and of respectful homage to Him. She may have been one of those who had heard His gracious words, spoken possibly that day: ‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ Whatever her motive in coming, she had certainly come in a repentant and deeply contrite state.**” (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 190).

17 - **weeping** – The word “weeping” is translated from the Greek word “κλαίω” or “klaiō”. It means to mourn, weep, or lament. Weeping was seen as a sign of pain and grief for the thing signified. Weeping symbolizes “**grief and mourning**”. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 190).



The question one must ask is why the woman was weeping? Verse 48 of this chapter is better translated ‘thy sins **have been** forgiven’, indicating that the woman was not crying because of unforgiven sins. It is more likely that she is weeping with extreme gratitude. The cleansing confirmation of the spirit had come upon her, and she had come to experience being clean again. It is likely that she was overcome with the spirit, and wept with joy.

18 - **began to wash his feet** – The word “wash” is translated from the Greek word “βρέχω” or “brechō”. It means to moisten, wet, or water. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “wash” as “moisten”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 38, page 118). Fitzmyer translates this passage as “**literally, ‘she began to moisten his feet with tears.’ The cause for her tears is not expressed: it has usually been assumed to be repentance for her sins. It could also have been weeping for joy at the realization of the forgiveness of her sins by God that she has already experienced.**” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 689).



By beginning to wash Jesus’ feet, the woman has assumed the position of a servant or a slave. This was a humble position that required great meekness. The custom required that “**after bowing, greeting, and kissing, the Eastern guest is offered water for washing his feet. Wearing of sandals would naturally necessitate foot washing, but it is often done when shoes have been worn. A servant will assist the guest by pouring the water upon his feet over a copper basin, rubbing the feet with his hands, and wiping them with a napkin.**” (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 96). The interesting part of this story is that the woman lacked the necessary tools and resources for the normal washing of the feet. She improvised resulting in an increased level humility and service.

19 - **with tears** – The word “tears” is translated from the Greek word “δάκρυ” or “dakry”. It means a tear. The symbolism of the tears is closely related to the symbolism associated with weeping in footnote #17. The tears themselves, however, resemble water and can take on the figurative representation of cleansing, purification, washing, and repentance.

20 - **did wipe** – The word “wipe” is translated from the Greek word “ἐκμάσσω” or “ekmassō”. It means to wipe off or wipe away.

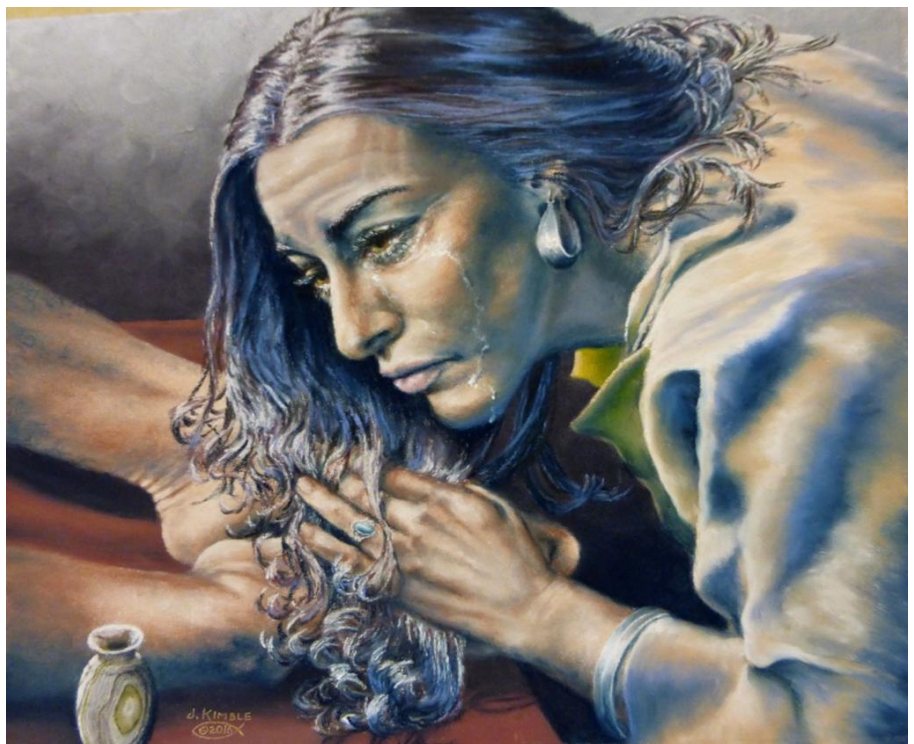


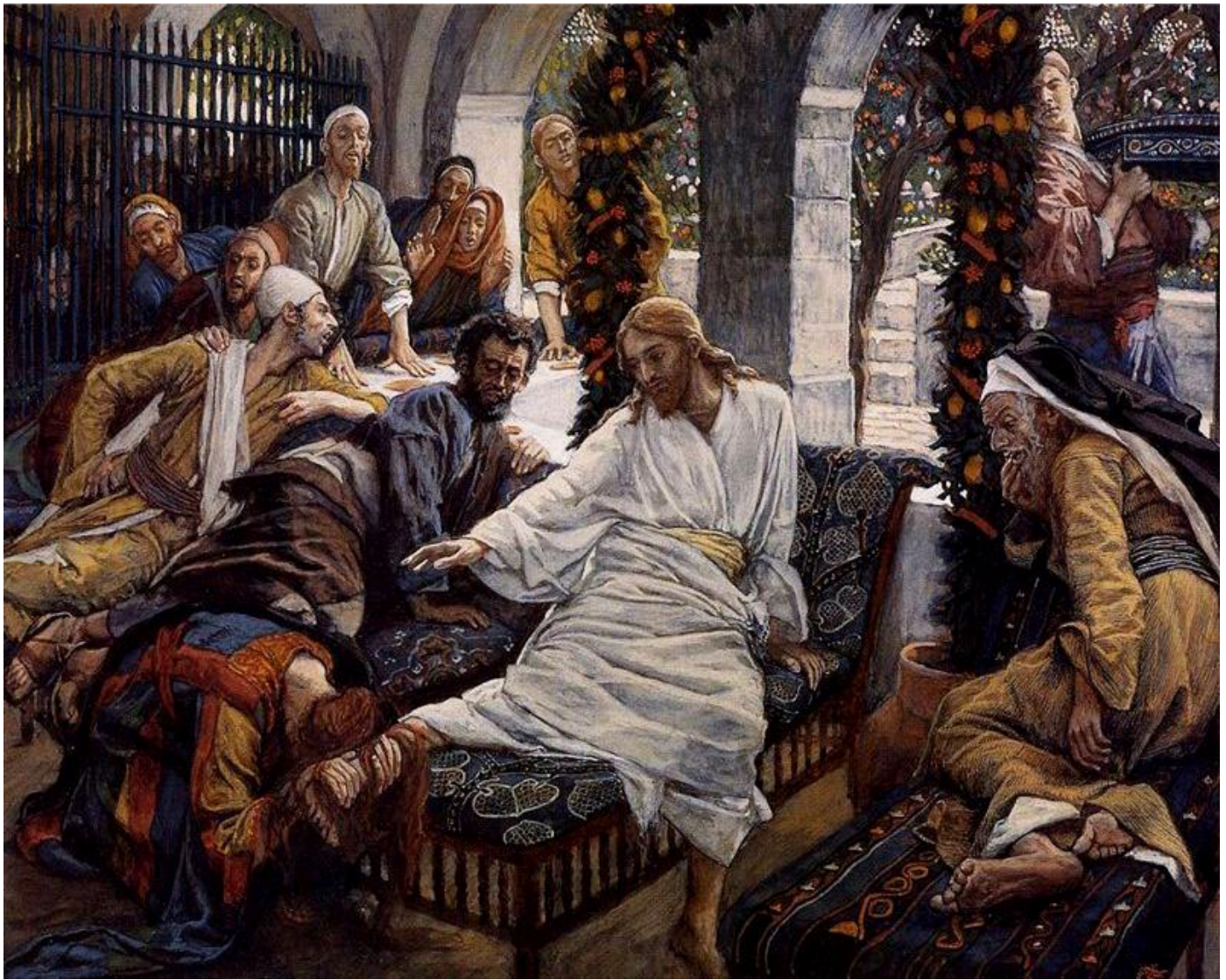
21 - **with the hairs of her head** – The word “hair” is translated from the Greek word “θρίξ” or “thrix”. It means the hair of the head. Hair symbolizes ones “life force; strength; energy; power of thought; virility.” (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 127). “A woman’s hair carries different symbolic meaning than a man’s. It is considered a vital part of her beauty, and has been traditionally regarded as a source of temptation to men. Accordingly, some ultra-Orthodox women cut off their hair after their wedding.” (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 67). The word “head” is translated from the Greek word “κεφαλή” or “kephalē”. It means the head, both of men and often of animals. Since the loss of the head destroys life, this word is used in the phrases relating to capital and extreme punishment.

