

Broken Vessels

Shards of Wisdom for
Holy Week



Mark 14: 3-9

The Anointing at Bethany

³ While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. ⁴ But some were there who said to one another in anger, 'Why was the ointment wasted in this way? ⁵ For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor.' And they scolded her. ⁶ But Jesus said, 'Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. ⁷ For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. ⁸ She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. ⁹ Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.'



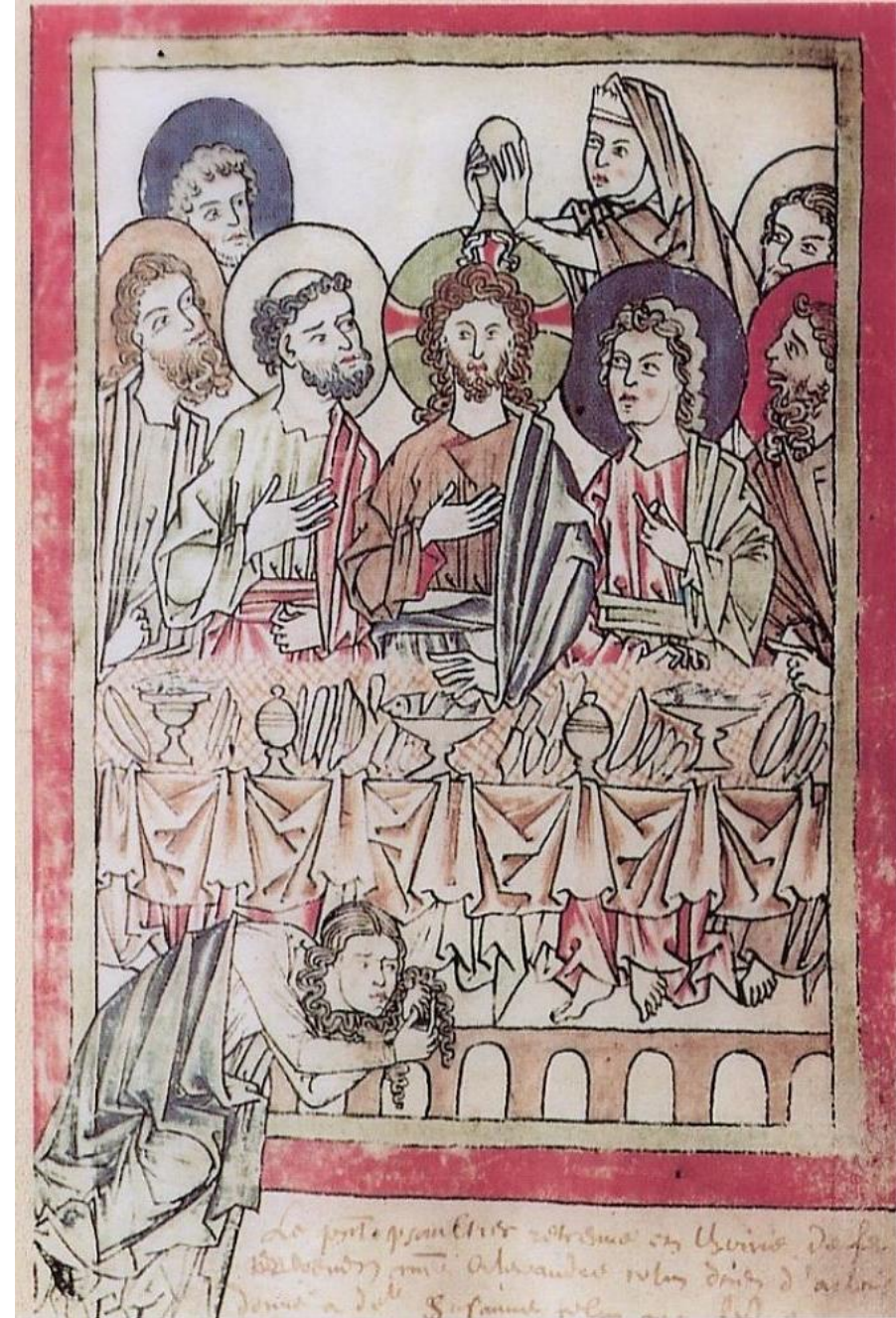
The Widow of Zarapeth

I Kings 17

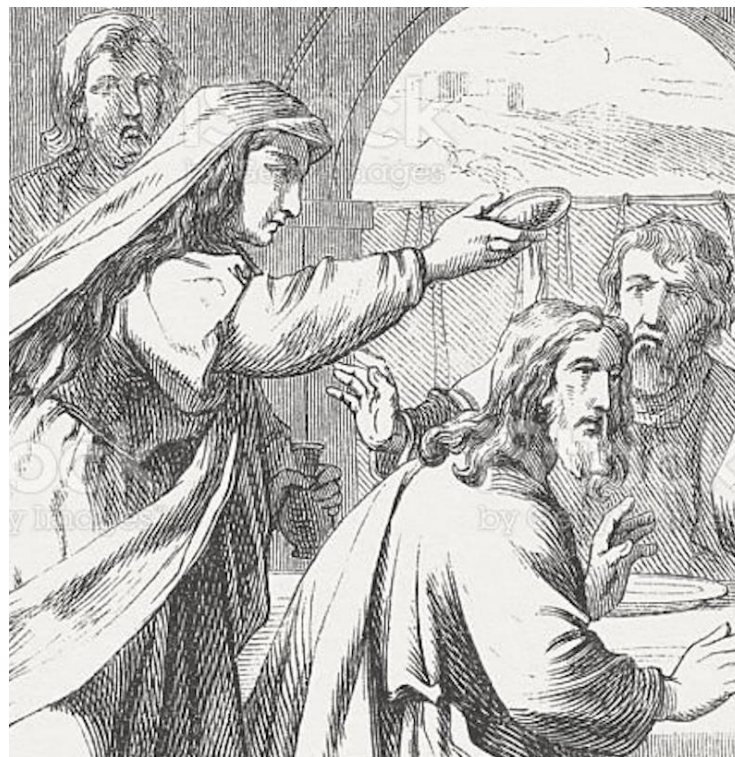
Image: Micah Hayns



Wood engraving after a drawing by
Julius Schnorr Von Carolsfeld, 1877



Cistercian illuminated manuscript, Basel, 1260 CE.



She broke open the jar

'You must be broken'
St Augustine said.
But how? Not down,
Ground into helplessness,
Nor up, fragmented into
Uselessness,
but Open, like seeds
Releasing life.

Ann Lewin



Prayer

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give Your angels and saints charge over those who sleep.

Tend Your sick ones, O Lord Christ.

Rest Your weary ones.

Bless Your dying ones.

Soothe Your suffering ones.

Pity Your afflicted ones.

Shield Your joyous ones, and all for Your love's sake. Amen.

Prayer of Augustine