The lack of a napkin or towel to dry Jesus’ feet did not deter the woman from completing the task at hand. She used her own hair, a symbol of her virtue and strength, to dry His feet. She did this in spite of the fact that it was considered socially unacceptable for a woman to let down her hair in public. Barclay explains, “For a Jewish woman to appear with hair unbound was an act of the gravest immodesty. On her wedding day a girl bound up her hair and never would she appear with it unbound again. The fact that this woman loosed her long hair in public showed how she had forgotten everyone except Jesus.” (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 95).

Fitzmyer suggests that this act alone may have given cause to the Pharisee calling her a sinner. He wrote, “Having loosened her headdress, she unbound her hair, and wiped away the tears. Doing so in public, she caused surprise and occasioned the Pharisee’s comment. Her action does not confirm her sinfulness; it merely gives rise to an interpretation of her.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 689).

This entire scene teaches an interesting and vital principle. We must approach the Lord with a readiness to offer all that we possess, even our very will. The woman held nothing back in her worship. There was no worry about her own needs or how she is viewed by others. She saw an opportunity to worship the Master and she seized it.

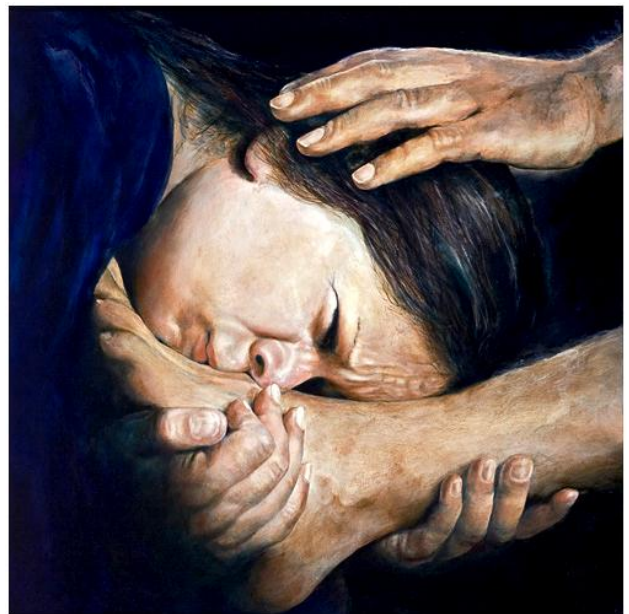




22 - **kissed** – The word “kissed” is translated from the Greek word “καταφιλέω” or “kataphileō”. It means to kiss much, kiss again and again, or kiss tenderly. A kiss is a “**token of good will; peace; sealing a pact; good faith; fellowship; reconciliation; affection**” (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 91).

Americans don't use a kiss as a form of greeting, except towards those who they are extremely close and even then it is not generally done publically. There are cultures in the world, however, that greet each other with a symbolic kiss. Such kisses are not intimate. The French for instance kiss each cheek without actually contacting the lips to the cheek. They merely press cheeks together and kiss the air. Like the French, “**guests in Holy Land homes expect to be kissed as they enter. When entertained by a Pharisee, Jesus commented on his reception by saying to him, ‘Thou gavest me no kiss’ (Luke 7:45). The difference between the Oriental and the Occidental way of greeting each other is made clear by one who lived in Palestine many years. Here men shake hands when they meet and greet, but in Palestine, instead of doing this, they place their right hand on their friend's left shoulder and kiss his right cheek, and then reversing the action, place their left hand on his right shoulder, and kiss his left cheek. In this country men never kiss each other's faces; there it may be constantly seen. But how the practice lights up the numerous allusions in Scripture which are naturally lost to a Westerner! Once grasp the fact that their kiss answers to our hearty handshake between friends and social equals, and how much-how very much- becomes plain that was before obscure!**” (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 94).

There are some that claim that the Jewish practice of offering kisses as a greeting originated with the Romans and Greeks. Freeman disputes this claim. “**This was no unusual practice among the Jews, and was also customary among the Greeks and Romans. It was a mark of affection and of reverence. It was also the practice of supplicants, and of those who had an important request to present. Kissing the feet of princes was a token of subjection and obedience.**” (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 420).



23 - anointed – The word “anointed” is translated from the Greek word “ἀλείφω” or “aleiphō”. It means to anoint. Symbolically, it means “**consecration; that which is made sacred or set apart; prosperity; joy; an infusion of divine grace.**” (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 13).

Anointing was often done as a therapeutic treatment for skin and hair. Oils and ointments were used to nurture damaged hair and skin. They were also used to clean the dirt from the skin.

Anointing was also used for ceremonial purposes. A king's coronation was traditionally associated with an anointing of the head. Likewise, priests were ritually anointed to serve in their capacity. The Lord specifically directed that the sons of Aaron be anointed on various parts of their body.

The Jews incorporated this very personal and often sacred rite of anointing in the hospitality they showed to their guests. Matthews wrote, “**The custom of anointing guests with oil is an ancient one among nations of the East. Olive oil alone was often used, but sometimes it was mixed with spices.**

Simon the Pharisee was accused of lack of hospitality because he failed to anoint Jesus (Luke 7:46). This would indicate the custom was quite common in the days of the Gospel accounts. David immortalized the custom when he wrote his shepherd psalm and exclaimed: “**Thou anointest my head with oil**” (Psa. 23:5). Travelers in the Orient in recent times have discovered that this practice of anointing still exists in some quarters.” (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 96-97).



24 - ointment – The word “ointment” is translated from the Greek word “μύρον” or “myron”. It means ointment. The word ointment is defined as a smooth oily preparation that is rubbed on the skin for medicinal purposes or as a cosmetic. Smith Bible Dictionary defines anointing as follows: “**An oily or unctuous substance, usually compounded of oil with various spices and resins and aromatics, and preserved in small alabaster boxes or cruses, in which the delicious aroma was best preserved. Some of the ointments have been known to retain their fragrance for several hundred years. They were a much-coveted luxury, and often very expensive. Besides the oil used in many ceremonial observances, a special ointment was appointed to be used in consecration. (Exodus 30:23 Exodus 30:33 ; 29:7 ; 37:29 ; Exodus 40:9 Exodus 40:15) A person whose business it was to compound ointments in general was called an ‘apothecary.’ (Nehemiah 3:8) The work was sometimes carried on by woman ‘confectionaries.’ (1 Samuel 8:13).**” (Smith’s Bible Dictionary, “Ointment”).

25 - bidden – The word “bidden” is translated from the Greek word “καλέω” or “kaleō”. It means to call or to invite. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “bidden” as “invited”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 39, page 118). It was customary for banquets and guests at special meals to be issued a formal invitation. We may assume that Jesus received a written invitation by courier, rather than some off handed verbal request.

26 - saw it – The term “saw it” is translated from the Greek word “εἶδω” or “eidō”. It means to see or perceive with the eyes.

Simon the Pharisee saw a woman known to be a sinner approaching Jesus and then touching Him. This was an inappropriate act in and of itself. She was unclean, and she should not have been allowed to touch Jesus. He watched as she washed Jesus’ feet. He then witnessed her letting down her hair, another impropriety according to Jewish custom. A woman with her hair down was immodest and unbecoming of a lady. The Pharisee saw the woman’s behavior and expected a totally different response from Jesus. Jesus was considered a great rabbi among the people. “**A Jewish Rabbi could not have so acted and spoken; he would not even have understood Jesus; nay, a Rabbi, however gentle and pitiful, would in word and deed have taken precisely the opposite direction from that of the Christ.**” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 562). The Pharisee expected Jesus to chase the woman away, and condemn her for her behavior. Jesus, however, welcomed her humble worship.

27 - spake within himself – The word “himself” is translated from the Greek word “ἑαυτοῦ” or “eautou”. It means himself, herself, itself, or themselves. The phrase “spake within himself” means that the Pharisee had thoughts that he did not express verbally. Farrar wrote, “**The Pharisee did not utter these thoughts aloud, but his frigid demeanor, and the contemptuous expression of countenance, which he did not take the trouble to disguise, showed all that was passing in his heart. Our Lord heard his thoughts, but did not at once reprove the expose his cold uncharity and unrelenting hardness.**” (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar’s Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 197).

The Pharisee was passing judgment on Jesus. “**The Pharisee’s thoughts reflect a common belief: a prophet should be able to perceive the character of persons with whom he deals.**” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 689). Jesus didn’t seem to see what the Pharisee thought to be obvious. If Jesus was a prophet why didn’t He see the woman was a sinner. What the Pharisee failed to see was the power of Jesus’ redemptive power and process of repentance. The woman had been forgiven, and was no longer a sinner.

“**Simon thus ‘spoke within himself’; that is, he thought to himself – and as the ancient proverb says: ‘Guard well thy thoughts, for thoughts are heard in heaven’.**” (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 137). Jesus, through divine power, knew the thoughts of the Pharisee. He could see the judgment that was being passed. There are no thoughts or desires that can be hidden from heaven.



28 - a prophet – The word “prophet” is translated from the Greek word “προφήτης” or “prophētēs”. It means one who, moved by the Spirit of God and hence his organ or spokesman, solemnly declares to men what he has received by inspiration, especially concerning future events, and in particular such as relate to the cause and kingdom of God and to human salvation.

The people who had come to know Jesus at this point, believed Him to be a prophet of God. They believed that he was God’s authorized spokesman, **“but, He was more than a prophet – the Saviour of sinners; and so she might quietly weep over His Feet, and then quickly wipe away the ‘dew’ of the better morning,’ and then continued to kiss His Feet and to anoint them.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 567).

29 - what manner of woman – The term “what manner” is translated from the Greek word “ποταπός” or “potapos”. It means of what sort or quality, i.e. what manner. We might rephrase this into the modern expression, “what kind of woman is this?” The implication is that Jesus should have known the moral character of this woman, as a prophet by definition has such revelatory insight. Even more surprising to the Pharisee is that everyone else seemed to know that this woman was a sinner. **“The shadow of her form must have fallen on all who sat at meat. But none spake; nor did she heed any but One. Like heaven’s own music, as angel’s songs that guide the wanderer home, it still sounded in her ears.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 565). She was no longer a sinner, at least from the sins that they perceived. The Pharisee, and others present, viewed her as such, not seeing the mighty change of heart that had taken place, nor the steps she had taken to achieve forgiveness. They wondered why Jesus did not see her sins. It could be questioned as to why they could not see the miracle of forgiveness that had taken place. It was not Jesus who did not know the kind of woman that she was, it was the Pharisee.



Edersheim suggests that the woman may not have been a sinner relative to our definition of sinners. He explains that **“we must bear in mind the greatness of Jewish prejudice against any conversation with woman, however lofty her character fully to realize the absolute incongruity on the part of such a woman in seeking access to the Rabbi, Whom so many regarded as the God-sent Prophet.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 564). It would be a sin for the woman to approach Jesus, and a further sin for her to take down her hair in front of Him. Such would be

a violation of Jewish modesty codes for woman of the time. Even so, we must keep in mind that **“this story is a fragment.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 564).

30 - that toucheth him – The word “toucheth” is translated from the Greek word “ἅπτομαι” or “haptomai”. It means to fasten one’s self to, to adhere to, to cling to, or to touch.

Touching was a sensitive subject. The Jews of Jesus’ time had to be cautious with the things that they touched and the things that touched them. They believed that ritual impurity and uncleanness could be transferred through touch. The woman that was classified as a sinner by the Pharisee would have been unclean. Her touch should be avoided by any pious person trying to maintain ritual purity. Surely a prophet would have known this and avoided her.

31 - Simon – The name “Simon” is translated from the Greek word “Σίμων” or “Simōn”. Translated literally, it means, a hearing or to hear. The name Simon is the Greek form of the Hebrew name “שמעון” or “Simeon”. The Hebrew name is pronounced “shim-ōn”. It is a name rich in Israelite history. The Patriarch Jacob named his second son “Simeon” because the Lord had “heard” their prayers and gave him a son. This son became the progenitor of one of the 12 tribes of Israel, bearing his name; the tribe of Simeon. It is quite probable that the parents of the Pharisee in this chapter gave him his name with this heritage in mind.

Since Simon was a Pharisee, we might also assume that He was a ruler in or of a synagogue. He would have been pious, even if it was self proclaimed. From his actions in this chapter, we might surmise that he thought he was better than Jesus and the common folk of his community. Elder McConkie wrote, **“Simon – a Pharisee, a leader of the people and a man of note, a pillar in the synagogue, who gloried in his supposed righteousness – Simon offered none of the usual civilities and courtesies, however ritualistic and meaningless they often were.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 138). Such behavior would indicate his own pride and perceived social status.

“Simon was a Pharisee, one of the separated ones. Why should such a man invite Jesus to his house at all? There are three possible reasons.

- (a) It is just possible that he was an admirer and a sympathizer, for not all the Pharisees were Jesus’ enemies (compare Luke 13:31). But the whole atmosphere of discourtesy makes that unlikely.
- (b) It could be that Simon had invited Jesus with the deliberate intention of enticing him into some word or action which might have been made the basis of a charge against him. Simon may have been an agent provocateur. Again it is not likely, because in Luke 7:40 Simon gives Jesus the title, Rabbi.
- (c) Most likely, Simon was a collector of celebrities; and with a half-patronising contempt he had invited this startling young Galilaean to have a meal with him. That would best explain the strange combination of a certain respect with the omission of the usual courtesies. Simon was a man who tried to patronize Jesus.” (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, pages 94-95).

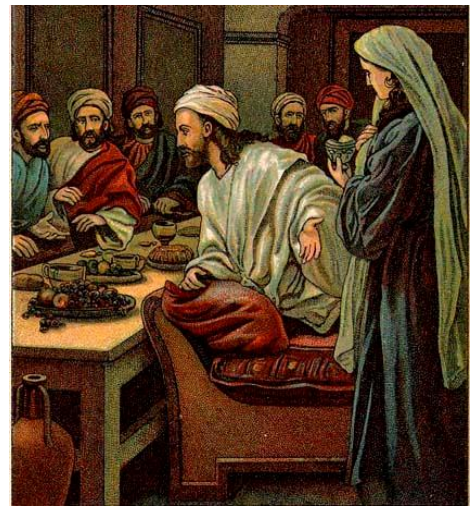


Simon, who in all indications saw himself as superior and more pious than the normal person, had determined that the woman in this chapter is a sinner. He probably based his determination on past experience or observation. As a ruler or elder in the synagogue, he may have even stood in an official capacity of passing judgment on the woman. He saw

her only through his own eyes. What he did not see was the spiritual miracle that had occurred for this woman. She had repented, been baptized, and received a remission of her sins. **“None of this known to Simon. He is in his sins, being unbaptized; and like Nicodemus, the master in Israel who knew not that men can be born again, Simon is, in his present state, spiritually incapable of conceiving that a woman whose soul once was scarlet is now as white as snow.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 137).

There are some scholars that believe the Pharisee in the chapter is indeed still unknown, by name, to this day. The beginning of the story fails to name him. **“It is strange that this name is only now introduced. Many commentators think that Luke has introduced it here secondarily under the influence of Mark 14:3. That is not impossible...”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 689).

- 32 - **I have somewhat to say** – The word “somewhat” is translated from the Greek word “τις” or “tis”. It means a certain, or a certain one. Jesus declares that He has something certain or specific to say. His words were calculated and precise.
- 33 - **Master**– The word “Master” is translated from the Greek word “διδάσκαλος” or “didaskalos”. It means a teacher, or teacher of religion. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “Master” as “Teacher”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 40, page 118). **“Didaskalos was a title revered in contemporary Palestine, as can be seen from its use on a Jerusalem ossuary. John 1:38 translates rabbi as didaskale, and 20:16 gives it as the translation for rabbouni.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 689). Whether the Pharisees truly believed that Jesus was a Rabbi or a great Teacher, he at least offer the respect of referring to Him as such. He may have done this to appease those witnessing the events.
- 34 - **say on** – The phrase “say on” is translated from the Greek word “εἶπον” or “eipon”. It means to speak or say. It would have been expected and customary for the Pharisee to welcome the words and teachings of a visiting Rabbi, especially a visiting one.
- 35 - **certain** – The word “certain” is translated from the Greek word “τις tis”. It means a certain or a certain one. The use of this word is an indication of a parable, the word certain being used to refer to a unnamed and unspecified creditor and debtors.



- 36 - **creditor** – The word “creditor” is translated from the Greek word “δανειστής daneistēs”. It means a money lender or creditor. A money-lender was a occupation common to larger cities. They were a necessary evil. The Jews looked down upon them, and especially the charge of usury. The Jews were not forced to use them, so their existence says something about the sociality at the time. Edersheim laught, **“The frequent allusion to such and to their harsh ways offers painful illustration of the social state at the time.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 567).

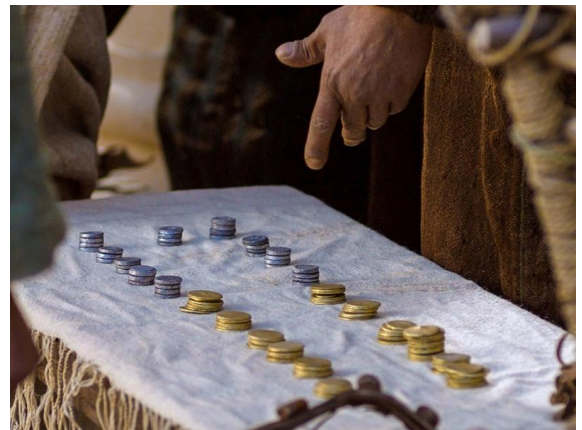


Like bankers of our time, a creditor would loan money on the condition of timely repayment with interest. Unlike the bankers of our time, failure to repay a loan according to the agreed upon terms would result in indentured servitude. The debtor would be sold into slavery in order to satisfy the payment due. In most cases, the term of servitude was based on the monetary value of the debt. Edersheim explains, **“Equally strict were the regulations affecting debtor and creditor. Advances were legally secured by regular documents, drawn out at the expense of the debtor, and attested by witnesses, about whose signature minute directions are given. To prevent mistakes, the sum lent was marked at the top, as well as in the body of the document. A person was not taken as security for another after the loan was actually contracted. In reference to interest (which among the Romans was calculated monthly), in regard to pledges, and in dealing with insolvent debtors, the mildness of the Jewish law has never been equaled. It was lawful, under certain restrictions, to take a pledge, and in the event of non-payment to sell it: but wearing apparel, bedding, the ploughshare, and all articles required for the preparation of food were excepted. Similarly, it was unlawful, under any circumstances, to take a pledge from a widow, or to sell that which belonged to her. These are only some of the provisions by which the interest of all parties were not only guarded, but a higher religious tone sought to be imparted to ordinary life. Those who are acquainted with the state of matters among the nations around, and the cruel exactions of the Roman law, will best appreciate the difference in this respect also between Israel and the Gentiles. The more the Rabbinical code is studied, the higher**

will be our admiration of its provisions, characterized as these are by wisdom, kindness, and delicacy, we venture to say, far beyond any modern legislation.” (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 117-118).

- 37 - **two debtors** – The word “debtors” is translated from the Greek word “χρεοφειλέτης” or “chreopheiletēs”. It means a debtor. It is a word that describes someone who has borrowed money from a creditor. Symbolically, a debtor is used to represent a sinner or anyone who has transgressed a law or rule, and consequently is in need of compensation or reconciliation.
- 38 - **owed** – The word “owed” is translated from the Greek word “ὀφείλω” or “opheilō”. It means to owe, or to be in debt for. In Jesus’ parable we had two debtors, or symbolic sinners. They both owed a debt. The term ‘owed’ is symbolic of the magnitude of the sin, and the restitution necessary to pay the debt.

It is easy to see that the woman would be considered a spiritual debtor, being defined as a sinner. The Pharisee; however, would have been seen as pious. His heart however may have revealed otherwise. It is evident from the story that he falsely judged the woman, and he also violated Jewish customs of hospitality. **“Extending certain courtesies to an honored guest, such as washing the feet, giving a kiss of greeting, and anointing the head with oil, was customary among the Jews in New Testament times. Jesus chastised the host of this dinner by contrasting Simon’s lack of courtesies with the courtesies given him by a sinful woman.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 543). In this way, the Pharisee was a debtor and owed a debt.



39 - five hundred pence – The number “five hundred” is translated from the Greek word “πεντακόσιοι” or “pentakosioi”. It means five hundred. The word “pence” is translated from the Greek word “δηνάριον” or “dēnaron”. It is a denarius, which translated literally means “containing ten”. It is a Roman silver coin in New Testament times. It took its name from it being equal to ten “assarions”, a number after 217BC increased to sixteen (about 3.898 grams or .1375 oz.). It was the principal silver coin of the Roman Empire. From the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, it would seem that a denarius was then the ordinary pay for a day’s wage. (Matthew 20:2-13). The authorized LDS footnote says that the word pence should be translated from the Greek word denarii; one denarius was a workman’s daily wage. Likewise, the Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “pence” as “denarii”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 41, page 118). To understand the relative worth of a “pence” the following chart is being provided;



New Testament Coins & Values

The denarius or drachma is the standard unit, equal to a typical day’s wage

talent	6,000 drachmae/denarii	Matt. 18:24; 25:14–30
mina	100 drachmae/denarii	Luke 19:13–26
shekel	4 drachmae/denarii	No direct used in the New Testament, but it was a common coin
stater	2 drachmae/denarii	Matt. 17:27
half-shekel	2 drachmae/denarii	No direct used in the New Testament, but it was a common coin
didrachmon	2 drachmae/denarii	Matt. 17:24
drachma	Greek: a day’s wage	Luke 15:8
denarius	Roman: a day’s wage	Matt. 18:28; 20:1–16; 22:19; Mark 6:37; 12:15; 14:5; Luke 7:41; 10:35; 20:24; John 6:7; 12:5; Rev. 6:6
assarion	1/10 drachma/denarius	Matt. 10:29
quadrans	1/4 assarion (1/40 drachma/denarius)	Matt. 5:26; Mark 12:42
lepton	1/2 quadrans (1/80 drachma/denarius)	Mark 12:42; Luke 12:59; 21:2

Silver value today, March 8, 2015 is \$0.51 per gram

1 Talent = \$30,600 U.S. adjusted for time \$40,440,960 (\$0.15 = 1 day wage in Jesus’ day, \$198.24 = 1 day wage in the U.S. in February 2015)

	1 Talent	1 Mira	1 Shekel	1 Tetradrachm	1 Stater	1 Drachm	1 Denarius	1 Assarion	1 Quadrans	1 Lepton
Value in Shekels	3,000 Shekels	50 Shekels	1 Shekel	1 Shekel	½ Shekel	¼ Shekel	¼ Shekel	1/40 Shekel	1/160 Shekel	1/320 Shekel
Value in Dollars	\$1,500,000	\$25,000	\$500	\$500.00	\$250	\$125	\$125	\$12.50	\$3.12	\$1.56
Value in Day’s Wage	12,000 days (1 lifetime)	200 Days (1 year)	4 Days (1 Week)	4 Days (1 Week)	2 Days (½ Week)	1 Day	1 Day	1/10 Day	1/40 Day	1/80 Day

500 pence (500 denarius) would be valued at \$62,500 in today’s currency.

40 - fifty – The number “fifty” is translated from the Greek word “πεντήκοντα” or “pentēkonta”. It means fifty. Fifty pence (50 denarius) would be valued at \$6,250 in today’s currency.

There is an interesting Hebrew association between the number 50 and repentance/forgiveness. The Jews lived with a foundational law call the Sabbath. The Sabbath was a day created and dedicated by God as a Holy Day designed to bless the lives of men. It is a day designed to help us remember Him. It is a day intended to turn our hearts to Him. The process of turning our hearts, implies change. This change is known as repentance. The Jews practiced Sabbath worship weekly as the Lord commanded. Furthermore, the Lord commanded the Israelites to practice a Sabbath year every seventh year. During that year, the Jews neither planted nor harvested. They left their work lie fallow dedicating the entire year to remembering the Lord, and changing their hearts. Finally, the Jews considered any number squared to be a symbol of perfection and completeness. Consequently, when the seventh Sabbath year arrived they recognized the square of the Sabbaths (7x7=49). Subsequently, the following year or as they called it “the Jubilee year”, became a very special year. The fiftieth year was a year of absolute forgiveness. During the fiftieth year, all sins are to be forgiven. All debts are to be forgiven, and all slaves freed. It was a year of atonement.

In this parable, Jesus is equating the Pharisee to the debtor who owed the 50 pence. It should be noted that the sinful woman in the story is being equated to the debtor who owed 500 pence. The number 500 is closely related to the symbolism of number 50 and the Jewish Jubilee. To the Jews, the number 10 is a number of completeness and fullness; ten commandments, parable of the ten virgins and the ten lamps. The number 500 carries the same symbolism as the number 50, but with the added symbolism of the number 10. The sinful woman had completely repented (500) while the Pharisee was in need of repentance (50).



41 - nothing to pay – The word “pay” is translated from the Greek word “ἀποδίδωμι” or “apodidōmi”. It means to deliver, to sell, to give away one’s own profit, to pay off, or discharge what is due. Neither the woman who was classified as a sinner or the pious Pharisee were capable, in and of themselves, of removing their own sins. Symbolically,

they were not capable forgiving their own debt. Both needed the creditor to forgive their debts. The symbolism points to the fact that we all need the Savior of Heaven and Earth to forgive the sins we have committed. We cannot grant ourselves forgiveness, no matter how hard we try.

42 - frankly – The word “frankly” is not translated from the Greek transcript. It appears to be added by translators. The Codex Sinaiticus omits the term from its translation. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 42, page 118).

43 - forgave them both – The term “frankly forgave” is translated from the Greek word “χαρίζομαι” or “charizomai”. It means to do something pleasant or agreeable, to do a favor to, gratify, show kindness, or grant forgiveness. Fitzmyer translates the passage as “literally, ‘he forgave them both.’ The verb *charizesthai* means ‘to give us a favor, bestow graciously,’ but it is also used technically of ‘remitting’ debts or sins.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 690).



It is a false doctrine to think that there are limitations to Jesus’ ability to save. Often when we have sinned we question whether or not we can truly be freed from the debt of sin. Some have sinned so grievous that it is hard to believe that it could ever be made right. The Apostle Neil L. Andersen helps us understand the true doctrine of Jesus’ redemptive powers. He said, “There are many degrees of personal worthiness and righteousness. Yet repentance is a blessing to all of us. We each need to feel the Savior’s arms of mercy through the forgiveness of our sins. Years ago, I was asked to meet with a man who, long before our visit, had had a period of riotous living. As a result of his bad choices, he lost his membership in the Church. He had long since returned to the Church and was faithfully keeping the commandments, but his previous actions haunted him. Meeting with him, I felt his shame and his deep remorse at having set his covenants aside. Following our interview, I placed my hands upon his head to give him a priesthood blessing. Before speaking a word, I felt an overpowering sense of the Savior’s love and forgiveness for him. Following the blessing, we

embraced and the man wept openly. I am amazed at the Savior’s encircling arms of mercy and love for the repentant, no matter how selfish the forsaken sin. I testify that the Savior is able and eager to forgive our sins. Except for the sins of those few who choose perdition after having known a fulness, there is no sin that cannot be forgiven. What a marvelous privilege for each of us to turn away from our sins and to come unto Christ. Divine forgiveness is one of the sweetest fruits of the gospel, removing guilt and pain from our hearts and replacing them with joy and peace of conscience” (Ensign, “Repent ... That I May Heal You,” Elder Neil L. Andersen, Nov. 2009, pages 40–41).

44 - Tell me – The phrase “Tell me” is translated from the Greek word “εἶπον” or “eipon”. It means to speak or say. The Codex Sinaiticus omits the term “Tell me” from the translation. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 42, page 118). Jesus has taught by parable, and now asks Simon the Pharisee some clarifying questions. “Simon does not seem to have had the slightest conception that the question had any reference to himself – as little conception as David had when he pronounced so frank a judgment on Nathan’s parable.” (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar’s Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 198).

45 - love him most – The word “love” is translated from the Greek word “ἀγαπάω” or “agapaō”. It means to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, or to love dearly. The word “most” is translated from the Greek word “πλείων” or “pleiōn”. It means greater in quantity, the more part, very many, superior, or more excellent. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “love him most” as “love him the more”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 42, page 118). “Jeremias suggests that *agapan* means not so much ‘love’ as ‘feel the deepest thankfulness,’ since neither Hebrew nor Aramaic has a distinct word for thanks, gratitude.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 690).

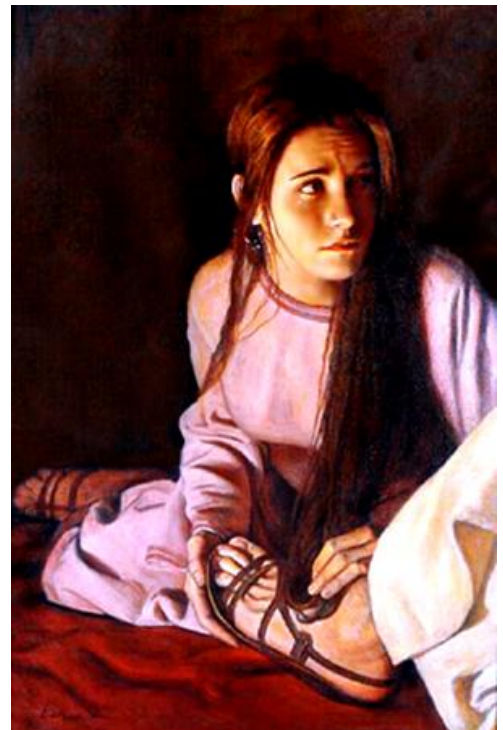
46 - I suppose – The word “suppose” is translated from the Greek word “ὑπολαμβάνω” or “hypolambanō”. It means to take up in order to raise, to bear on high, to welcome, take up in the mind, to assume or suppose.

47 - forgave most – The term “forgave” is translated from the Greek word “χαρίζομαι” or “charizomai”. It means to do something pleasant or agreeable, to do a favor to, gratify, show kindness, or grant forgiveness. The word “most” is translated from the Greek word “πλείων” or “pleiōn”. It means greater in quantity, the more part, very many, superior, or more excellent. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the term “forgave most” as “forgave the more”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 43, page 118).

Elder Shayne M. Bowen of the Quorum of the Seventy raised and answered the question of whether someone who desires forgiveness is ever beyond the ability to receive it through the Atonement of Jesus Christ: “Is it possible to reclaim a life that through reckless abandon has become so strewn with garbage that it appears that the person is unforgivable? Or what about the one who is making an honest effort but has fallen back into sin so many times that he feels that there is no possible way to break the seemingly endless pattern? Or what about the person who has changed his life but just can’t forgive himself? ...The Atonement of Jesus Christ is available to each of us. His Atonement is infinite. It applies to everyone, even you. It can clean, reclaim, and sanctify even you. That is what infinite means—total, complete, all, forever” (“The Atonement Can Clean, Reclaim, and Sanctify Our Lives,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2006, 33–34).

48 - Thou hast rightly judged – The word “rightly” is translated from the Greek word “ὀρθῶς” or “orthōs”. It means rightly. The word “judged” is translated from the Greek word “κρίνω” or “krinō”. It means to separate, choose, select, to pick out, or approve. It is also used to mean to judge, decree or pronounce an opinion between right and wrong. “Jesus said, ‘Thou hast rightly judged.’ The answer had been given; the scene was set. All at the dinner table were attentive; all were acutely aware of Simon’s host-imposed failures, of the woman’s worshipful act, and of the Divine Presence, whose gracious words always presented a Heavenly message in the best way.” (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 138).

49 - Thine house – The word “thine” is translated from the Greek word “σοῦ” or “sou”. It means thy and thee. The



word "house" is translated from the Greek word "οἰκία" or "oikia". It means a house. The house is used as a symbol for family, safety, refuge, and protection. In the ancient world, at the time of Jesus, a house was the ultimate symbol of peace and hospitality. Even an enemy was afforded protection when invited into one's house. The owner or authorized host of a house was required by their culture to extend certain hospitalities. Barclay records, **"When a guest entered such a house three things were always done. The host placed his hand on the guest's shoulder and gave him the kiss of peace. That was a mark of respect which was never omitted in the case of a distinguished Rabbi. The roads were only dust tracks, and shoes were merely soles held in place by straps across the foot. So always cool water was poured over the guest's feet to cleanse and comfort them. Either a pinch of sweet-smelling incense was burned or a drop of attar of roses was placed on the guest's head. These things good manners demanded, and in this case not one of them was done."** (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 94).

Jesus was an honored guest in Simon the Pharisee's house. The greatest respects and hospitalities should have been afforded Him. **"His reception at Simon's house appears to have been somewhat lacking in warmth, hospitality and honorable attendance. The narrative suggests an attitude of condescension on the part of the host. It was the custom of the times to treat a distinguished guest with marked attention; to receive him with a kiss of welcome, to provide water for washing the dust from his feet, and oil for anointing the hair of the head and the beard. All these courteous attentions were omitted by Simon."** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 190). This would have been highly offensive to a guest. Interestingly enough, Jesus understood the laws of hospitality and was respectful even when His host was not.

The most interesting part of dinner was the visit of the woman classified as a sinner. She did what the Pharisee failed to do, and he was the host. Farrar wrote, **"An Oriental's house is by no means his castle. The universal prevalence of the law of hospitality – the very first of Eastern virtues – almost forces him to live with open doors, and any one may at any time have access to his rooms. But on this occasion there was one who had summoned up courage to intrude upon that respectable dwelling place a presence which was not only unwelcome, but positively odious. A poor, stained, fallen woman, notorious in the place for her evil life, discovering that Jesus was supping in the house of the Pharisee, ventured to make her way there among the throng of other visitants, carrying with here an alabaster box of spikenard."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., pages 196-197).

- 50 - **gavest me no water** – The phrase "thou gavest me" is translated from the Greek word "δίδωμι" or "didōmi". It means to give, or bestow a gift. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase "gavest me no water for my feet" as "water for my feet thou gavest not" (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 7, Verse 44, page 118). Water can symbolize **"the life-giving waters of the sacred Law (Torah)."** (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 189). **"According to the ancients, the world consists of four basic elements: fire, air, earth, and water. The ethereal elements, fire and air, are associated with the heavens and the divine; the solid earth, with humankind. Water is the transitional medium, the channel between realms. In most religions, from ancient times to the present, water is used symbolically for rites of passage, spiritual purification rituals, and sacred ceremonies. Water is also an agent of change, causing dissolution of matter, and by extension, spirit."** (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 186).



Water is essential to life. Without it we die and so does all other forms of life. No wonder it is so often associated with Jesus and the ordinances of salvation. He is essential to eternal life and exaltation. Without Him, physical and spiritual death are permanent. There is no substitute for Him. The Pharisee, who offered no water to wash Jesus' feet, failed to seek out the living water of salvation that Jesus had. The woman, however, washed the Savior's feet having actively sought out the saving ordinances authored and mediated by Jesus.

- 51 - **for my feet** – The word "feet" is translated from the Greek word "πούς" or "pous". It means a foot, of either man or beast. The feet represent one's ability to act and move. Unclean feet symbolize sinful actions. Clean feet symbolize righteous actions. These symbols were incorporated into the domestic hospitality of the time. One would not think of allowing sin to defile one's home. The sacred areas of the home were to be vigilantly protected. The mats used for prayer and eating were especially important. Farrar wrote, **"In order that the mats or carpets which are hallowed by domestic prayer may not be rendered unclean by any pollution of the streets, each guest, as he enters a house in Syria or Palestine, takes off his sandals, and leaves them at the door. He then proceeds to his place at the table."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 196). What Farrar omits from his account is the fact that feet were to be washed and anointed prior to entering the home. Sins were to be symbolically wash before approaching Him in prayer or eating at His table.
- 52 - **Thou gavest me no kiss** – The word "kiss" is translated from the Greek word "φιλήμα" or "philēma". It means a kiss. The kiss with which, as a sign of fraternal affection, Christians and Jews were accustomed to welcome or dismiss their companions in the faith. The Pharisee conveyed no love or affection for Jesus, as is conveyed by the fact that there was **"no kiss of welcome upon the cheek."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., pages 195-196). Our ability to repent is eternally connected with our ability to love. Likewise, God's ability to forgive is eternally connected with His ability to love; and His love is infinite. Consequently, His ability to forgive is equally infinite.
- 53 - **not cease to kiss my feet** – The word "ceased" is translated from the Greek word "διαλείπω" or "dialeipō". It means to interpose a delay, to intermit, or leave off for a time something already begun. The word "kiss" is translated from the Greek word "καταφιλέω" or "kataphileō". It means to kiss much, kiss again and again, or kiss tenderly. **"The marks of the woman's gratitude are not limited to tears or perfume, but even include that sign of respect and love that human beings esteem most."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 691). As our love grows for Jesus, our expressions of love will also grow. This love will naturally be followed by acts of service and charity. In turn, our hearts become soft, compassionate, and Christ like. We change our thoughts and desires. Our new heart qualifies us for forgiveness. The woman in this chapter is clearly displaying the fruits of repentance; pure Christ like love.



54 - **My head** – The word “head” is translated from the Greek word “κεφαλή” or “kephalē”. It means the head, both of men and often of animals. Since the loss of the head destroys life, this word is used in the phrases relating to capital and extreme punishment. The head symbolizes, “with the heart, the chief member of the body, the seat of life-force and the soul and its power; it denotes wisdom; mind; control; rule. The head is the seat of both intelligence and folly and is the first of both honor and dishonor.” (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 80). “Because it sits atop the body, the head represents mastery or control. Thus, the leader of the people is called ‘head’” (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 74).

55 - **with oil** – The word “oil” is translated from the Greek word “ἔλαιον” or “elaion”. It means olive oil. Oil symbolizes “consecration; dedication; spiritual illumination; mercy; fertility. Anointing with oil is infusing new divine life; consecration; bestowing the grace of God or conferring wisdom.” (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 122). The Olive symbolizes “immortality; fruitfulness; bridal, to impart fertility; peace; plenty (the oil being valuable).” (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 122).



“In ancient Israel, oil, primarily made from pressed olives, was considered one of the three necessities of life together with food and clothing. It was used as a food, cosmetic, fuel, and medicine, as well as an export item. Within the ceremonial life of the people, oil played a central role in sacrifices and coronations. Oil is one of the blessings God promises as a reward for faithfulness. Because of its value and centrality, oil symbolize honor, joy, and favor...Oil was also a symbol of life, which was probably why the leper was anointed with oil when he was welcomed back into the community.” (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 122).

The OLIVE TREE

Olive oil has some interesting symbolism associated with the atonement of Jesus Christ. When oil is extracted from olives, an incredible amount of pressure is required. Upwards of 2,000 pounds per square inch are needed for the oil within the olive to release. This natural occurrence is figurative of the pressure that

our sins placed upon Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. The pressure caused Him to bleed from every pore. Hence, olive oil represents the healing powers of the atonement. It symbolizes eternal life and mortality. Frankel and Teutsch wrote, “Olive trees were and still are among the most valued trees in the Middle East. The oil of this tree’s fruit was grouped among the seven species characterizing the beauty and bounty of the Land of Israel. Olive oil was a mainstay of the Israelite diet and household economy, of commerce, and of Temple and palace ceremonies. Because of its potential to live over 1,000 years and still bear fruit, the olive tree has long symbolized longevity and immortality.” (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 123).

56 - **thou didst not anoint** – The word “anoint” is translated from the Greek word “ἀλείφω” or “aleiphō”. It means to anoint. “The anointing of Jesus’ feet is perhaps a ‘strange picture,’ but it is one that would more likely be changed in the oral tradition to an anointing of the head than the other way around.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 690).

57 - **Her sins** – The word “sins” is translated from the Greek word “ἁμαρτία” or “hamartia”. It means to be without a share in, to miss the mark, to err, to be mistaken, or violate God’s law. “In effect Jesus is saying: ‘Her sins were many, but she believed in me, has repented of her sins, was baptized by my disciples, and her sins were washed away in the waters of baptism. Now she has sought me out to exhibit the unbounded gratitude on one who was filthy, but is now clean. Her gratitude knows no bounds and her love is beyond measure, for she was forgiven of much. Had she been forgiven of but a few sins, she would not have loved me so intensely.’” (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 265).

58 - **which are many** – The word “many” is translated from the Greek word “πολύς” or “polys”. It means many, much, or large.

59 - **(little is) forgiven** – The word “little” is translated from the Greek word “ὀλίγος” or “oligos”. It means little, small, or few. The word “forgiven” is translated from the Greek word “ἀφίημι” or “aphiēmi”. It means to send away, divorce, yield up, send forth, or disregard.

In verse 48 of Luke 7, the translation they sins “have been forgiven” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 692) is an indication that the woman’s sins were forgiven prior to her approaching Jesus at Simon the Pharisee’s house. This simple fact forces us to ask what must have happened to her to obtain forgiveness. The answer is set in the pattern given to prophets of all ages. Charles Penrose explained, “The next is to get remission of past sins. ‘Why,’ some will say, ‘if a man repents is he not forgiven?’ Not at all. A man may contract a heavy debt at a store, but his being sorry for having contracted the debt would not pay off the old score. Faith and repentance, then, are the first and second principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the first and second steps towards the attaining of that great boon, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. What is the next step? To be buried in the water in the likeness of Jesus Christ’s death by a man holding authority from God to administer that ordinance, and to be raised up from the water by that person in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This ordinance is for the remission of sins – not that water cleanses the man spiritually, not that the water washes away any sins the man may have committed. The blood of Christ alone cleanseth from all sin. That blood was shed for all humanity, but humanity will only obtain the full benefits flowing therefrom by obedience to the fixed laws that relate to the matter and pertain to salvation. We must obey the commandments of the Lord to obtain the blessings of the Lord. ‘Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven.’ Jesus Christ set the pattern.” (Journal of Discourses, Volume 22, Charles W. Penrose, May 1st 1880, page 90)



60 - **she loved much** – The word “much” is translated from the Greek word “πολύς” or “polys”. It means many, much, or large.



61 - **the same loveth little** – The word “little” is translated from the Greek word “ὀλίγος” or “oligos”. It means little, small or few. **“Love describes the consequences of forgiveness, and the ‘little love’ characterizes the host, who turns out to be the little debtor. In God’s sight, little forgiveness is shown to Simon, not because of his conduct, but because of his fundamental attitude.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 692).

62 - **Thy faith** – The word “faith” is translated from the Greek word “πίστις” or “pistis”. It means faith. Faith is a belief in something not seen or necessarily proven by mortal men. It is a conviction born from revelation, and founded in the Holy Ghost. It is a gift from God that cannot be obtained from any other source. We cannot create faith or fabricate it. Once obtained, continued faith must be nourished by the same spirit that formed it. Faith is the first key to repentance. All our hopes and dreams start with the spark of faith. The Book of Mormon teaches, **“Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God.”** (Ether 12:4).

At this junction in the story, Jesus changes His address from the Pharisee to the woman. He takes a moment to teach, helping her understand that her faith in Him is the source of her forgiveness.

63 - **hath saved thee** – The word “saved” is translated from the Greek word “σώζω” or “sōzō”. It means to save, keep safe and sound, or to rescue from danger or destruction.

The salvation Jesus is referring to is a rescuing from physical and spiritual death. It is overcoming the consequences of mortality and sin. Such salvation is not gained through mystical methods or chance. The Lord has a specific plan that operates under heavenly direction and divine patterns. **“Jesus reaffirms that forgiveness previously gained through repentance and baptism. He is not forgiving sins contrary to the law which he himself has ordained, which law is that men must believe the gospel, repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 265).



The story contained in this chapter is believed, by most scholars, to be the first spiritual healing by Jesus. Edersheim wrote, **“And so she, the first who had come to Him for spiritual healing, the first of an unnumbered host, went out into the better light, into peace of heart, peace of faith, peace of rest, and into the eternal peace of the Kingdom of Heaven, and of the Heaven of the kingdom hereafter and for ever.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 569). I would argue that this was not the first spiritual healing by Jesus. All of Jesus’ healings contained a spiritual healing. There were no physical healing performed by Jesus that were not spiritual in nature.

64 - **go in peace** – The word “peace” is translated from the Greek word “εἰρήνη” or “eirēnē”. It means a state of natural tranquility, peace, security, safety, or prosperity.

This passage is reminiscent of an Isaiah quote used by the Book of Mormon prophet Abinadi. He said, **“And behold, I say unto you, this is not all. For O how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that is the founder of peace, yea, even the Lord, who has redeemed his people; yea, him who has granted salvation unto his people;”** (Mosiah 15:18). Jesus is the founder of peace. His peace comes from knowing that we have been reconciled with Heaven. It is a peace that comes from being aligned with God’s will. Repentance makes this possible; repentance only obtained by and through Jesus.

